

PARENT HANDBOOK

NORTHWOOD PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL
Promoting the joy of learning

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I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

About Us

Northwood Presbyterian Day School is a supportive community of children, teachers and families which provides a healthy, happy, nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment for each and every child. Our mission is to nurture your child's potential, guide and encourage their discovery, and promote the joy of learning. We offer:

- Low teacher-student ratios
- Small group sizes
- Trained staff
- Active parent involvement
- Spacious classrooms
- Large playground

Program Description

Northwood Presbyterian Day School offers a school year program for infant/toddler and preschool classes for either two (2), three (3), or five (5) days a week. We follow the NEISD school year calendar and offer early morning and afternoon care as well. NPDS is open from 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday (late August thru early June).

Accreditation

The National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is the largest professional organization of early childhood educators. In order to be accredited by NAEYC, early childhood programs voluntarily undergo a very comprehensive and intense review. We are working toward becoming fully accredited by the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We will begin accreditation process in the spring of 2011.

Curriculum

Northwood Presbyterian Day School is committed to providing a healthy, happy, nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment for each and every child. The curriculum is designed to:

- Develop safe and healthy habits in young children with an emphasis on proper hygiene, sound nutrition, exercise and physical care.
- Foster positive self-esteem.
- Provide opportunities for creative expression.
- Support the development of social skills such as sharing, cooperation, generosity and empathy.
- Stimulate cognitive problem-solving skills with an emphasis on the concepts of cause and effect, classification, serialization, space, time, numbers, shapes and colors.
- Strengthen communication skills necessary for listening, reading, writing and speaking by providing an environment rich in the practical uses of words.
- Enhance fine motor and gross motor skills.

For the specific objectives addressed at each age level, consult with your child's teacher. Developmentally appropriate activities are planned and implemented in each group. The daily schedules provide for a balance between child-directed and teacher-directed activities, quiet and active time, and inside and outside play. Children have daily opportunities to read books, use a variety of art media, explore math and science materials, music experience, and work alone or together with friends.

Because children learn by doing, classrooms are designed with learning centers and children are provided time to explore and experience at their own rate based on their interests and abilities. Classroom curriculums reflect a well-rounded balance between cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development.

- Cognitive Development: There is a Chinese proverb which states: "I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand." Our philosophy is to let the children "do" as much as possible. The rooms and the daily routines are organized to give the children the freedom, within a structure, to disassemble, reassemble, manipulate, build, organize, and create with concrete materials. Learning centers invite children to explore a variety of topics through block play, manipulatives, music, dramatic play, science, art, woodworking, and cooking. Group times focus on vocabulary development, stories and rhymes, and music and rhythm. Concepts presented are related to the ages of the children and their interests. Particular concepts, such as colors, shapes, numbers, and letters are included in the over-all learning activities of the day.
- Social Development: We know that young children are just developing their social skills and that they need much guidance in this area. We provide a loving environment which accepts children's growing needs for

independence, while helping them live within the limits of others' needs as well. We help them to talk and to listen to each other, and we intervene when it appears that physical action might replace negotiation. We believe that the best discipline comes from within the child, and we work to help the child see the other's viewpoint and to understand the reasons behind the rules which are established.

- **Emotional Development:** Young children's self-esteem is basic to their ability to relate to others and to their environment. We work to help children see themselves as successful, lovable people. We hope to provide a secure, warm base from which they can gradually gain independence and mastery. We accept their feelings, both positive and negative, and help them learn appropriate ways to express those feelings.
- **Physical Development:** We believe that a sound body is the foundation upon which all other aspects of healthy development depend. Therefore, we provide a substantial outdoor time where children can develop gross motor skills in running, jumping, climbing, throwing, catching and balancing. Teachers plan activities that develop fine-motor skills in and eye-hand coordination.
- **Spiritual Development:** As a church-related school, we want to help children gain an understanding of their relationship to God. Because young children learn best through direct experience, we provide most of our teaching through modeling. We show God's love and forgiveness through our own actions and words. Everyday occurrences such as seeing a butterfly can be opportunities for thanksgiving for God's creation. In addition, we provide Chapel one to two mornings a week, where the ministerial staff of the church leads the children in a short worship service.

In order to enrich the learning experience, group and individual activities are conducted both indoors and outdoors. Special events are incorporated into many of the classes. Our enrichment programs include, but are not limited to, music, tumbling and Spanish, which take place inside and outside the classroom environment.

Program quality

High quality early child care and education programs benefit children. Children who experience a quality program have greater academic success, enhanced self-esteem, and increased self-control. There are four factors present in high quality programs: lower staff-child ratios, smaller group sizes, staff educated in Early Childhood Education/Child Development and parent involvement. We strive to keep the number of children assigned to each staff member lower than that required by Minimum Standards. We will also keep our group size smaller. Please note the staff-child ratio charts and group size listed below and how they compare to the minimum requirements. All staff receives 20 hours of training a year, as well as training in CPR and first aid. We are very proud of the educational levels of our staff.

Ages of Children:	Group Size:								
	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22
Infants (birth to 15 mos.)	1:3	1:4							
Toddlers (12 to 28 mos.)	1:3	1:4	1:4	1:4					
Toddlers (21 to 36 mos.)		1:4	1:5	1:6					
Preschool 2.5 year olds									
to 3 year olds (30-48 months)				1:6	1:7	1:8	1:9		
4 year olds						1:8	1:9	1:10	

This chart has been modified to reflect Preschool only.
Reference: Guide to Accreditation by the NAEYC

Specified age group	Number of children Supervised by one staff	Maximum group size
0-11 months	4	10
12-17 months	5	13
18-23 months	9	18
2 years	11-13	22-26
3 years	15-17	30-34
4 years	18-20	35
5 years	22-24	35

This chart has been modified to reflect Preschool only.
Reference: Day Care Center Minimum Standards & Guidelines

Discrimination Policy

Northwood Presbyterian Day School does not discriminate against any child based on the child's race, color, national origin, sex, religion or disabilities. Reasonable accommodation will be made to provide services to persons with disabilities. All children are accepted on a probationary basis. The staff and parents will assess the child's needs to insure that the program is able to meet the needs of the child.

Staff

Our staff is selected on the basis of their teaching experience, interaction with children and ability to implement classroom curriculums. Many of our teachers at NPDS have appropriate credentials for teaching in early childhood centers, including Associate Degrees, certification In Early Childhood Education, and designation as a Child Development Associate. As a commitment to your child's education and to our staff, we require that our teachers continuously sharpen their skills by attending workshops and seminars throughout the year and that they be certified in first aid and CPR. Many of our professional staff members have been a part of the NPDS team for many years.

