

2024-2025



Parent Handbook

NorthShore Christian Academy, Lago Vista

Policies are reviewed annually and updated if necessary

Dear Families,

On behalf of Northshore Christian Academy, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 2024/2025 school year. For those of you joining us for the first time, we want to extend a warm welcome to the Falcon Family! To those of you who are returning, welcome back! While many things will look the same as last year, we have been working tirelessly to perfect our program thus holding true to our vision. Northshore Christian Academy has the following mission statement:

"Growing a community of learners through faith and innovation".

Community

Family: We teach our students to treat each other with respect, kindness, and compassion.

Teamwork: We teach our students the importance of supporting each other and working as a group.

Inclusivity: We may have differences, but we are **all equal** members of our class and school.

Faith

Faith is the origin from which all things are taught. Our priority is to teach students to love like Jesus and to act in His way. We aim to keep God's word at the center of everything we do. We believe that instilling Christian character in our students results in children who are strong in their faith, compassionate, and love as they serve others.

Innovation

Innovation plays a key role in our curriculum development. Teachers and Directors are constantly working together to develop a program that meets each student's needs. We are a Mastery-Based program which means that each concept we teach is a foundation block to be built upon. The next concept is not taught until the "foundation" is solid thus supporting a deeper understanding of the material.

Thank you all for your continued support and love. We are forever grateful for the trust you have put in us to love on your most precious gifts from God. We are honored to be part of your team. We can't wait to have our best year yet.

In Christ,

Lisa Ritter and Becky Ming

OUR MISSION

At NorthShore Christian Academy, our Mission Statement is "Growing a community of learners through faith and innovation." First and foremost, our goal is to teach students to love like Jesus through their actions. We are a Christ-centered program and aim to keep God's Word at the center of everything we do. Instilling Christian character in our students results in children who are strong in their faith, compassionate and love as they serve others.

ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

Our academic philosophy is a natural extension of our beliefs. We teach our students that their classmates are teammates, and that each child is a unique part of our learning community. Our teachers understand that no two children are alike, and that God gave them each their own set of strengths and abilities. To help our students reach their potential we must meet them where they are and continue to raise the bar of excellence. We are a mastery-based program which we believe fosters success by allowing students to learn at their pace rather than teaching to the "middle". Innovation plays a key role in our program as our teachers and director are constantly working together to build on and adapt our curriculum to meet the students' needs.

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. NCA believes that the Bible is God's indisputable message to man, that it is inspired by God himself and, therefore, is without error. II Peter 1:20-21, II Tim. 3:15-17
2. NCA believes there is one God who continuously and endlessly evidences Himself in three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. Gen 1:1, Matt 28:19, John 10:30
3. NCA believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and He is one with the Father. John 1:1, Isaiah 43:10-13, John 17:20-21, John 10:30, Luke 3:21-22 5
4. NCA believes that Jesus was born of a virgin, that He lived a sinless life, and that He accomplished amazing miracles, as recorded in Scripture. Isaiah 7:14, Matt 1:18-23, Heb. 4:15, I Peter 1:18-19
5. NCA believes that Jesus shed His blood and died on the cross as our substitute and, in so doing, settled the score once and for all for our sin. Isaiah 53:4-6, Romans 6:23, Gal. 1:4, Romans 5:8, Romans 3:22-24
6. NCA believes in the miraculous resurrection of Jesus and that He ascended to the right hand of God the Father where He constantly intercedes on our behalf and that one day He will return to earth in power and glory. Heb. 7:26, John 5:28-29, John 11:25, Mark 16:19, Romans 8:26-34, I Thess. 4:16, Heb. 4:15.
7. NCA believes that through a personal heart-felt acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior, we are reborn as a new creation by the inner working of the Holy Spirit. John 5:24, Eph. 2:4-9, Titus 3:5-7, Romans 5:8-9, Romans 10:9-10, Eph. 1:13-14, John 14:6.
8. NCA believes that the Holy Spirit indwells the Christian and encourages us to live a Godly life. John 16:1-11, Romans 8:13-26, John 14:26, I Cor. 3:16, Heb. 4:15

9. NCA believes in the resurrection of the dead for both the believer and the nonbeliever; those that are saved unto eternal life in heaven and the unsaved to eternal damnation in hell. I John 5:11, Romans 8:11, I Cor. 15:42-49, John 5:28-29.
10. NCA believes in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ and pledge to look beyond doctrinal conflict in order that the kingdom of God be extended. Gal. 3:26-28, Eph. 4:4-6, I Cor. 12:1-14, Phil. 2:1-5.

