Welcome to

**NORTHMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL**

CONTENTS

2022/23 CALENDAR

Staff and Board Directory

School Philosophy

Enrollment Procedures

Payment Policies

Tuition

Tuition Assistance Policy

Orientation and Separation

Discipline Policy

Food/Snack Policy

Schedule Information

Daily Schedules

Lunch Bunch

Grand Parent Program

Appendix

*Class Names Are Used As Follows:*

AM 2 year-old M/W (Taylor/Thompson) GREEN M/W

AM 2 year-old T/R (Taylor/Thompson) GREEN T/R

AM 3 year-old (Berkowsky/ Matera) BLUE

AM 4 year-old (Nichols/Wen) YELLOW

| 2022-23 Calendar |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |

| | Saturday, August 27 | All-School Bent Park Playdate | 9-11 am | | --- | --- | --- | | Tuesday, August 30 | Teacher Orientation | 10:30 am | | Tuesday, August 30 | Parent Orientation | 7:00 pm | | Wednesday, September 7  Monday, September 26  Sunday, October 2  Wednesday, October 5 | Regular Classes Begin  Rosh Hashanah  Fall Fun Fest  Yom Kippur | 9:15 am  NO SCHOOL  4:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m.  NO SCHOOL |  | NO SCHOOL | | Monday & Tuesday, October 3 & 4  Wednesday, October 12  Wednesday & Thursday, October 19 & 20 | Picture Day  Institute Day  Hearing & Vision Screening | During School hours  NO SCHOOL  During School hours | | Friday, October 21  Thursday, October 27  Tuesday, November 8 | Institute Day  In-Service Day  Election Day | NO SCHOOL  NO SCHOOL(STUDENTS)  NO SCHOOL | | Saturday, November 12 | Fall Open House | 9-11 a.m. | | Monday-Friday, November 21-25 | Thanksgiving Recess | NO SCHOOL | | Friday, Dec 23-Mon Jan 9 | Winter Recess Begins | NO SCHOOL | | Tuesday, January 10  Monday, January 16 | School Resumes  MLK Day | 9:15 am  NO SCHOOL | | Tuesday, January 24 | Open House | 9:15 am, 12:45 pm, 7 pm | | Tuesday, February 7 | Parent/Teacher Conferences by Appointment | NO SCHOOL | | Saturday, February 11  Friday, February 17 | Adult Fundraiser  Institute Day | Evening, Off Site  NO SCHOOL | | Monday, February 20 | Institute Day | NO SCHOOL | | Tuesday, February 21  Friday, March 10  March 27-March 31 | Registration Confirmation for 2023-24 mailed  Teacher In-service  Spirit Week | NO SCHOOL(Students)  Mon-Friday | | Monday-Friday, April 3-7  Monday, April 10 | Spring Recess  School Resumes | NO SCHOOL  9:15 am | | Sunday, May 7 | Spring Sing | 4 – 5:00 pm | | Friday, May 26 | Last Day of School | 9:15 am | |  |  |  | | Teacher Orientation | 9:00 am |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |

**NNS Staff and Board Directory**

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***SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY***

Our purpose is to provide young children with an atmosphere in which they can grow intellectually and socially to their highest potential and have fun in the process in a place where they can learn that they are loved and accepted outside their families. Our purpose, further, is to help children feel that "school" is a place of acceptance, excitement and enjoyment.

The philosophy of Northminster Nursery School is based on the developmental theories of education. Children develop at individual rates, and the many facets of a personality do not all develop in the same way, or at the same rate.

Children learn best by doing. Play and hands-on experiences provide the setting for learning. Children are guided toward learning through varied, engaging, and fun activities.

The materials, equipment, and activities are chosen for their age-appropriateness and ability to challenge and interest preschoolers. The environment is planned by the teachers to encourage exploration and peer interaction.

Northminster works to help children develop their social skills and their abilities to negotiate, accommodate, and empathize with other children. We try to enhance self-esteem, as well as sensitivity to the rights of others.

Northminster Nursery School welcomes children of all faiths and races. We believe that we are a supplement to the home. We know that the families' religious training is what children absorb. The principles of love and understanding inherent in all faiths are practiced in our classrooms. We say grace and talk of God as the Creator who loves and provides for us. Christmas and Hanukkah are both celebrated, as well as the traditions of other faiths when appropriate to our current population.

***ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES***

Registration for the fall takes place in mid-January. It is our policy to extend admission opportunities to all applicants without regard to race, sex, religion, national origin, or physical or mental ability. We advertise extensively in the surrounding neighborhood and in the greater community.

Priority enrollees include: members of Northminster Church, current students, alumni families, and My Morning Out participants. The priority group registers first followed by open enrollment to the community at large. A $50.00 fee is required with the enrollment application. An additional deposit of $250.00 is required as acceptance of placement. Waiting lists are maintained until the start of school in September; if no placement becomes available before the start of school, the original $50.00 application fee will be refunded.

An additional $100.00 activity fee is due at the entry conference. This amount covers the class photo, a class lunch, snack, Fall Fest and a vision & hearing screening.

Children must be two years of age by September 1 for Green (2X2) class. Children three years old by September 1 are eligible for the Blue (A.M. all 3s) class. Children four years old by September 1 are eligible for the Yellow (A.M. all 4s) class. They must have physical examination and immunization records on file. Children registering for three and four year-old programs (Blue and Yellow) must be toilet trained.

Parents of three year olds may register their children for three, four, or five days. Two acceptable choices must be included on the enrollment form. Provided that we have openings, preferences can be stated for morning, afternoon, mixed age, with or without a sibling. These preferences will be taken into consideration. However, placement must be based on what is best for the child, as well as the school. Group dynamics and gender ratios must also be factored. The director and registration committee will make every effort to honor requests while balancing class rosters. Green (2 X 2) meets just two mornings per week, and children are placed strictly by age.

***CANCELLATION, REFUND AND***

***LATE PAYMENT POLICY***

A fee of $50.00 accompanies application forms. This fifty-dollar amount is **non-refundable,** unless **NO** space becomes available before the start of class in September. Your application fee of $50.00 will then be refunded.

An acceptance deposit and entry information forms are due April 1. This deposit amount of $250.00 is applied to your tuition account. If you should wish to withdraw and cancel your registration, the $250.00 amount can be **refunded until July 1**. Cancellations after July 1 are entitled to no refund.

Tuition this year may be paid monthly on the Brightwheel system. Tuition is due the **1st of September and again the 1st of every month until April.** The schedule listed assumes all deposits have been paid. Payment should be completed online or with a check handed to the greeter at the door, not put in the child’s school bag. If you prefer to pay with a check, please make it payable to Northminster. If payments are not being received in a timely manner, the child will have to be excluded until such time as the payment is received.

Tuition assistance is available on a sliding scale but needs to be arranged at the start of school. Emergency situations will be considered.

Withdrawal during the school year requires payment of tuition up to and including the full month of the last day of attendance. If tuition was paid in full, a pro-rated refund will be made.

An activity fee of $100.00 is required at the entry conference. This covers the costs of a vision & hearing screening, COVID cleaning supplies, the class lunch, Fall Fest, snacks and one group photo. This amount is non-refundable.

Please watch your child’s school bag for information on our Lunch Bunch program which may start in October and is an optional/fee-based program.

NORTHMINSTER NURSERY SCHOOL TUITION

Yearly tuition fees for the registering class of 2022-2023 are as follows:

Five days/week $6115.00/year

Four days/week $4874.00/year

Three days/week $3672.00/year

Two by Two $3232.00/year

Extended Day Tuesday and Thursday $2091/yr, non-refund., ½ due April 1

Tuition must be monthly. This can be paid on your Brightwheel Account. Tuition assistance is available. Amounts are determined by a sliding scale. We do not want tuition to be a barrier for your enrollment. For questions regarding your payments, please contact Margaret Parcell at NNS (847-440-2919).

A $50.00, non-refundable, application fee is required with registration. A deposit of $250.00 is required as acceptance of placement. This amount is due before April 1, 2022 and is applied to your tuition account; it can be refunded if withdrawal is made before July 1, 2022. An activity fee of $100.00 is required at the entry conference. This fee covers the costs of our in class Halloween party, Fall Fest, Spring Sing, the class lunch, one class photo, and a vision & hearing screening.

**Tuition amounts below reflect payment of the $250.00 deposit.**

Monthly

5 days. $734

4 days $578

3 days $428

2 days $373

Extended for those that paid $250 $230 per month

Extended for those that neglected the $250; $262

If you choose to pay by check, payments may be mailed to the school office, or placed in the blue box in the hall at the door. Please do not send payments in your child's school bag. Please make your check payable to Northminster.