Enrollment

All children must be enrolled before attending the school. Parents must also participate in school tours and program orientation. The following must be completed and submitted to the school:

- ❖ Application and enrollment packet
- ❖ Immunization record (Up-to-date and current, must have child's name, birth-date, number of doses and type of vaccine, and date the child received each immunization, stamp, or signature from physician or health department).
- ❖ Parent permission for water activities or other special activities and for emergency medical attention.
- ❖ Written document indicating that child is able to take part in the program from licensed health personnel.

Placement

Age and developmental level determine the placements of children in a classroom. We want your child to be placed where his/her needs will be met and interest will be challenged. Occasionally, it is necessary to move children or combine groups. This is done only in emergencies and you will be informed if this occurs. The continuity of care is important to your child's development so every effort is made to minimize such disruptions in care.

Parent Involvement and Communication

We invite parents to visit the school at any time. Parents are also encouraged to participate in providing learning activities with the children by sharing particular talents or interests. We communicate with parents through newsletters, parent meetings, scheduled individual conferences each year, and informal conversations. Parents are welcome to call teachers or the director anytime they have a question or concern. We also maintain a library for parents and can make referrals to other community resources.

Governance of the Day School

Directly responsible for policies and goal-setting is the Day School Board, made up of church members and parents. Budgets and financial decisions must be approved by the Session of Northwood Presbyterian Church. The director of the Day School is responsible for carrying out the policies as established by the Day School Board.

The Minimum Standard Rules of Texas

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is the Licensing Agency of Child Care Centers. NPDS is required by law to comply with the Minimum Standard Rules that are set by the TDFPS. If at any time you would like to review these rules you may come by the office and request to see a copy or you may also get online at <http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/child-care/>.

Results of our most recent visit and our license are posted on the bulletin board outside of the office.

You may contact the local licensing office by calling 337-3399. The Texas DFPS child abuse hotline is 1-800-252-5400. The child care licensing website is: <http://www.dfps.state.tx.us>.

II. PROGRAM POLICIES

1. Accidents/Emergencies

The staff maintains current certifications in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). Teachers will follow basic first-aid procedures for injuries and notify parents of any accidents requiring first-aid at school through a written accident report. Injuries such as scrapes, cuts and other wounds will be cleaned with soap and water, as the staff is not able to use hydrogen peroxide or antibiotic ointments as these require parental permission. Should further emergency action be needed beyond basic first aid, staff will provide immediate care, call EMS, call parents, the child's physician and/or EMS as needed. Parents will be notified of any accidents requiring first aid at school through a written accident/incident report, which they will be asked to sign to verify that they have received the information about the accident.

- a. Minor injuries - will be treated at school. Staff will contact you if the injury is to the face or head. A written report will be sent home describing the cause of the injury and the treatment.
- b. Major injuries - staff will provide immediate care, call EMS, call parents and the child's physician.
- c. Emergency Procedures – Fire and evacuation drills are held monthly to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. The evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. In case of a toxic fume release or if the building must be evacuated, the children will be taken to Garner Middle School or Woodridge Elementary. Parents or emergency persons listed on the enrollment form will be contacted. If your child is injured, a trained staff member will provide first aid and you will be contacted. If necessary your physician will be notified and 911 emergency personnel will also be called.

2. Address, Telephone or Work Changes

Any changes in address, telephone numbers or work location must be reported promptly in writing. Emergency telephone numbers and individuals authorized to pick up the child must also be kept current.

3. Arrival and Departure Procedures/Sign In-Sign Out

Early morning care begins at 7:00 a.m. The program begins at 8:45 a.m. during the school year. Families needing an earlier arrival time may make arrangements with the office. All early arrivals should be taken to the designated classroom or playground where staff members will be on duty. Children arriving at or after 8:30 should be taken directly to their individual classrooms or to their teacher. We are unable to accept children after 9:30. (The only exception is for a Doctor's appointment and a Doctor's note is required.) Late arrivals can be very disruptive to the entire classroom.

Parents or a designated adult must sign in their child with the arrival time and initials upon arrival and sign out their child indicating departure time and initials on the SIGN IN/SIGN OUT SHEET. SIGN IN/SIGN OUT SHEETS are located near the classroom door or with the teacher if class is not in classroom at time of drop off or pick up (playground, chapel, etc). Children arriving for early arrival and/or extended care program must also be signed in and out on the appropriate sign in/out sheets. If parents fail to sign their child in they will be called and asked to come back to do it. Since the staff must continue to assume supervision of the child until the parent and child leave the playground or classroom, parents should indicate the departure as the time they actually depart with their child and not the time they arrived to pick up their child or the scheduled departure time.

For the safety of all during arrival and departure, NPDS requests that parents maintain stringent supervision of their child in and around the parking lots and the grassy area around the church premises. Children should not be allowed in any classrooms or church rooms or to wander the premises without an adult supervising them closely. Even though the parking lot can be seen from many of the classrooms, **parents must not leave any infant or child under the age of 10 in the car at any time of the year, even for a few minutes to drop off a sibling, since it is considered leaving a child in a potentially dangerous situation (especially due to extreme weather in South Texas).**

When children are picked up from the school, be sure to sign them out and inform the assigned staff. Children will be asked to pick up materials they are using before they leave the classroom or playground. Please check cubbies and mailboxes for artwork, soiled clothing and notes to parents. The policy for release of children is as follows:

- A child is released only to a parent or an adult designated by the parent in writing (on emergency card or letter written by parent).
- If a person authorized to pick up a child is unknown to the staff, the staff will require that the individual present a driver's license and staff will record the license number.
- If a parent calls to authorize the emergency release of a child, the school will verify that the caller is actually the parent.
- The Day School is unable to accept or release children from/to older siblings under the age of sixteen.

Please be on time to pick up your child at his/her scheduled departure time. Children become anxious and worried when they are not picked up promptly at 12:00, 3:00 and 5:00 release times, all remaining children can be picked-up

in the rainy day room (next to the office). The children will be in the care of the director or the office administrative assistant until parent/guardian arrives. There will be a \$25.00 fee assessed at 5 minutes after scheduled departure time. A \$5 fee will be assessed for each additional 5 minutes after scheduled departure time. (Example: \$25 at 5:05, \$30 at 5:10, \$35. at 5:15, etc.) This fee will need to be paid at pick-up or before the child can be dropped off the following day. Each family will receive 1 warning before being charged.

4. Biting Policy

NPDS recognizes that many children go through a developmental stage in which they express emotion through biting. Teachers and staff will conference with a parent and use all age-appropriate strategies to prevent biting when a biter has been identified. If the biting is excessive and not improved with the use of said strategies, dismissal of the child from Northwood Presbyterian Day School may be necessary in order to maintain the safety of the other children in the class.