Northshore Christian Academy will address spiritual matters using this statement as a basis and guide. The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Northshore Christian Academy's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Directors is Northshore Christian Academy's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

CORE CURRICULUM

Children learn by doing. They learn through play, experimentation, exploration, and testing. Learning should be a joyful, natural experience. We have chosen a curriculum based on the developmental needs of the children in each room and to foster individual growth through opportunities for exploration. 90% of brain growth occurs from zero to 5 years old. The lesson plan and schedule are posted in your child's room. We incorporate current trends in Early Childhood and School Age Education and then structure this curriculum to meet the needs of the children in the group. Our curriculum, although it will vary depending on age, is guided by the following underlying principles:

- Teaching Children to love like Jesus
- Children learn through dynamic investigation
- Children instigate their own learning
- Learning comes from open-ended experiences
- Adults are facilitators of children's learning

Curriculum Used

Infants – Pre-K: Frog Street
School: Abeka

OUR STAFF

Our staff is here to assist your child in making their stay enjoyable. Questions pertaining to the facility can be directed to the management of the Childcare Center. All staff are trained and have extensive knowledge in Early Childhood and specific training in developmentally appropriate practices related to the age of the children they provide care for. They also are trained in CPR/ First Aid for infants, children and adults. Staff favorites can be found on our website.

ENROLLMENT

Open enrollment for students not presently attending the school begins in April. Enrollment priority is given to siblings of children currently attending the school. Our school welcomes students without regard to their race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, ability, gender, or family structure. In order to apply please fill out the registration form on our website.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Community resources are available to parents and families on a bulletin board in our lobby.

PARENT FEEDBACK

We value our families' feedback/suggestions. Parents will be emailed an annual survey. We also have a suggestion box in our lobby for parents to give suggestions that could be integrated in our program as applicable.

TUITION

All tuition is due on or before the last day of the previous month (For example September's tuition is due no later than August 31). A late fee of \$35 will be added to all payments made after the due date has passed. If all payments are not received within 5 business days your child will not be allowed to attend until all balances are reconciled unless prior arrangements have been made with administration. Tuition is non-refundable.

Please see our website at northshorefalcons.com for tuition price list and fee structure.

LATE PICKUP FEES

Our student/teacher ratios are based on the schedule you select for your child. We understand that emergencies arise, however, it is imperative that you communicate with us and pick up your child on time. Here are our late fees:

0-10 minutes	\$10
10-30 minutes	\$15
30-45 minutes	\$30
45-60 minutes	\$45
Over 60 minutes	\$55

Failure to pay late fees, may result in dismissal from our program. A list of late pickup fees is also available on our website at northshorefalcons.com

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Pre-K 4 and K-3rd grade start at 8:00am. Doors open for Pre-K 4 and K-3rd at 7:30am. All the other classes start at 8:30am. Our doors will remain closed from 8:30-8:45am each morning for a time of prayer, pledge and proclamation. Doors **WILL NOT** be

answered during this important time. Children may be dropped off from their scheduled time until 9:00am. We ask for your cooperation in seeing that your child arrives by 9:00AM on their scheduled days. You must have a doctor note to arrive after 9:00AM.

DISSMISAL

Standard pick up time is between 2:45-3:00pm. If your child is not picked up on or before **3:00pm**, you will be charged a late fee.

Our after-school dismissal times are based on your scheduled times:

On or before **5:30pm** - If your child is not picked up on or before 5:30pm, you will be charged a late fee.

On or before **6:30pm** - If your child is not picked up on or before 6:30pm, you will be charged a late fee.

The after-school care program may be available for periodic drop-ins if you make arrangements in advance. This is critical for the ratio safety of our staff and students. In the event your child(ren) has not been picked up on or before 7:00pm, and all efforts to communicate with the family have failed, NCA will contact local law enforcement and Texas DFPS.

CALENDAR

Our program calendar is published on our website, or you can pick up a copy in the office to see a list of yearly closings and holidays. Each parent will receive a monthly calendar sent to you via Brightwheel that provides important dates and upcoming activities at NCA.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

It is our goal to keep the doors of communication between our families and staff open. Once a quarter you will receive the Falcon newsletter that outlines important happenings. There is a parent communication board in the lobby. In addition, parents will receive progress notifications from teachers through brightwheel.