Lunch Bunch fees are separate and due at the time of registration for that program.

***TUITION ASSISTANCE POLICY***

Northminster Nursery School is committed to enabling children of all races, nationalities, ethnic origins, religions, and economic circumstances to benefit from an excellent preschool education. Providing tuition assistance to families in need enables us to broaden our socio-economic base and to serve all families in the diverse community in which we live.

Based on our annual budgeting process and on monies raised through certain fund-raising activities, the Northminster Nursery School Board determines the total amount available for tuition assistance. Because the amount available for tuition assistance is based on fund-raising efforts of NNS parents and community volunteers, this fund is limited.

**Assistance will be awarded on the basis of financial need** according to gross income guidelines. Special consideration will be given to single parents and multiple-enrollee families.

Tuition assistance for three year-olds (in the Blue or Yellow classes) is based on enrollment of three days a week. Three year-olds may be enrolled for additional days, but tuition assistance cannot be provided for those days. Assistance for four year-olds (in the Yellow class) is based on enrollment for four days a week. Families requesting tuition assistance for the Two-by-Two Program will eligible for half of the assistance amounts listed above. Assistance is not available for the extended day option (Lunch Bunch).

Every effort will be made to ensure that no family in need of financial help will be turned away. However, in the event that the number of applicants exceeds tuition assistance available for a given year, the following factors will be given equal weight in determining priority ranking of assistance:

\* Four-year-old applicants

\* Request for continuing assistance

\* Educationally at risk

\* Special needs, physical or emotional

\* Northminster Church membership

Approximately 10% of the funds designated for tuition assistance each year will be held in reserve for contingency needs that may arise during the course of the school year (i.e., late registration, sudden loss of employment, death or divorce, etc.).

When tuition assistance funds are exhausted and there is more than one opening in a classroom, families requesting financial help can be accommodated at a mutually agreed upon rate. This arrangement will be totally dependent on enrollment patterns for a given year. There can be no guarantee that a similar accommodation can be made in the following year.

The Tuition Assistance Committee is comprised of the Director of NNS, and the Tuition Coordinator (Assistant Director of the School). This committee will review all applications confidentially and will determine the best allocation of available funds, consistent with the guidelines outlined above.

Applications are available in the school office. Please be aware that the form must be filled out completely and that a copy of your last federal income tax return (IRS form 1040/1040A/1040EZ) must be filed in order for your application to be considered. All documentation should be submitted to the Director of Northminster Nursery School.

***ORIENTATION AND SEPARATION***

Our parent orientation meeting is usually held in late August or very early September. At this time, we go over the handbook, page-by-page, and clear up any misunderstandings. We also describe all of the various ways parents can become involved and offer the opportunity to learn more about these groups and committees. Time is allowed for parents to form car-pools, which we do encourage.

The children's orientation, or entry conference, is held a few days afterward. Each child, accompanied by a parent(s), comes to the classroom to meet the teacher and get acquainted with the room. The child will have an opportunity to find his/her storage box and coat hook. They will meet our classroom pets, and explore the room. At this time, parents are asked to complete and sign emergency cards and permission slips. They will also be asked some questions designed to help the teacher get to know their child and family.

We recognize that this is the first school experience for many of our children and the initial separation, for some, may be a bit difficult, for both parent and child. We do our best to help you both over this auspicious hump. Parents are encouraged to bring their children all the way into the classroom the first few days of school. The parents should try to make an exit as soon as it seems appropriate. The teacher may indicate when she feels the time is right.

Coffee is usually served during the first few days of school. This is in a meeting room nearby, so that parents may get acquainted, and make the break in small stages, if necessary. There are sometimes tears; this is normal and rarely lasts very long.

***DISCIPLINE POLICY***

Teachers are expected to deal with the young children in their care with gentle firmness. Teachers use the positive classroom management techniques of careful planning, consistent scheduling, redirection of inappropriate behavior, problem solving techniques, and positive reinforcement. A child who is out-of-bounds may be isolated from the group, but kept within the room, unless his/her presence is upsetting to the whole group. If the child is removed from the classroom, the child will always be in the presence of their teacher or the school director. This removal will not exceed one minute per year of age.

Children are encouraged to settle their own disagreements. Classroom rules for the children will be developed each year at the start of school as an activity, which includes ideas from both children and staff. These rules will be understandable to the children, stated in the most positive form possible, be enforceable, and on display in each classroom. Physical force against other children or teachers will be prevented, if possible, and stopped immediately if it begins.