5. Calendar

We follow North East School District's calendar, running late August thru early June. Please refer to the current school calendar for exact dates each year.

6. Celebration of Birthdays and Holidays

Birthdays are important to your child, and we like to celebrate with you. Please contact your child's teacher several days in advance to make plans for a simple celebration at school. (We suggest sharing a snack of your child's favorite nutritious food, such as a favorite fruit or muffin, please no cakes, cookies, or cupcakes). If your child is having a party, you may send invitations to school only if each child in the class is invited. Birthday snacks must follow San Antonio Metro Health guidelines.

Many holiday traditions will be observed during the year, with emphasis on family gatherings, traditional foods, songs, dance and symbols. Parents are encouraged to share their individual family traditions with the class by sending a traditional food for snack, reading a story, telling about or showing items related to the celebration.

7. Cell Phones

Parents are encouraged to refrain from talking on their cell phones as they drop off or pick up their child. The arrival and departure times need to be a special 1 on 1 time between children and parents to say good-bye and to reconnect after a long day. Taking into consideration the view of the child, it can give your child the message that work or the other person on the phone is more important than they are at these special times.

8. Child Abuse and Neglect

In an effort to protect the well-being and safety of children, the State of Texas requires anyone who suspects child abuse and neglect to report it to the proper authorities. The school staff has been trained to identify the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. All suspect indicators will be documented and reported. The school is required by law to cooperate with any investigation of child abuse and neglect. You will be notified if your child is questioned as part of the investigation.

Remember: Never shake a baby or young child

Because of our continuing concern about the welfare of children, we have provided the following information for families. Parents are encouraged to discuss child abuse and neglect with the director and/or their child's teacher. It is important for even suspected abuse or neglect to be reported (toll-free Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400) so that specialists can intervene before more harm is done.

Abuse includes the following acts or omissions:

- Physical injury that results in substantial harm to the child, or genuine threat of substantial harm from physical injury to the child.
- Failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent an action by another person that results in causing substantial harm to the child.
- Mental or emotional injury to a child, causing or permitting the child to be in a situation that results in an observable and material impairment in the child's growth, development or psychological functioning.
- Sexual conduct harmful to, or failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent, sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional or physical welfare.

Neglect includes:

- Leaving of a child in a situation where their child would be exposed to a substantial risk of physical or mental harm, without arranging for necessary care for the child.
- Placing the child in or failing to remove the child from a situation that requires judgment or actions beyond the child's level of maturity, physical condition or mental abilities and that result in injury or substantial risk of harm to the child.

- Failure to seek, obtain, or follow through with medical care for the child, with the failure resulting in an observable and material impairment to the growth, development or functioning of the child.
- Failure to provide the child with food, clothing, or shelter necessary to sustain life or health of the child, excluding failure caused primarily by financial inability unless relief services had been offered and refused.

9. Child Custody Issues

It is the school’s intent to meet the needs of children especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation or remarriage. Sharing information about such situations may be helpful to school staff and will be held in the strictest confidentiality.

The school will send home 2 copies of any communication. Children will only make one project.

The school cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child’s records, or picking the child up unless the Day School has been furnished with legally filed, executed and current documents. Copies of all court documents must be submitted to the school. In case of conflicts, the proper authorities will be contacted.

10. Clothing/Backpacks

Children should be dressed in comfortable and washable clothing. Clothing which is easy to put on and take off encourages independence at toilet time. Our program promotes exploration and direct experiences of many kinds. Please understand that this kind of philosophy is not consistent with staying clean and that it helps if a child’s clothing school is selected with this in mind.

- Rubber soled shoes are best for active young children on the playground; boots (except on Western Day), dressy shoes, flip flops, sandals or similar shoes can be hazardous and are highly discouraged. Shoes are required for all children including those not yet walking to wear on the playground.
- A complete change of clothing must be kept in a child’s back pack at all times.
- All articles of removable clothing (jackets, sweaters, hats, etc.) should be marked clearly with child’s name.

Dress your child in clothing that is durable and comfortable. Please have your girls wear shorts under their dresses. Many of your child’s favorite activities may tend to be a little messy, like finger painting and digging in the dirt. Clothing and shoes should be easy for children to take off and put on during toileting. Children should wear closed shoes like tennis shoes. **No boots, sandals, or Crocs.** The children will go outside every day (unless it is raining) so dress them accordingly. Each child also needs a complete change of clothing.

Recommended daily needs each clearly marked with child’s name:

Infants under 18 months	Toddlers 18 months - 2 ½ years	Pre-school age 2 ½ - 5 years
Diapers 2 changes of clothing 2 small blankets *Milk or formula bottles (labeled) Baby food as needed Bibs for each day	Diapers or training underwear 2 changes of clothing Small blanket or beach towel (for naptime) Small, soft cuddly toy to sleep with Lunchbox	Small blanket (for naptime) One change of clothing Lunchbox

***Bottles must be prepared. Children are fed on demand therefore please send more than amount normally consumed during the time period your child is at school for extra hunger or loss due to spillage.**

Each child must bring a back pack with his/her name clearly marked on the front or inside. A complete change of clothing must be kept in a child’s backpack at all times. Backpacks will ensure that your child’s belongings, artwork and communication from the school will be sent home. Backpacks should be large enough to take all personal items back and forth from home to school (including nap items).

11. Communication Folders

Each child (older 2’s and up) receives a communication folder at the beginning of the year. These need to be brought to school each day the child attends.

12. Confidentiality

We take confidentiality seriously at the Day School and all staff and board members abide by the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conducts. A copy of the Code of Ethics can be obtained from the school office. We will not only make every effort to protect the confidentiality of your child and family, but also of every child, family and staff member of the Day School.

The confidential files of the enrollment forms, medical forms, accident forms, screenings, assessment forms and other records of each child are kept in a locked room in the school office. Parents grant authorization to review the files by staff, the child's current teachers, and authorities of licensing and health department in addition to any other family members indicated by the parent on the Authorization for Access Form. A copy of the authorization is kept inside the child's individual file.

Each child's current ongoing Assessment Portfolio consisting of work sampling, anecdotal observations, notes, developmental screenings and/or checklists will be kept in a locked cabinet in the child's current classroom.

At times other schools, therapists, and/or other professionals may request information about your child as part of an enrollment process or while providing care for your child/family. Such information will only be provided with additional written permission from the parent or guardian. Release forms may be obtained from the office or provided by the individual/school requesting such information.