CONFERENCES

Good communication between parents and the teacher is an important part of your child's education. We will have two schedule conferences this school year on Monday, October 14, 2024 and Friday, March 14, 2025

Should you desire an additional conference concerning your child's progress and review assessments, you may contact the school via Brightwheel to schedule a conference.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We are open Monday-Friday from 7:00 am - 6:30 pm

All children are required to be at school by 9:00 for AM instruction.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of an inclement weather delay, you are advised to tune in to your local radio and television stations for information about possible school delays. NCA does not incorporate scheduled inclement weather delay days. If it were announced that there would be a delay for the Lago Vista Independent School District, that would include NCA for safety purposes only. Safe travel is always the priority. We will announce all delays and closures through Brightwheel.

MEALS AND FOOD SERVICES

NCA is a peanut free program. NCA provides a daily peanut free snack for all students. Please see the monthly calendar for snack schedule.

Parents are responsible for their child's nutritional well-being while supplying lunch. Parents are responsible for providing a refillable water bottle, which will be continuously filled with clean, filtered water. We do offer Falcon Friday Pizza Lunch – ask how to signup.

DISPENSING MEDICATIONS

In order for NorthShore Christian Academy staff to administer ANY medication, prescription or over the counter medication, we must have a signed Authorization for Dispensing Medication form from the parent/guardian or a written order from the child's physician.

All prescription and non-prescription medications are kept in a designated area. All medication must be signed in. All prescriptions must be in the original container labeled with your child's name, date, directions, and the physician's name. Non-prescription medications must be in the original container, labeled with your child's name.

No medicine, vitamins, or cereal may be mixed in a bottle or food item unless medically indicated by the child's health care provider.

Medicine that has expired will not be given to a child. All medication must be removed from your child's backpack and lunch box.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

State laws govern the taking of medication by students while at school. Anytime prescription medication that is to be given by school personnel must be in a container with the pharmacist's label attached.

Before we can administer any medication (prescription and/or nonprescription), we must have on file a completed medication form that will give us specific instructions regarding your child's medication. This form must be signed by the parents.

STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO SELF-MEDICATE. This includes headache remedies, cough drops, throat lozenges, etc. However harmless these items may seem; they are still subject to the same procedures as the medications stated above.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All children admitted to the facility must meet immunization requirements, as specified for the child's age by the state's department of health. A notarized exemption or physician signed or stamped copy of the most recent shot record must be provided for each child at enrollment and kept up to date. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide NCA with the most up to date physician signed or stamped immunization requirements.

ALLERGIES

If a child's physician has identified an allergy, an Allergy Emergency Plan must be completed by the child's physician and kept on file prior to enrollment. All staff are trained annually (or upon admission) on any specific child allergies and any child's Allergy Management Plan.

Any allergy management/response medications prescribed by the child's health care provider must be provided by the parent/guardian.

The NorthShore Christian Academy Director will be consulted if assistance is needed to assess individual reactions.

Food Allergies: Per DFPS regulation §746.3819, NorthShore Christian Academy must have a food allergy emergency plan for each child with a known food allergy that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional.

A food allergy emergency plan is an individualized plan prepared by the child's health care professional that includes:

- A list of each food the child is allergic to
- possible symptoms if exposed to a food on the list
- Steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction.

The child's health care professional and parent must sign and date the plan.

Insect Allergies: NorthShore Christian Academy staff members take normal precautions to prevent insect bites through environmental controls, such as limiting freestanding water. In the event a child does sustain an insect bite, basic first aid is provided. In the event a child has a known reaction, his/her individual Allergy Management Plan will be followed. If the allergy needs of a child extend beyond the routine services, the parent/guardian must provide the items needed (e.g., wipes, lotions, medications, etc.).

Topical or Environmental Allergies: All topical or environmental allergies will be accommodated as reasonably as possible. In the event a child has a known reaction, his/her individual Allergy Management Plan will be followed. If the allergy needs of a child extend beyond the routine services, the family will provide the items needed (ie: wipes, lotions, medications, etc.).