If a child is frequently destructive or aggressive, a staff meeting will be the first step toward finding a solution. The lead teacher will then ask the parents for a conference. The parents and teachers will work together to find a strategy for managing the child's in-school behavior. Clinical behavior-management plans may be developed to meet the needs of a particular child with the input of parents and a professional clinician. This would be documented in the child’s file and all teachers involved with the child would be trained as to implementation. If a child is consistently upsetting the atmosphere of the class and no resolution can be found after several staff and parent meetings, the school will then work with the parent to find a more suitable program for that child. The parents would be informed of resources available to them for the appropriate placement of their child. It is expected that this action would be extremely rare, and taken only after all attempts at resolution have proved unsuccessful.

The following behaviors will **never** be employed at Northminster: corporal punishment of any kind, threatened or actual; withholding of food, rest or toilet use; abusive or profane language; humiliation, threats, or any kind of emotional abuse. Physical violence of any kind against a child in our care is grounds for immediate dismissal.

***FOOD (SNACKS/MEALS) POLICY***

Children are at Northminster Nursery School for two and one half hours on a regular basis. State licensing standards require that they be served one snack. Snacks at NNS are served approximately mid-session, according to the individual class schedules. Snack time is planned to be a group time where the entire group, including teachers, sit and share food and conversation. Grace is sung before eating. Children participate as they are able or wish.

All required sanitary procedures as to hand washing, table sanitization and proper service are followed carefully. In the older groups, children are encouraged to pour their own beverage. Food is provided by the school. Upon agreement of the staff, families may contribute commercially prepared unopened packaged snacks for special occasions. Snacks consist of small amounts of crackers, cookies, cereal, raisins, etc. Fresh vegetables and/or fruit are also served. The snack will contain food from at least two food groups. This is just a snack and amount is limited. If juice is served, it is 100% juice. Water is the beverage of choice.

When necessary, because of enrollment, we may need to enforce a peanut/tree nut-free policy. When that is the case, all snacks purchased for the school will be checked to ensure that they do not contain peanut or tree nut products. Families will be asked to be especially careful about washing up after eating peanut products at home before coming to school. Any food brought into the school will also be checked to prevent contamination and to maintain a safe environment for children with serious allergies.

If necessary, special allergen free snacks may need to be provided by the family of the allergic child.

Our food restriction policy will be evaluated yearly and adjusted to accommodate the current school population.

***The 2022-2023 school year must be peanut & nut free.***

***SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS***

Our school calendar is listed in the front of this book. All NO SCHOOL days and special events are listed. If a weather emergency or other situation should arise that demands the school be closed, **every** family will be contacted via e-mail and/or Remind app before 8:45 a.m. on the day in question. The Director and/or the Assistant Director will make this decision based on conditions at our building and the well- being of our students and staff. Missed attendance days due to emergencies will be made up at the discretion of the board.

***SCHOOL DAY***

*ARRIVAL PROCEDURES*

Morning classes begin at 9:15 a.m. and end at 11:45 a.m. A teacher will be at the St. Andrew’s Chapel door (the far north entrance on Central Park Avenue) to greet the children at the start of each session. Parents/caregivers are required do a self check and temperature at home before arriving to school. Please wait, physically distanced, on the sidewalk at the Chapel Door. After you sign your child in, please take them to the classroom door. A greeter will be at the door from start time to ten minutes after. After that time the chapel door and the upstairs access doors will be locked. If you arrive late, you must be buzzed in at the central office door (middle door on Central Park Avenue). Upper level doors within the building have doorbells that will alert staff of late arrivers.

Schedules are posted outside each classroom. These are approximate times and we need to be flexible. There are times when we may leave the classroom, but we will always leave a note indicating our whereabouts.

**Please call the school to report if your child will be absent from school.** This is especially important if your child is brought to school by someone other than yourself (nanny, car pool, etc.). Planned absences or long illnesses should be reported to and discussed with the classroom teacher.

*LATE PICK-UPS*

Please be mindful of our teachers and their schedules. We realize that we all may run late occasionally. If you are 10 minutes late, 3 or more times during the school year, you will be fined $20.