13. Diapering

Children who wear diapers must bring an ample supply of disposable diapers. It is best to bring a full package at a time. Teachers will notify you when your supply is getting low. We ask that you replenish wipes when diapers are replenished. Cloth diapers are not permitted. Diaper rash ointment, if desired, must be provided by the parent and clearly labeled with the child's name. A medication form must be filled out for use of diaper creams.

14. Discipline and Guidance Techniques

We believe that discipline and guidance should be consistent and based on an understanding of individual needs and development. A positive guidance technique promotes self-discipline and acceptable behavior.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

Positive guidance techniques used by the NORTHWOOD PRESBYTERIAN DAY SCHOOL staff will include but are not limited to:

- * recognizing and encouraging appropriate behavior
- * developing reasonable and clear rules and expectations in each group
- * explaining the consequences of inappropriate behaviors
- * redirecting children into positive behaviors
- * modeling pro-social behaviors
- * enforcing limits and rules consistently and fairly
- * helping children to identify and express feelings in acceptable ways

Please discuss with your child's teacher specific guidance techniques that work best with your child. Changes at home do affect a child's behavior at the school. The school staff is anxious to work with you regarding behavior problems at the school or home. In case of continued behavior that is potentially harmful to your child, other children or property, you will be notified immediately.

NPDS will follow a four-step discipline system based on the following criteria.

1. All three (3) and four (4) year old teachers will post and communicate with parents the "visual" discipline chart/plan that will be used in their classrooms.
2. When a child repeatedly reaches the "low" level on the chart, it can be considered a discipline offense.
3. Other discipline offenses include (but are not limited to):
 - a. Injury to another child or teacher
 - b. Repeated defiance
 - c. Running away or leaving the classroom without permission
 - d. Physical or verbal aggression/bullying

- e. Destructive behavior
4. All two (2) year old teachers will document/journal about individual student's behaviors that are disrupting the learning environment. In the case of excessive disruptions or injury to others (or self), the two year old teachers will use the following warning and discipline notice system also.

Discipline offenses will be documented using the following steps:

- **Official Warning:** Written warning/communication by the teacher to the parents if a child reaches the "low" level on the discipline chart. (Notes to parents regarding minor infractions may not be considered an official warning). Parents must sign and return the **Official Warning** notification.
- **1st Discipline Notice:** Parents will receive a written notification from the teacher and director stating the child is having discipline problems. The parents must sign and return the form and participate in a conference by phone or in person to discuss behaviors and strategies that work at home.
- **2nd Discipline Notice:** Parents will be contacted to arrange a mandatory meeting with the parent, director, and teachers to develop an individual behavior plan and agree upon a period of time in which improvements in behavior must be demonstrated.
- **3rd Discipline Notice:** Parents will be notified of the discipline offense by the director and in writing stating that any further incident will result in immediate dismissal.

*Incidents of severe violence or resulting in substantial injury may result in immediate dismissal.

15. Extended Care/Rest Time

All children staying for the extended care will be required to rest for a period of time as required by TDFPS Minimum Standards. The children have participated in a busy morning filled with numerous activities and all ages need time to relax their bodies. Early risers and non-nappers will be provided quiet activities, such as books, puzzles, drawing, etc. after a brief rest time. The children will play outdoors or inside following nap/rest time. All children (except those sleeping in cribs) must furnish their own nap mats, which can be purchased by parents on their own or through the Day School. Small blankets, "snuggles" and/or travel size pillows may also be included for the child's comfort and warmth. Sheets and blankets will be sent home at the end of the week for laundering.

The following sleeping requirements for infants have been recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and required both by TDFPS Minimum Standards. All children under 12 months of age will be placed on their back for sleeping position. Infants will be allowed to sleep on their side or tummy only if the child has turned to that position on their own. Only very thin receiving blankets tucked around the bottom of the crib mattress and reaching only as far as the infant's chest will be allowed in the crib. Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys or any other soft products are not permitted in the crib with any child under 12 months. Any exceptions to this guideline pertaining to "Back to Sleep" position for sleeping must come in writing from the child's physician.

Children not regularly scheduled for Extended Care may "drop-in" on a space available basis. "Drop-ins" must be scheduled no later than 9:00 a.m. We prefer that 24 hours notice is given to ensure appropriate staffing and to inform the child of the change in schedule. Please refer to the yearly fee schedule for the rates.

16. Fee Structure and Payment

- The school year tuitions are pro-rated over the year and thus tuitions remain the same each month from September - May, including December. The August and June tuitions will vary each year depending on the actual start date and end date of school. Please refer to the annual fee schedule for current fees and tuition.
- Tuition is due in the director's office on the **5th** day of each month (unless prior arrangements have been made in the office). Please make checks payable to "NPDS".
- A **\$20.00 late charge** will be added on the **10th** of each month to each payment not received. Payment must be received before the 10th to avoid the late charge.
- If payment is not received by the **15th** of any given month the student **will be suspended** from school until the balance is paid in full.
- If the student is suspended for nonpayment of tuition, the parent/guardian will be assessed a \$50.00 re-instatement fee, which must be paid before the student can return to the classroom. Tuition continues to accrue during suspension, and the balance due must be paid, along with the reinstatement fee before the student may return to the classroom.
- The last month of the school year tuition will be due on the 10th day of the month with no grace period.
- A \$25.00 service charge will be charged for returned checks. If this happens twice, a parent may be asked to pay in cash or money order only.

- If there is an increase in rates, parents will be given one month's notice regarding the new rates. At the end of each calendar year, the school will furnish a report of all tuition and fees paid throughout the year to be used for income tax purposes. Parents must request this in writing.
- There is no credit for days absent due to illness, absences, vacation, or the school being closed for holidays or emergencies.
- All fees are non-refundable, this includes: registration fees and tuition.
- An annual registration fee is due upon enrollment and renewable in March of each year. The fee secures your child a place in the school for the next school term, and it is non-refundable.
- In order to hold a future spot for your child in their designate classroom monthly tuition payments will be due, according to the current tuition rates. NPDS cannot reserve a spot unless payment is received on-time on a monthly basis.

17. Grievance Procedure

Parents are encouraged to first talk with their child's teacher and/or the director with any concerns or issues. Parents should request a time to speak with the teacher at a time when he/she is not responsible for the care of children. The director is generally available during the day, but parents are encouraged to set a time to meet in advance. The goal will be to resolve the conflict at this initial level in a satisfactory manner for both the parent and the school.

If the director is not able to adequately resolve the difference with the parent, the parent may seek input from the Day School board chairperson. The chairperson may meet with the parent with or without the director. Additional executive Day School members may be present if desired by the parent. With some issues, a letter to the Day School board may be appropriate after the director and/or chairperson have attempted to resolve the conflict. If the above channels of communication do not resolve the issue, the parent may ask to meet with the board.