Severe or Life-Threatening Allergies: With written parent/guardian permission, parents of other students in the classroom will receive a letter notifying them that a student with a life-threatening food allergy is in the classroom and that they should refrain from sending children to school with food/substances that are known allergens.

CHILD HEALTH – ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION CRITERIA

A well check will be conducted daily upon arrival documenting any signs of illness or injury. Parents will be contacted if the teacher has any questions or concerns. Parents are required to notify the program regarding **any** illness your child(ren) may have.

Per Texas DFPS regulations, an ill child may not attend NorthShore Christian Academy if one or more of the following exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in child-care center activities including outdoor play
- The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care
- The child has one of the following (unless a medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the child-care center's activities):
 - A temporal artery temperature above 100.4 degrees that is 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, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill
 - A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious. If a child has a communicable illness (i.e. pink eye, hepatitis, any known contagious infection for which medical attention is required) that child will not be allowed to return to the daycare without a doctor's note indicating it is safe for the child to be around other young children/infants.

Any child with two (2) or more runny stools in one day will be sent home.

Any child with one vomiting episode in a 24-hour period will not be allowed in the school.

The NorthShore Christian Academy Director has the discretion to ask for a doctor's release if the child has an illness that could be communicated to others in the program.

CHILD HEALTH – ILLNESS DURING THE DAY

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will:

- Contact the parent to pick up the child. For the safety of the other students and staff the child must be picked up within two (2) hours by you or an emergency contact. In the event your child is not picked up within two (2) hours, Texas DFPS will be contacted.
- Care for the child apart from other children
- Give appropriate attention and supervision until the parent arrives
- Give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation if the child has diarrhea or vomiting.

CHILD HEALTH – ILLNESS & RETURNING TO THE CENTER

A child who was ill may return to NorthShore Christian Academy when:

- The child is free of symptoms of illness without the use of medication for 24 hours.
- The illness required medical attention, the parent/guardian has obtained a health care professional's statement that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition.

ABSENCE

Reporting absenteeism is not required, but it is appreciated.

VACATION

Each student is eligible for one annual vacation period of up to two consecutive weeks. During this time, families will receive a 50% discount on the regular tuition fees. To qualify for this discount, parents must notify the administration at least two weeks in advance of the planned vacation start date. This policy is in place to allow students a break for family time without significant disruption to their learning routine.

Please note the following guidelines:

1. **Notification:** Submit a written notice to the administration at least two weeks before the vacation. This allows us to adjust our scheduling and staffing needs.
2. **Duration:** The vacation period is limited to a maximum of two consecutive weeks.
3. **Frequency:** Each student is allowed one vacation period in the school year, under this policy. Additional vacations will not qualify for the tuition discount.
4. **Discount Application:** The 50% tuition discount will be applied to the monthly tuition rate during the approved vacation period.

We value the importance of family time and hope this policy provides families the flexibility to enjoy time together while supporting their child's learning.

ACCIDENTS

In case of accidents or injury at school, children are treated with first aid and an incident report will be made via Brightwheel. The administration will contact parents if needed. As such, it is very important that changes in phone numbers and addresses be reported to the school promptly. In the event that a parent cannot be reached, persons named on the emergency card to act on a child's behalf will be contacted.

DISASTER PLAN

The actions taken in the initial moments of an emergency are critical. A prompt warning to evacuate, shelter, or lockdown can save lives. This emergency plan has been developed to assist in protecting the health and safety of the children in our care.

EVACUATION

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. Fires, floods, or transportation accidents may lead to the required evacuation. Evacuation time may depend on the hazard, some allowing no time to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning ahead is essential. In the event of an emergency evacuation, students will be taken to Northlake Church:

Located at 3610 Lohman Ford Road, Lago Vista, Texas, 78645.

Emergency evacuation location phone number - 512-522-4372

EVACUATION ROUTES/ EXITS

All students will exit the nearest exit. Meeting away from the building in the area designated on the fire plan. Regular Drills are held to ensure speed and consistency of this plan.

NOTIFICATION

Once all children are safely evacuated:

- 911 will be called
- Parents will be notified of the evacuation plan via Brightwheel and/or phone call/text if necessary

INDOOR LOCKDOWN

An indoor lockdown (also known as shelter in place) is appropriate when conditions require you to seek protection. An indoor lockdown may occur due to threats of violence, including active shooters, terrorism, or bioterrorism, etc. The safest locations to seek shelter vary by hazard, and the length of time to shelter may also vary.