***DAILY SCHEDULES***

BLUE CLASS

9:15 - 9:30 Arrival, Wash Hands, greeting

9:30 - 9:45 Circle Time, Calendar/Helper, Story

9:45 - 10:45 Free Play (Art Work and Projects)

10:45- 11:00 Clean-up, Circle Time, Journals, Story

11:00 – 11:15 Bathroom/Snack

11:15 - 11:45 Outdoor Play and dismissal

GREEN CLASS

9:15 - 9:30 Arrival - Wash Hands

9:30 - 9:45 Circle Time

9:45 - 10:45 Free Play (Art Work and Projects)

10:45- 11:00 Outdoor Play

11:00 - 11:15 Bathroom/Snack

11:15 - 11:45 Play and Dismissal

YELLOW CLASS

9:15-9:45 Arrival/Outdoor Play

9:45-10:00 Rug time Greeting/Story/Music

10:00-11:00 Toileting,Snack,Free Play/Art

11:00 – 11:15 Clean-up

11:15-11:40 Rug time

11:45 Dismissal

***Music Education***

Music with Megan Beltran Jewett will be held once per week. We will have a Spring Sing at the end of the year to showcase what the students have been learning throughout the year.

**Traffic Safety**

Our chief concern is our children's safety. We have firm requirements regarding arrival and dismissal of the children and ask for your compliance and cooperation.

**When dropping off or picking up a child by car, ALWAYS pull up to the curb on the church side of the street and turn on your hazard flashers. Remove the child directly from the car to the curb. Never take a child from the car into the street.** Central Park Avenue is a very narrow and busy street.

NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE! Turn off ignition and remove keys.

We will not release a child to a car parked across the street unless you agree to walk to the corner and cross there. We will not release a child to a car that is double-parked. We teach our children never to go between parked cars or cross a street in the middle of the block. This is a survival technique and a habit that we wish to instill in our children. Your cooperation is essential. Please do not make exceptions to these rules, even on those days when you are running late. Accidents happen when we hurry. Pass this information on to anyone else that has permission to pick your child up at school.

*DISMISSAL PROCEDURES*

We will release the children only to those persons who **have been authorized by the parent or guardian**. Persons with written permission who are not on the primary authorized pick-up list may be required to show a picture ID. If your child is going to a friend's house after school, an activity we like to encourage, we must have written permission to release your child to the friend's parent, signed and dated.

Attendance logs to document time of departure will be kept in the lower hall on color-coordinated clipboards. Parents and /or other authorized persons **WILL BE REQUIRED** to initial each child out and record the time of pick-up.

All children will be dismissed from the play yard gate near the Chapel Door. During inclement weather, the children will wait inside the St. Andrew’s Chapel door until dismissed by the teacher Authorized adults need to sign out, indicating the time, and depart the premises promptly. The front lawn is **not** an appropriate place for prolonged play. Central Park Avenue can be a dangerous thoroughfare.

Children left longer than ten minutes will be taken to the school office to await the arrival of their ride. Attempts to contact the authorized driver will be made from the school office. No child will ever be left alone. No child enjoys consistently being the last to leave. Please be considerate of your child’s feelings and the staff’s time.

We reserve the right not to dismiss a child to a person that is believed to be intoxicated or impaired.

***HEALTH***

If you sense your child is coming down with a cold, etc., please keep her/him at home. They will not get much out of school if they are not well and may leave germs for the rest of us to take home. Especially during these COVID times**.** Your child will have cold symptoms at some point during the year. It is necessary to report communicable diseases (strep, staph, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, head lice, pin worms) to the school by phone, as soon as possible, so that we can alert the other families. It is also necessary to report COVID exposure or a positive COVID test. Please see the special COVID appendix at the end of this document for further information related to COVID.

Children with allergies or chronic illness that may require medications during school hours will have a care plan included in their files with specific written procedures and releases signed by both parents or guardians and the physician of record.

Physical health and well-being depend on many factors including good eating habits, exercise, regular medical and dental checkups, and the practice of good hygiene on a daily basis. You, your family, and children can easily maintain a greater degree of protection from infectious diseases if you use and teach the following precaution procedures;

1. Wash your hands and your children's hands regularly and thoroughly with soap and warm water, particularly after toileting, diaper changing, potty training, cleaning cuts and injuries, coughing and sneezing and before food preparation.

2. Teach young children to always wash their hands carefully after toileting, coughing, sneezing, and before eating.

3. After thorough cleansing, cover open cuts and injuries with bandages.

4. Wash toys, stuffed animals, favorite blankets and things children put in their mouths regularly with soap and warm water.