While some issues may not be able to be resolved in the manner requested by the parent, the Day School recognizes that all families should be given ample opportunities to voice their concerns. Throughout all levels, the goal will be to resolve the issue in a satisfactory manner for both parties.

18. Hand washing

All children must wash their hands upon arrival to the program. Throughout the day, children and staff will wash their hands before all snacks and meal, after toileting/diaper changes, after playing outside, before and after water play and other times as needed.

19. Health/Illness Policy

A child who has fever of 100.4 or higher and/or is otherwise ill (vomiting, pain, diarrhea, frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge, signs of conjunctivitis, etc.) or generally not feeling well should be kept at home until he/she has been free of fever without fever-reducing medication or other symptoms for at least 24 hours. The Day School will not administer medications, i.e. Tylenol to reduce a child's fever. We ask that parents keep their child at home if they are using a medication to reduce or "mask" their child's fever. If a child becomes ill while at school with the following:

- a fever of 100.4 or higher,
- frank diarrhea (more than two in a two hour period and/or is not able to be contained within a diaper or the child's own toileting),
- vomiting,
- generally not feeling well or other symptoms while at school.

For the well-being of the child and others in the program, the parent will be notified so that the child can be picked up and taken home. When called, you (or an alternate emergency person) are expected to pick up your child immediately. This is to protect the health of your child and his/her classmates. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

If your child is not well enough to play outdoors, he/she should be kept home. Outdoor play is an integral part of the day's program and the children go outdoors daily. Take the weather into account when dressing your child for school.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not your child is ready to return to school.

- * Mood, appetite, behavior and activity are again normal.
- * No fever for 24 hours or more (without fever-reducing medication).
- * Antibiotics (if prescribed) have been used for a full 24 hours.
- * No vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours.
- * Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge has been resolved.

* Pain (earache, cramps, headache, etc.) resolved.

Parents will be notified if their child is exposed to a potentially contagious disease while at school. Likewise, parents should notify the school if their child has been exposed to or has a contagious disease such as pink eye, head lice, ringworm, chicken pox, etc.

One of the most serious challenges facing group care situations for young children is preventing illness. The staff will strive to maintain the highest standards of cleanliness. Proper hand washing procedures will be followed and taught to the children. The toys, eating surfaces, toileting and diaper equipment will be sanitized between children's use.

One of the best ways to prevent the spread of disease is to have strictly enforced standards regarding the exclusion of ill children. We need your help with this. Do not bring ill children to the school and if your child becomes ill at the school, please pick the child up immediately.

According to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, children cannot attend the school if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.
- The child has any one of the following:
 - Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - Rectal temperature of 101.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
 - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting (two or more episodes in 24 hours) rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior change, or other unusual signs.
 - The child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease, until medical evaluation determines that the child is no longer communicable and is able to participate in the facility's activities.

In addition, the School's policy requires that your child be free of symptoms of illness: temperature, diarrhea or vomiting for at least 24 hours. Please keep in mind that if we send your child home because of illness, the child will not be admitted to the School the next day because the 24-hour period will not have elapsed. The School reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be re-admitted to the School.

20. Immunizations/Medical Records

Each child enrolled in the program must have current immunizations according to the immunization schedules of the San Antonio Metropolitan Health Department and TDFPS Minimum Standards and documented on his/her medical record. Parents must bring in a statement by their physician certifying that all immunizations are up to date and the medical form must be completed by a licensed physician stating that the child has been seen by the physician within the past year and is physically able to take part in the Day School's program.

21. Lost and Found

Labeling all your child's belongings (coats, sweaters, gloves, hats, lunch boxes, etc.) is a great asset in loss prevention. Children and adults should turn in any items they find and inquire about any things they have lost in the office.

Occasionally an item belonging to another child may be accidentally sent home with your child. If you find an item not belonging to your child please send it back to your child's class. If you are missing an item belonging to your child, check with your child's teacher as well as the lost and found.

22. Medication Policy

The Day School prefers not to administer medication to children and will not give the first dose of any medication. The Day School will not give fever-reducing medications to reduce or mask a child's fever (children with a temperature over 100.4 degrees will be sent home). When it is absolutely necessary for a child to receive medication during the day, the staff will strictly adhere to the following guidelines for administration of medication set by the TDFPS Minimum Standards:

- Prescription medications will be administered only when it is in the original container labeled with the child's name, date, expiration date, directions and prescribing physician's name. The medication will be

administered only as stated on the label directions and only with written permission from parent on a signed medication authorization form (obtained from the teacher or in the office) or written note.

- Nonprescription (over the counter) medication will not be administered. Parents are welcome at any time to come and administer non-prescription medications.
- Any prescribed, non-prescribed, sample, etc. medication without a specified dosage, such as “as prescribed” or “consult a physician” must be accompanied by a signed note from the physician indicating the appropriate dosage.

If your child requires medication during the day you should deliver the medication directly to the teacher, along with a completed medication form (which may be obtained in your child’s classroom). To insure the safety of all children, never leave medication in your child’s back pack or lunch box.

No medication will be administered to a child without a completed medication authorization form. Teachers will document each dose of medication given and will keep all medications inaccessible to children at all times. It is the parent’s responsibility to retrieve the medication at the end of the day.

It is not acceptable to add medicine to bottles, cups or food.

23. Notification of Absences

If your child is not coming to school for any reason, we ask that you notify the office by 9:00 a.m. Additionally, please let the office know if your child is absent due to an illness so that staff can be notified of the situation. There is no credit for absences.

24. Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an integral part of the day’s program. All classrooms play outside daily, weather permitting, on the playground and/or take walks around the church grounds. If a child is not well enough to play outdoors, he/she must be kept home or picked up prior to outside play so that both teachers can be on the playground since the teacher-child ratios must be maintained while the children are outside. In extremely hot weather (over 100 degrees) or extremely cold temperatures (under 35 degrees or on cold days that are wet and windy), the children may go outside only briefly for a short walk and fresh air. Classes will limit outside time on air quality alert days or as recommended by local health authorities.

Please take the weather into account when dressing your child for school (coats, mittens, and/or knit hats for the winter and sun hats for the summer) in addition to sending your child in clothing and shoes conducive to active, outdoor activity on the playground and in the sand (play clothes, tennis shoes or rubber soled shoes rather than dressy outfits and dress shoes, boots or flip flops for example).

NPDS students will not leave church grounds for any reason unless accompanied by parents/designated adult at any time except for emergency evacuation of building or grounds. (See Emergency Procedures under PROGRAM POLICIES.)

25. Personal Items From Home

Children may bring a small personal item from home which are necessary for their security during special times of the day such as separation from parent and nap time. They will be asked to keep such items in their cubby when no longer necessary for their sense of security.