SHELTER IN PLACE

The safety of our students and staff is our top priority. In the event of an emergency requiring a "shelter-in-place" response, we have established clear procedures to ensure that all children and staff remain safe and secure within the facility. Shelter-in-place protocols may be activated in situations such as severe weather, environmental hazards, or other incidents where it is safer to remain indoors.

Shelter-in-Place Procedures

1. **Notification:** If a shelter-in-place situation is necessary, we will immediately notify staff and initiate our emergency response plan. In addition, we will make every effort to inform parents via Brightwheel as soon as it is safe to do so.
2. **Student Safety:** Staff will bring all students indoors to designated shelter areas, away from windows and exterior doors. Our designated shelter areas are stocked with emergency supplies, including water, first-aid kits, and non-perishable food items.
3. **Communication with Parents:** We will use brightwheel to keep parents updated on the situation. Please ensure that your emergency contact information is current at all times.
4. **Duration of Shelter-in-Place:** Students and staff will remain sheltered until it has been deemed safe to resume normal activities by emergency services or other authorized personnel.
5. **Release of Students:** For everyone's safety, students will not be released to parents or guardians during an active shelter-in-place. Once the emergency has passed and it is safe to leave the building, we will notify parents of pickup procedures.
6. **Staff Training:** All staff are trained annually on emergency response protocols, including shelter-in-place procedures. Practice drills are conducted regularly to ensure that both staff and students are familiar with these procedures.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we work to ensure the safety and well-being of all students during emergency situations. Please contact us with any questions about our emergency procedures.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN DURING A DISASTER

In the event of a disaster, children will only be released to contacts listed on the child's form with proper identification.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

The following drills will be conducted with attendees of Northshore Christian Academy:

Fire Drill - Once Monthly

Emergency Drill - Once monthly

Emergency/Shelter in Place Drills - Quarterly

BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

All students at NCA are expected to behave themselves in a proper manner at all times. Behavior that is inappropriate for the school setting will not be tolerated. You will be notified if your child exhibits unacceptable behavior. Communication, parental cooperation, and supportive school staff are the keys to solving behavioral problems. A copy of the school rules has been included at the end of this handbook. Please take the

time to review these guidelines and re-enforce them with your child.

SCHOOL RULES ON THE CAMPUS

- Courtesy, common sense, and respect for others should guide behavior at all times.
- Abusive physical contact (pushing, hitting, biting, kicking, etc.) is not tolerated and will be subject to consequences, which may include suspension or expulsion.
- Students are not to possess any potentially dangerous items. Any item, instrument or tool that is used in any manner to threaten or cause bodily harm will result in consequences, which may include expulsion.
- Disrespectful or disobedient behavior toward school personnel will not be tolerated, appropriate consequences will be implemented.
- In the hallways, students are to walk quietly. Running, playing, talking or loitering in the hallways is not permitted.
- Students are not to play in areas that are designated as off limits.
- Chewing gum and sunflower seeds are not permitted.
- Toys and games brought from home are only allowed on special occasions at the teacher's discretion. Toys allowed in the classroom on occasion might not be allowed during recess time or in the after-school day care program.
- It is expected that students will adhere to the dress code.

IN THE CLASSROOM

Students are to follow his/her teacher's standards for behavior and learning. Classroom rules and expectations will be discussed with you during "meet the teacher" visits before school begins. They will be posted and will be reviewed often in the classroom.

DURING ALL NCA ACTIVITIES

- The school's policies and procedures are enforced for all school activities, on and off campus, and are to be followed by all students.
- The administration reserves the right to implement appropriate consequences taking into consideration the offense, developmental stage, and the behavioral history of the student.
- The NCA staff is committed to conflict resolution, peer mediation and student counseling. Our goal is to aid our students in spiritual and moral development in cooperation with their families.

BITING

Biting is an unfortunate occurrence when toddlers are in group care. It is not only upsetting to the staff but the parents of the biter and the one bitten. Biting is never the right thing for toddlers to do, but biting is a response for a variety of reasons. Most of

these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Focusing on techniques that address the specific reason for biting is far more effective than discipline.

Goal: The goal is to keep all children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there are episodes of ongoing biting, a plan must be developed including specific strategies, techniques, and timelines to address it. This provides teachers with the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting. Any response that harms a child is known to be ineffective and is prohibited.