5. Disposable gloves must be used when in direct contact with body fluids that may contain blood.

6. Wash surface areas, clothing, bed linen, and other items exposed to body fluids (blood, urine, feces, vomitus, secretions). Use a household disinfectant or mild bleach solution (1 cup bleach to 9 cups water).

7. Immediately cover and contain spills and accidents involving body fluids. Clean such spills using a 10% bleach solution.

8. Notify your physician if anyone in your household has been exposed to any communicable disease.

9. Keep all immunizations up to date.

10. Eat well, exercise regularly, and get a good night's sleep.

The above universal infection control procedures have been instituted in our school to keep the chances of disease transmission in the school program at a minimum.

***MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURE***

In the event that a child becomes ill or is injured during the time he/she is at school the following procedures will be followed:

Parents or guardians have given the school instructions as to who should be called in the event of an emergency or illness. Those instructions are contained on the Emergency Information Card, which is kept in a marked file box near the telephone in the school office.

If a child becomes ill (vomits, spikes a fever, develops diarrhea, or complains of not feeling well) or is injured (injury involving significant blood loss, bruising, or significant pain) a call will be made to the parent or guardian or those persons given authority on the Emergency Information Card.

The un-well child will be isolated from the group as much as possible and comforted by one of the classroom teachers or the director while we await the arrival of an authorized adult to take the child home. The child will be in an area of the classroom or the school office where they can be closely monitored.

The school has been given permission to use 911 Emergency if deemed necessary.

Universal precautions will be used, with every child, to guard against the spread of infection in all cases where bodily fluid is involved.

**LUNCH BUNCH**

Please watch your child’s backpack for information about this optional program for 3, 4 or 5 year olds.

***VISITS***

We welcome visits to our classrooms. Please arrange the visit with your child’s teacher. We will be monitoring CDC, IDPH, and DCFS guidelines regarding guests and masking requirements.

***SCHOOL SUPPLIES***

Please send a **complete** change of clothing including: pants, shirt, underwear, socks, jacket or sweatshirt. These are to be left in the child’s cubby. These are *to be brought to the Entry Conference for Blue, Green and Yellow classes.*

**All of these items and all other items that your child brings to school should be marked with his/her name or initials. This includes mittens, boots, raincoats, etc.**

Each child (new to Northminster) is given a canvas school bag to be individualized and clearly labeled. This bag should be carried each day. Works of art, craft projects and messages will be carried home in these.

**Please check it each day. Please, no "back packs."**

Green class children must carry a complete change of clothes and diaper supplies, if required, in the school bag daily.

***CONFERENCES***

You and your child will have an entry conference before school starts in order to get acquainted with the teacher and the room. Another one will be scheduled in mid-year .The teacher may request a conference at any time if she feels the need. Parents may also request a conference at any time during the year. Our goal is to maintain a high level of communication and cooperation between school and home. You will receive a written progress report at the end of the school year.

***PARENT INVOLVEMENT***

We strongly encourage every family to contribute their child's school by serving on one of the following committees. The current possibilities include the following:

*Serving a 2 year Board Position*

*Fall Fest*

*Fundraising events*

*Restaurant fundraisers*

*Volunteering at the Open House or Spring Sing*

We welcome assistance with our Board events! If you would like to get involved with a committee, please see the Director or the President of the Board. We would love to have you!

***MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION***

**Email Newsletter:** *The NNS News* is published every Monday morning and contains information about upcoming events. This is our main avenue of communication with home. The Newsletter is sent via e-mail. Please make sure we have an e-mail address that is used for family issues and is checked often. Most classroom teachers will send out their own weekly or bi-monthly communications via email.

**Dress:** Dress your child for work and play. Many a creative impulse has been stifled by too dressy an outfit. We have artists' smocks at the school, which the children use for wet or painting projects. We don't get ourselves messy intentionally, it just happens sometimes. Please do not send your child to school in Crocs, sandals, cowboy boots or party shoes. These shoes may be slippery and cause problems on the climbers. Gym shoes are the best option, every day.

**Holidays:** Birthdays are celebrated in a low-key fashion, though the day is made special for each child. Parents may supply birthday napkins for the birthday boy or girl to pass out during snack time. Snacks are always provided by the school. The birthday child usually will choose snack from our supply. Nothing homemade can be served.