Please leave toys at home, as it is difficult to share favorite toys, and it is sad when they are broken or lost. However, we encourage children to bring books, pictures or other items which have educational value, especially those things related to the current theme. Money, candy and gum are not allowed at school at any time.

26. Refunds

No refunds are given on registration fees or tuition. If you know your child will be withdrawing, mid month, arrange in advance for a prorated fee.

27. Safety Reminders

For the health and safety of children, families and staff, we ask your help with the following:

- The Day School does not allow smoking, drugs, firearms or weapons of any kind in the classrooms, playgrounds or the church premises and parking lot.
- For the safety of the children, parents should not bring cups of coffee or hot beverages, even those with a lid, into the classrooms or playgrounds.
- Parents must not leave any infant or child under the age of 10 unattended in the car at any time of the year or even for a few minutes since the child would be left in a potentially dangerous situation.

- The Day School encourages parents to follow all car safety guidelines by using seat belts for all passengers, appropriate car seats and/or booster seats for young children and not transporting children in the front seat of any vehicle. The Day School office has additional resources on car safety guidelines for parents in the office.
- The Day School encourages safe, slow driving in and around the school parking lot.
- The staff uses latex and non-latex gloves in changing diapers, first aid for cuts that have blood, and as needed throughout the day. Please let the office staff and teachers know if your child has an allergy to latex products and/or band-aids.
- All toys, paints and other materials used at the Day School are lead-free.

28. Save and Send

When you clean your house, remember that we can re-use: used toys and books in good condition, dramatic play props (phones, dress up costumes, jewelry, purses), good kitchen equipment, collage materials, (spools, yarn, buttons, ribbons, etc.), yogurt containers, paper towel rolls, baby food jars, greeting cards, picture calendars, magazines with good full page photographs, such as “Texas Parks and Wildlife” etc. Other items may be requested during the year. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

29. Separation Anxiety and Adjustment Process

Separation anxiety is a real fear for some children. There are many reasons that children are afraid to leave the parent or to have the parent leave them. There are many degrees of anxiety from simple clinging, quieter than usual to tears, temper tantrums or even screams of fear.

The teachers and the director have had a lot of experience dealing with children's adjustment processes and separation anxiety is very common among young children, particularly younger toddlers and 2 year olds. Parents should not be embarrassed if their child cries when they leave.

Our recommendation for most families in helping their child adjust to school is to:

1. Talk with the child about school, the activities, the teachers, the other children prior to coming to school.
2. Bring the child into his/her classroom, as matter of fact as possible, with a positive attitude. Children are very tuned into their parent’s feelings of anxiety.
3. Reassure him/her that you will return, stating a time in terms of activity such as after nap or lunch.
4. Kiss him/her good-bye...then leave. Lingering can be as upsetting to your child as much as hastily leaving. **Do not sneak out on your child** as it is frightening for all children. Be sure to tell your child good-bye. The teacher will comfort the child if needed and help them get involved in an activity.

Feel free to telephone the school anytime during the day to check on how your child is doing. Sometimes the anxiety continues for a few weeks. Sometimes it does not begin until after the child has been in school for some time. But, it always ends...even in extreme cases.

30. Snack and Lunch Guidelines

Snack time provides a good opportunity for promoting good eating habits. Good snacking habits can be developed by eliminating foods high in refined sugars, sodium and excess fat and replacing them with a variety of nutritious foods. Snacks will be served each morning. Often the children will be involved in food preparation as part of their learning experiences.

Snacks for the preschool and toddler classes will be assigned to each child on a rotating basis. Snack menus indicating what was served for snack are posted on the snack schedule in each classroom. Parents should make arrangements to provide snacks with the teacher or another parent if their child must be absent on his/her assigned day. In the unlikely event that the parent forgets snack, we ask that you either donate juice and a nutritious non-perishable snack food to the “reserve supply” or be billed \$10.00 on the next billing cycle.

It is imperative that snack be provided on-time to your child’s classroom, in order for the class to remain on schedule. If the snack is not in the classroom by 9:00 a.m. on your child’s assigned day a \$10.00 fee will be assessed to your next billing statement.

Due to the San Antonio Metropolitan Health Department guidelines, **NPDS can only accept unopened pre-packaged items or foods prepared from the grocery store, bakery, deli or restaurant.** This is in order to guarantee that foods we serve come from kitchens that have been inspected and are regulated by the health department. We are unable to accept any home-made foods. This includes birthdays and other celebrations.

Parents should send servings of foods for their own child's lunch that meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) daily recommendations for young children. Please refer to the Food Guide Pyramid For Your Young Child (2-6 year olds) at the back of this handbook. See below for additional guidance for children under 2.

The TDFPS Minimum Standards and NAEYC Accreditation criteria require that children in school for six or more hours a day get at least on-half of their daily food needs. This can only be accomplished with the cooperation of the parents. The staff may at times supplement children's lunches with food the Day School keeps on hand if they do not meet appropriate nutritional requirements. The staff will work individually with families as needed on the nutritional needs of their child.

Additionally, nutrition education is an important aspect of the Day School. We strive to increase the children's awareness and acceptance of a wide variety of foods and to promote good eating habits for optimal physical and mental development through mealtime discussion of healthy foods, periodic cooking projects and tasting activities, gardening, and classroom activities related to health and nutrition.

For infants and toddlers under 24 months: Families with infants and toddlers will be provided the Start Healthy Stay Healthy Feeding Guidelines recognized by the USDA for children under 2 years of age upon enrollment. Infants and toddlers will be held if unable to hold their bottle on their own or provided their bottle while sitting. We do not permit children to have bottles while lying down.

The following are licensing guidelines that we must adhere to for infants under 13 months:

- Bottles and feeding schedules provided to the teacher will need to be updated at least monthly.
- Bottles will only be warmed with tap water or a bottle warmer; a microwave is not allowed for warming bottles or infant food.
- Cow's milk should not be sent for children under 12 months; only whole milk should be sent for children 12 - 24 months of age. Written dietary instructions from the child's doctor must be provided if the child is to continue on formula or other alternatives to milk after 12 months of age.
- All extra formula and baby food should be sent in factory-sealed containers and will be prepared according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Bottles can not contain any medication or solid foods, unless the child's doctor provides written instructions to do so.
- The teachers will discard after one hour any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed or not refrigerated.
- The Day School supports breastfeeding. Young Infant Teachers will work individually with parents who desire to send breast milk and/or desire to come nurse their child while in our care.