Prevention: All toddler caregivers are required to attend training sessions on biting.

Post-Incident:

When biting occurs, these are our three main responses:

- Care and help for the child who was bitten.
 - o Give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten.
 - o Put ice on the bite if the child is willing.
 - o If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water.
 - o If the skin is broken, we recommend they be seen by their health care provider.
 - o Inform the parents the same day.
- Help for the child who bit so that he or she learns other behavior.
 - o Inform the parents of the biting behavior the same day.

DRESS CODE

In order to promote a school atmosphere where distractions from learning are kept as minimal as possible, NCA students are expected to dress appropriately. As such, the following dress code will be enforced:

- Excessively large trousers, pants and overalls may not be worn. All pants must be worn at the waist. Exposing under garments is not tolerated. Belt ends may not hang down.
- Excessively oversized shirts, including oversized t-shirts, worn outside pants is not allowed. Overalls must be worn with both straps on the shoulders, not hanging loose.
- All clothing must be neat in appearance. Commercial lettering or printing is allowed on shirts and sweatshirts as long as it is acceptable for school attire. Jackets, backpacks, binders, etc. may bear the name of the owner in printed block letters.
- All dresses and skirts must have shorts under them to cover undergarments
- Suggestive clothing or objects may not be worn which are libelous, obscene, or depict illegal activity. This includes buttons, arm bands, shirts, insignias, etc. Clothing with crude or vulgar printing or pictures depicting tobacco, drugs, alcoholic beverages, or clothing that is sexually suggestive or disruptive is not acceptable. No bare feet. No noisy, unsafe, or disruptive footwear shall be worn. Sandals without a back strap are allowed.

The administration reserves the right to declare any mode of dress that in their estimation inhibits the educational process or threatens the safety and protection of students as unacceptable. If students are dressed in an unacceptable manner, parents will be notified, and corrective measures must be taken before the student will be allowed to enter the classroom or participate on the playground.

Developmental Milestones and Early Intervention Policy

At Northshore Christian Academy, we are committed to supporting the growth and development of all children in our care. To ensure that every child reaches their full potential, we conduct annual developmental milestone checklists for children ages 0-5 years. These assessments are designed to identify potential developmental delays and are used as a tool to guide early intervention efforts.

If a delay is identified, referrals to appropriate specialists or services will be made, and the completed checklists will be shared with families to ensure transparency and collaborative support.

Approach to Challenging Behaviors

At Northshore Christian Academy, we understand that challenging behaviors are a natural part of child development. Our approach to managing these behaviors focuses on positive, constructive strategies that promote growth and understanding.

- Ongoing communication between teachers and families is essential for identifying the root causes of challenging behaviors.
- Collaboration between teachers and families will result in strategies tailored to the child's needs and developmental stage.
- Discussions will be centered around the specific objectives of the child's learning and behavioral goals.
- Families will be regularly updated on the child's progress and any adjustments to strategies or interventions.

By fostering a strong partnership with families, we aim to support each child in overcoming challenges and developing positive social and emotional skills.

Accommodation for Children with Diverse Needs

Northshore Christian Academy is committed to ensuring that all children, regardless of their background or abilities, are supported in a nurturing and inclusive environment. We offer accommodations for children who may need additional support due to factors such as home language, special needs, differing abilities, and cultural background. Examples of accommodations include, but are not limited to:

- **Space for Occupational and Speech Therapy:** Providing a quiet, designated area for therapy sessions.
- **Noise-Canceling Headphones:** Offering noise-canceling headphones for children with sensory processing disorders to help minimize distractions.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Incorporating culturally relevant materials and practices to ensure that all children feel respected and understood.

Northshore Christian Academy strives to create an environment where each child feels valued, supported, and able to thrive. Families are encouraged to communicate any specific needs or concerns, and we will work collaboratively to provide appropriate accommodations.

BIRTHDAYS

Each teacher acknowledges students' birthdays generally during snack or lunch time. Please check with the teacher before you bring treats or other birthday items. Treats must be peanut free. We try to avoid interruptions to the classroom routine that detract from learning.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

All classes have scheduled parties during the school year. Class parties will be held:

- October Fall celebration
- Before Christmas break
- Valentine's Day
- Last day of school

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips for ages 4 and up are planned throughout the year. A notice will be sent prior to the scheduled trip. A field trip permission form, indicating the day, time, location, purpose and items your child will need for the day. The teacher will send a detailed list home for the field trip. Parents may be invited to attend any of our scheduled field trips with a clear background check.