Christmas and Hanukkah are celebrated as times of family traditions, gift giving, sharing and special decorations. Many stories are read about the origins of these holidays. When appropriate the traditions of other cultures are also celebrated.If you have a particular tradition that you would like to share with the child’s classroom, speak with the teacher and we will find a time that you can share your traditions.

Valentine's Day is celebrated by making expressions of love for each parent. We would rather not have store-bought cards sent to school. If they are brought to school, they will be used for play, sorting, matching, and language development activities. Also if you must send cards, please do not address them to individual children and be sure to send enough for everyone in the group.

**Contraband:** Please **DO NOT** let your child bring food, gum, very small toys, TOY WEAPONS, or anything made of glass. In addition, special or expensive trinkets are best left safely at home.

**Grist:** If you have recyclable materials at home, think of it as possible grist for our mill. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing anything. Your trash can be children's treasure. Paper of all types is needed constantly. Dress-up clothes, for both sexes, are always welcome for our imaginative play area. You really are our best resource.

***FYI:***

The Cook County Sheriff’s Office maintains a listing of convicted sex offenders on the Internet. The site is accessible at:

<https://www.cookcountysheriff.org/illinois-sex-offenders/>

The Illinois Department of Public Health maintains a list of unsafe and recalled toys on the Internet. This site can be accessed at:

**http://srs.dph.illinois.gov/webapp/SRSApp/pages/index.jsp**

The Northminster Building is monitored regularly for pest infestation. If needed only bait traps are used, no sprays. You would be notified if this procedure would change.

***SAFETY PROCEDURES***

Northminster Nursery School staff practice safety procedures on a monthly basis. A copy of our manual is kept in the office. We talk about Emergency preparedness at our August staff meeting, and periodically revisit those procedures at subsequent meetings. We practice fire drills on a monthly basis, and severe weather drills on a twice yearly basis.

***GRANDPARENT PROGRAM***

We try to recruit a grandparent for each class. This person is usually a senior member of Northminster Church who has volunteered to spend two hours per week as a helper in the class. He or she will help with art projects and games, read to small groups during regular class time, and provide an extra lap or cuddle if needed.

***TRAVEL POLICIES***

The CDC has advised that travel within the United States and its territories is now safe for vaccinated individuals.   Because we are trying to protect the school environment and ensure it remains healthy for all our children and staff, we ask parents to be cautious when planning any travel out of the area.

Depending on the nature of the family’s travel and the current travel conditions in the United States, Northminster Nursery School reserves the right to ask the child or staff member to wear a mask when returning to school and test after 5 days home. If the child is vaccinated, the child may return to school after a trip but should wear a mask indoors for 5 days. The child should COVID test on day 5 and continue to wear a mask days 6-10. If the child is unvaccinated, the child must stay home for 5 days, and can return to school on day 6-10 with a mask indoors and outdoors. The child must COVID test on day 5.

Northminster Nursery School staff reserve the right to ask the family of their travel plans, so that we can determine the safest manner of return for the child and our school community, based upon current guidelines and recommendations for our local area.

Appendix A September 2021 and amended July 2022

COVID -19 policies and procedures

ENHANCED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (ERMP)

Welcome back to Northminster Nursery School! We appreciate your patience as we all continue to navigate this ever changing pandemic and how it affects our students and staff.

We will be following a layered approach to mitigation. We have been continuing to monitor federal and local guidelines so that we can keep our school population safe. Our guidance is based upon recommendations from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Illinois State Board of Education. We continue to follow a layered prevention strategy.

This appendix will serve as our reopening plan/enhanced risk management plan and shall be implemented by all staff at Northminster Nursery School.

Please read it carefully, and keep it with your important information.

Sincerely,  
  
Margaret Parcell, Director

The following set of strategies for everyday operations should be in place at all COVID-19 Community Levels, including low levels.

1. Staying up to date on all vaccinations, including COVID-19

2. Staying home when sick

3. Optimizing ventilation systems

4. Reenforcing proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette

5. Utilizing proper cleaning and disinfection practices

**Community Levels**

1. School and ECE program administrators should work with local health officials to consider other local conditions and factors when deciding to implement prevention strategies.

2. The addition and layering of COVID-19-specific prevention strategies should be tied to COVID-19 Community Levels

If community levels are low, we will support those who choose to continue to mask.