Lunches should be nutritious and include milk or juice (100% fruit juice, is recommended). Water will be served upon request. Items from each of the four basic food groups should be included (milk/milk products; vegetables and fruits; protein; breads and cereals). Items high in sugar and salt from "other" food groups such as cookies, fruit roll ups, chips, etc. are discouraged for nutritional reasons. Candy and gum are not allowed. Sugar consumption can cause restlessness in many children and may prevent them from being able to sleep. Teachers are not able to warm up foods but parents may send hot food in a thermos that will be warm at lunch time for their child. We also discourage you from sending your child's lunches from "fast food" restaurants.

Food Safety:

The following foods present a choking hazard and **should not be sent** at any time for children under the age of 4:

Hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds)
Whole grapes
Nuts or peanuts
Popcorn
Raw peas
Pretzels
Spoonfuls of peanut butter (including dipping cups with peanut butter)
Raw chunks of carrots, vegetables or
Meat larger than can be swallowed
Whole raisins (for children under 2)

**The teachers will not serve any of the above items
if they are sent for a child under the age of 4.**

All lunch boxes must be labeled with the **child's name**. Teachers will check expiration dates on pre-packaged foods and will not serve if the expiration date has already passed. The expired food will be discarded and the parent notified.

Children are not permitted to crawl or walk around with food, bottles or sippy cups and will be asked to sit at a table to finish their food or drink even if they arrive with food or a sippy cup in hand in the morning.

We will inform you if your child needs more food for lunch. Uneaten portions of lunch (that can be easily repackaged) are returned in the lunch box so that parents will be aware of their child's dislikes or changing appetites. Please send "blue ice" in the child's lunch box in order to keep foods from spoiling. Send lunches which do not require warming.

The following should be included in the lunchbox each day:

- ❖ Blue Ice (there is no refrigerator space for lunches) **"Blue Ice"** must be included in lunch boxes with foods that need to be kept cold, such as cheese and yogurt. Foods heated up at home can also be kept at the appropriate warm temperature in a thermos for lunch.
- ❖ Spoon and/or fork if needed WE WILL NO LONGER PROVIDE SPOONS AND FORKS FOR LUNCH
- ❖ Plastic cup
- ❖ Napkin

Please be sure to clean all parts of the sippy cup each day.

31. Special Events

The NPDS program will schedule special activities and events throughout the year. Because of the varied days of attendance of the children, some activities may take place on a day your child is not in attendance. In these cases, your child is welcome to participate in the special event if accompanied by you or another adult.

We will have four parties during the year to celebrate Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and the end of the school year. Room parents are responsible for planning the parties, and will call on all parents some time during the year to help.

We often plan other celebrations during the school year to emphasize a particular topic we've been studying. We may need help from parents at those times for food preparation or to supervise a special event. Details will go out before the event.

32. Special Needs

The Day School recognizes that any child at any time may have "special needs" due to family emergencies, divorce/separation, moving, medical concerns, allergies, etc. The program requests that parents keep the classroom teachers and/or Director informed of any situations that may be upsetting to the child or causing disruption in the child's regular routine or typical behavior. The program welcomes the input and suggestions of families in such instances to help us better meet the needs of your child and family. Conferences with the director and/or classroom teachers can be also arranged as needed throughout the school year. The program will also discuss with parents and/or make appropriate suggestions for referrals to professionals for children needing further screening, determination of possible developmental delays or when other concerns arise.

As required by the licensing standards of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children requiring special dietary considerations (such as vegetarian, food allergies/food sensitivities) must have a written statement from the child's physician or a registered dietitian stating foods that must be avoided and suggested alternatives. The staff will post the food allergy/sensitivity, nutritional needs or other medical needs of the child for all staff caring for the child to review only if written permission to do so has been given by the parent. With severe food allergies, such as to peanuts, a letter to all of the families in that room will be sent out to advise them of the severe allergy and ask for them to take it into consideration when preparing their own child's snacks and lunches.

Parents of children with identified disabilities or special learning needs are encouraged to share the Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP's)/Individualized Education Programs (IEP's), and/or any specialized learning plans or recommendations from the doctor, therapist or school district. This information along with input from the parents will be used to help us plan individualized learning activities and assess the needs of your child while in our care so that we can better meet the special needs of your child. Likewise, the Day School director and/or teachers will also provide information to therapists, doctors, school districts and/or private schools about the behavior and abilities

demonstrated by a child while in our care and/or copies from the child's assessment portfolio when requested with written parental permission.

Specialized consultants, including speech, occupational, and physical therapists and other professionals as needed are welcome to arrange with the director a time to observe the child while at the program and the use of a classroom or meeting room to provide therapy for the child on site at the Day School only with written parental permission and payment made directly to the therapist by the child's parents. The therapist would need to sign the child out and back in to the classroom after therapy sessions. The therapists or specialized consultant may obtain information from the teacher about the child and/or review their assessment portfolio only with parental permission. In addition, teachers and/or the director will meet with the parent and therapist to determine the needs of the child while in our care. The Day School staff welcomes the input of specialized consultants in helping us meet the special needs of a child under their care. The director has the contact information of several agencies, consultants and therapists in the San Antonio area that the center has worked with in the past as well as others that can provide support services for children with special needs.

The Day School does not discriminate on the basis of abilities and attempts to be inclusive of all children. The program will work as best as possible with families with children with identified disabilities and special learning or developmental needs by making developmental placement, adjustment in staffing patterns or schedule, additional staff training, and/or modification within the physical environment within reasonable limits. The reasonableness of the adjustments needed for the specialized needs of the individual child in addition to meeting the needs of all the children enrolled will be seriously considered by the director, church pastor, school board and/or church session before making any final decision. The Day School may request that the parent share or fully cover the cost of any additional staff, specialized training, modifications to the environment or other adjustments needed to accommodate their child.

33. Speech/Hearing/Vision Screening

All children who turn four years of age by September of each school year are required by the State Health Department to have a hearing and vision screening by a licensed physician, qualified professional or certified screener.

34. Sunscreen/Sun Protection, and/or Insect Repellant for Outside Play

Since the classes play outside each day in the morning and afternoon, weather permitting, and given the intensity of the South Texas sun, parents are encouraged to send their child with protective clothing for the sun, such as sun hats, and/or apply sunscreen on their child before school. For children staying for the afternoon program, teachers will reapply sunscreen after nap if parents provide the sun block or sunscreen with at least a SPF of 15 or higher. The sunscreen must be labeled with the child's name and written permission/request to reapply must be given on a medication request form.

If desired, parents may also want to apply insect repellant to their child prior to arriving to school. Teachers will reapply repellant only if the parent provides the repellant labeled with the child's name and given written permission/request to reapply on a medication form. Insect repellants with DEET should be sent if recommended to be used by the local health authorities because of a high risk of insect-borne disease.