TRANSITION PLANS

When your child is ready to move to a new classroom, we do all we can to make this transition a smooth and successful one. We will contact you when we feel your child is ready to move. The move will always be a collaborative decision among parents, teachers and administrative staff. We recognize that transitions can be a challenge therefore we will take into consideration each child's temperament and adjust our transitions time accordingly.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Our daily schedule provides opportunities for children to engage in physical activities. Children participate in appropriate outdoor and indoor activities as part of the daily curriculum.

SCREEN TIME POLICY

1. Educational Use Only

- Electronic media and devices are to be used solely for educational purposes during designated times.
- Entertainment or recreational use of electronic media is not permitted

under any circumstances, unless prior notice has been made to parents.

2. Screen Time Limits for Children Over 2 Years

- Screen time for children over the age of 2 is limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per day.
- Additional screen time may be granted only for special educational viewings, and parents will be notified in advance when these exceptions occur.

3. Screen Time for Children Under 2 Years

- Screen time is strictly prohibited for children under the age of 2, in alignment with recommendations for early childhood development.

4. Monitoring and Enforcement

- Staff will monitor screen time use to ensure compliance with this policy and will redirect students to other activities if screen time limits are exceeded.
- Parents are encouraged to support this policy by setting similar limits at home to promote healthy screen habits.

This policy is designed to support the development and well-being of children by limiting screen exposure and ensuring that all media use is enriching and educational.

Screen time and children: How to guide your child :

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/screen-time/art-20047952>

BREASTFEEDING POLICY

1. Designated Breastfeeding Area

- A comfortable area is provided for breastfeeding mothers to nurse or pump.

2. Access and Support

- Breastfeeding mothers may access this designated area at any time. If additional accommodation or support are needed, staff are available to assist in facilitating these arrangements.

3. Respect and Privacy

- The privacy and needs of breastfeeding mothers will be respected. The designated area will be equipped with comfortable seating, appropriate lighting, and privacy measures.

4. Encouragement of Breastfeeding

- Our organization supports breastfeeding as part of our commitment to the health and well-being of children and families. Mothers are encouraged to nurse or pump as needed and can discuss any specific needs with our staff.

This policy is designed to create a welcoming, respectful environment that supports breastfeeding mothers and their infants.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Hearing and vision screenings may be provided during the 1st semester for students aged 4-5, free of charge. NCA will provide information and a permission slip/waiver to the family of each child that will participate. Families may choose to decline this screening in lieu of taking their child to their pediatrician for a hearing and vision screening at their own expense.

INFANT SLEEPING

To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), staff members shall put infants to sleep on their backs, unless the infant's physician has provided NCA with a written statement authorizing another sleep position for that particular infant.

Infants shall be placed to sleep only on firm, tight-fitting mattresses in a crib. Staff members must not place any pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other soft items in the crib.

When an infant can easily turn over onto his or her stomach, staff members must continue to put the infant to sleep initially on his or her back but allow the infant to roll over onto his or her stomach as the infant prefers.

Under no circumstances shall a staff member place positioning devices that restrict an infant's movement in the crib, unless the infant's physician has provided a written statement authorizing the use of such device for that particular infant.

If a staff member is approached by a parent and instructed to use such device without a physician's authorization, the staff member must immediately contact the NCA Directors.

LOST AND FOUND

Our students may make inquiries about lost articles before and after school. A "Lost and Found" area is maintained for articles of clothing that remain unclaimed. This is located at the Kids Club Counter.

Please label your child's belongings to better assist you with recovery. To avoid confusion, coats, sweaters, hats, lunch boxes, etc. should be clearly marked with a student's first and last name. Students, not the school, are responsible for the items they bring to school. Personal items, especially valuable ones, should not be brought to school.

PROCEDURE FOR UPDATING CONTACT INFORMATION

Parents can update Brightwheel directly, send any updates via Brightwheel messaging or email admin@northshorefalcons.com.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

NCA strives to support parental involvement in all school programs by continuing to emphasize and improve communication between the school and home. The Parent/Student handbook and calendar, notes, telephone calls, parent/teacher conferences, website, and Brightwheel are the basis of communication between the school and parents. Parents are encouraged to present suggestions by written communication or e-mail. There is also a suggestion box in the lobby. All suggestions are taken seriously and are responded to in a timely manner. NCA invites parents to attend Family Chapels and other various scheduled events.