If community levels are at medium, persons who are immunocompromised, at high risk for severe disease or have household or social contacts at high risk for severe disease, we are encouraging those folks to talk with their healthcare providers about whether they need to wear a mask.

If community levels are high, we are recommending masking indoors.

**SCREENING AND MONITORING**:

Please remember to keep a safe distance between families while waiting at the Chapel door for entry into the school.

All students, staff, and guests should have completed a health self-check prior to entering the center.

Parents, guardians, and those authorized for drop-off/pick-up will be asked to take their child’s temperature and complete a health-check before coming to the facility. Please do not bring a sick child or sibling to the school.

The parent/guardian must confirm that the child does not have the following:Fever or Chills (Temp 100.4 or higher),Cough,New loss of taste or smell,Sore throat, Fatigue,Muscle or body aches, Headache,Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing,Nausea or Vomiting,Diarrhea, Congestion, or Extreme fussiness

The Director or designee has the right to refuse entry to a person that does not appear to be well. If it is determined that the child has a fever, the child may not be admitted to school until they are 24 hours fever free without the use of medication.

**ISOLATION**

If the child or staff member becomes sick while at school, they shall be taken to Room 207 until a parent/guardian can retrieve them. If it is a staff member, they may be dismissed immediately.

**DISCHARGE**

Any child or staff member suspected of having COVID-19 or diagnosed with COVID-19 shall be excluded from the facility. Symptoms of COVID-19 are fever (temperature greater than 100.4F/37C), chills, sore throat, runny nose, cough, shortness of breath, muscle aches, headache, vomiting and diarrhea.

If the child or staff member has symptoms concerning for COVID-19 and subsequently is determined by a medical provider **not likely to have COVID-19** infection, the child or staff member may return to NNS if the following is met:

* No fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications (fever is temperature greater than 100.4F/37C) AND a negative test for COVID-19;
* The child can manage their mucous and can wear a mask for 10 days upon return to school.

If that child or staff member **has been diagnosed with COVID-19**, and he or she is vaccinated, he or she may not return to NNS until the following is met:

* Individual is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications for at least 24 hours.
* Individual’s symptoms, including cough, have improved
* It has been at least 6 days since the onset of the individual’s illness. The person must mask indoors and outdoors for days 6-10.

If the individual is not vaccinated, the individual may return to school on day 11.

**CLOSE CONTACT**

Persons identified as close contacts (persons **not up to date** with COVID 19 vaccination who are within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more in a 24 hour period) should quarantine for five days consistent with CDC guidance and mask for 5 additional days, or 10 days if unable to mask properly.

For those **up to date** with COVID-19 vaccination, masks should be worn for 10 days after exposure.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

If a child or staff member has been diagnosed with COVID-19, the classroom teachers and parents in which the child participates will be notified by the director via email. The child will not be named in these communications.

Families are expected to immediately notify the child care center or home if someone in their home tests positive or if the child has been in close contact (within 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes) with a positive case.

# **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)**

Face masking is recommended to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus. If a parent chooses to have the child wear a face covering mask indoors, we ask that the parent let the teacher know so in an email. It is the parent or caregiver’s responsibility to send the child with that face mask each day they are at school. The school will have paper masks available should the child’s mask get soiled. If the parent prefers to send the child with a supply of their own paper masks, that is acceptable as well.

**PARENTS/GUARDIANS/SITTERS**

We ask that parents/guardians or sitters that are feeling unwell and are unable to remain at home, but have tested negative for COVID wear a mask when dropping their children off indoors at the school.

**STAFFING & VISITORS**

Northminster Nursery School Director has a list of qualified substitute teachers should they be required.

We will re-welcome fully vaccinated visitors to the classrooms when it is safe to do so.

**ENHANCED CLEANING AND SANITATION PRACTICES**

Arrival will take place at the Chapel Door for the Blue and Green Classes. The Yellow class will begin the day outside. The Blue Class will end the day outside and the yellow class will exit the building at the Chapel doors. Parents/Caregivers must pick up their Green Class Child at the Green Classroom.

Children and staff will sanitize their hands before and after playground use.

**STAFF VACCINATION**

Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at low risk of symptomatic or severe infection. A growing body of evidence suggests that people who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are less likely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19 to others than people who are not fully vaccinated. In most settings, people who are fully vaccinated and do not have compromised immune systems can safely resume activities they did before the pandemic, except where prevention measures are required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.

Northminster Nursery School is asking that all staff be vaccinated against the COVID virus.