All insect repellant and sunscreen must be kept in a locked cabinet in the classroom and can not be kept in the child's bag or cubby.

35. Telephone/Messages/E-mail

Due to the physical layout and size of the program, it is sometimes difficult to ensure that someone is always available to answer the telephone. A telephone answering system will take messages when no one is able to answer the telephone or if the line is already in use. Messages are checked regularly throughout the day and calls returned as soon as possible. The teachers are generally able to talk with parents over the phone in the afternoon from 1:00 - 2:30.

In an emergency or matters needing immediate attention and the NPDS office staff is not available, parents may call the Church office at 824-7238 (open Mon. – Thr. 10a.m. to Noon & 1p.m. to 3:30pm; Fri. 10am-Noon) to have a message delivered to the Day School. Parents should make note of this number in their records in case they should need it in an emergency.

The school does have accessibility to a fax machine through the church office at 824-7271. The school's e-mail address is npds@sbcglobal.net. Since the children are our priority, the email is at times only checked at the end of the day so it should be used only for information or needs that do not require immediate attention.

36. Termination of Enrollment

Partial Withdrawal from the Day School:

When a parent drops one or more of the scheduled days in the morning program, the parent may continue to be obligated throughout the school year for tuition due for the dropped day(s) until such a time as the position is filled by the school. The school will make every effort to fill the slot in a timely manner. All requests for reduction in days should be made in writing to the school office with a thirty day notice. There will be a \$50 change of schedule fee if reducing days/hours of scheduled enrollment.

Complete Withdrawal from the Day School:

A thirty-day written notice, given to the Director, is required for complete withdrawal from the program. The parent is responsible for 30 days of tuition after such date. As budget and staff decisions are greatly impacted by reenrollment changes, we would very much appreciate notice of complete withdrawal as early as possible, so we can attempt to fill the slot.

In extreme situations, a child's enrollment may be terminated by the Director and/or Day School Board after informing the parents of the problem through conferences over time, trying to work with the family to resolve the issue through various efforts, and giving adequate notice and suggestions for other arrangements or referrals. A child's enrollment may also be terminated if the parent's account is 30 days or more delinquent as stated in the section on "Fee Structure and Payment".

37. Toilet Learning

Teachers will work with parents whose children seem ready to learn to use the toilet. Generally, the staff has found "pull ups" to be ineffective, confusing for the child and to hinder the changing process. The staff prefers children remain in diapers until they are able to achieve significant daytime control and will encourage children showing signs of readiness to use the toilet, especially if their diaper is dry. Children newly in underwear should bring several extra pairs of underwear as well as two complete changes of clothing including sock and shoes. Toileting accidents will be dealt with in a calm, pleasant, and casual manner. However, if a child is having multiple accidents a day, several days in succession, the teachers will consult with the parents to determine if child is ready for toilet training. Also it is helpful if parents are consistent in the use of pull-ups or underwear. It is very confusing to the child if they are brought to school in pull-ups and then made to wear underwear only at school. Please inform your child's teachers if pull-ups are needed only at naptime. After naptime, the teachers will change child back into underwear.

Children vary widely in the age for toilet learning with 2 and ½ being an average and some not until after 3 (most often for boys). Some will show interest at school and not at home and vice versa. The staff will work individually with each child and their family when the child is showing clear signs of readiness.

Some of the typical signs of toilet learning readiness include:

- Interest in using the toilet
- Ability to indicate need or desire to use the toilet (by using words)
- Awareness of physical cues prior to using the toilet
- Can stay dry for at least two hours at a time
- Often wakes up dry after nap
- Usually off the bottle
- Wants diaper dry; dislikes soiled or wet diaper
- Some interest and ability in dressing

38. Visitors

Parents are welcomed visitors at the NPDS at all times to observe, to eat lunch with your child, to volunteer to help in the classroom, or to share a special talent with the children. All visitors must sign-in in the office.

39. Weather Related School Cancellations

The NPDS program will follow any closing for inclement weather which the Northeast Independent School District follows. Listen to local radio or T.V. stations for school closing reports.

In the event of a power outage, NPDS reserves the right to cancel classes for the day or until electricity has been restored. Having no electricity presents safety and health concerns for our students.

III. COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Home-School Communication

We believe that direct, effective communications are at the heart of a stimulating, safe, caring program for young children. If you have concerns about day to day operations, the program, or your child's care specifically, please feel free to discuss them with your child's teachers or the NPDS Director. In the event that the situation concerns the director or you feel it has not been handled appropriately, please feel free to contact a board member (names and numbers are listed in the directory).

Website

Our website, located online at www.NPDaySchool.org, contains information on upcoming events, reminders and classroom activities. Please check the website frequently for announcements or to download newsletters and school-related documents.

Messages from Home

All important messages (a change in schedule, a different person picking up your child, child going with a friend, etc.) must be in writing, dated, signed and given to the teacher. Please let the school know when something is happening which may have bearing on your child such as: a projected move, birth, death, separation, etc. Having this information will enable our staff to help the child deal with his/her feelings.

Newsletters

A monthly newsletter will be sent home with your child. We urge you to read the newsletter as it contains news pertinent to what is going on in your child's classroom and the school. We feel that it is very important for each parent to stay informed!

Parent Bulletin Boards

Parent information will be posted outside your child's classroom. A Parent Information bulletin board is in the main hallway. Please check both bulletin boards regularly for relevant information.

Student Directory

A directory of phone numbers and addresses for all students and teachers will be compiled to aid in communication. If you do not wish your phone number or address to be listed, please contact the office.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Conferences with the teacher will be scheduled in the fall and spring to discuss your child's development and progress. Teachers will be glad to schedule a conference at any other time you desire in addition to the set conferences.

Parent Meetings/Workshops

Parent meetings and workshops will be scheduled throughout the year which will deal with child-rearing and other subjects relevant to your child's development. Most workshops will be held in the evening. Childcare will usually be available by reservation.

Parents as Volunteers and Resources

We have found that parents who are actively involved at school gain insight about their child, childhood education, and our program. We hope you will consider ways that you can contribute. We need room parents, as well as occasional visits from parents who have a special talent or ability to share. We can also use handy-parents for repair or construction of classroom materials. Just let us know how you would like to be involved.

Program Evaluation

Annually parents will be asked to evaluate the program's effectiveness in meeting the needs of children and parents.

Room Parents

Room parents assist in communicating information to parents within the class, help with special activities and school events, and any other services requested by the classroom teacher. If you would like to volunteer, please leave your name with your child's teacher.

Questions and Concerns

If, at any time, a parent would like to review and discuss with the Day School Director any questions or concerns about either the policies or procedures of NPDS they may contact the Director to arrange an appointment.