VISITATION POLICY

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is for parental awareness as to NCA visits.

Policy: Northshore Christian Academy appreciates the value of parent and school partnership in ensuring a student's success, so we encourage our parents to be a part of our program, meet with teachers, and attend special events.

However, for the safety and security of all staff and students at Northshore Christian Academy any parent wanting to participate in special activities during regular business hours is required to complete a background check through the State of Texas Licensing Department. Our administrative team will assist with this process.

All scheduled visitors must check in at the office and have valid identification. We encourage you to complete the background check in the begin of our program year.

We do not allow classroom visits during the school day, as they distract from learning and create a challenging environment for other students and the staff. If your child has a behavior or emotional need which requires parental supervision, those visits will be scheduled with the administration.

If you wish to visit or give a classroom presentation, please be sure to make an appointment one week in advance. Siblings may not attend.

Teachers will be happy to schedule a conference at a mutually convenient time.

In the event of a child's birthday, parents may make prior arrangements to bring in a treat to the class. This must be approved by the Administration one week prior.

In order to protect the privacy of other students and maintain a proper learning environment, parents/guardians must have advanced permission to photograph or record activities during the visitation.

Parents must refrain from cell phone use during an NCA visitation.

The Administration has the authority to deny access to the program for any individual who has been disruptive or may disrupt or disturb the learning environment, or who lacks a valid or legal purpose for entering the facility.

VISITOR PARKING

If you need to come into the office or on campus, please park in the designated parking area. It poses problems when vehicles block coned, fenced off areas and driveways. Our goal is to provide the safest possible environment for your child's learning. Please help us to do that by obeying all signs and traffic guidelines.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

We reserve the right to terminate a child for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay (see tuition)
- Routinely late picking up child
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Serious illness of a child
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person on the property
- Our inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with regulations
- Failure of child to adjust to the center after a reasonable amount of time

*Center administration has the right to give verbal notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance.

Non-discrimination clause

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, culture, religion or ability.

NO SMOKING POLICY

1. Smoke-Free Campus
 - Our school maintains a strict no-smoking policy across all campus grounds, including buildings, parking lots, and playgrounds. This policy applies to all forms of smoking, including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes, and any other tobacco or nicotine products.
2. Applies to All Individuals
 - Smoking is prohibited for all individuals on school premises, including staff, parents, guardians, and visitors, regardless of the time of day or purpose of the visit.
3. Off-Campus Events
 - This policy extends to any off-campus events or school-sponsored activities, ensuring a safe, smoke-free environment for our school community.
4. Promoting a Healthy Environment

- This policy is part of our commitment to providing a healthy, safe environment for students, staff, and visitors by minimizing exposure to secondhand smoke and promoting overall well-being.
5. Policy Enforcement
- Violations of the no-smoking policy may result in appropriate action, including reminders and, if necessary, further measures to ensure compliance.

Thank you for helping us maintain a smoke-free environment that promotes health and safety for all.

GANG-FREE ZONE

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code will be amended to include Section 42.064 requiring information about gang free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed childcare centers.

Northshore Christian Academy Transportation Policy

Northshore Christian Academy (NCA) is committed to providing safe and reliable transportation services for students in compliance with Texas State licensing guidelines for childcare and education facilities. This policy outlines the procedures and standards for all transportation activities, ensuring the safety and well-being of all children under our care.

1. Driver Qualifications All individuals operating NCA vehicles must meet the following requirements:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Possess a valid Texas driver's license with the appropriate classification for the vehicle being operated.
- Have a clean driving record, verified annually through the Texas Department of Public Safety.
- Complete an annual criminal background check and fingerprinting as required by Texas licensing standards.
- Be certified in First Aid and CPR.
- Complete a minimum of 2 hours of transportation safety training annually, including instruction on safe loading/unloading procedures, child passenger safety, and emergency protocols.

2. Vehicle Requirements NCA-owned or leased vehicles must adhere to the following:

- Be inspected annually by a certified mechanic and maintained in safe operating

condition.

- Be equipped with age-appropriate safety seats and seat belts as mandated by Texas law.
- Contain a fully stocked First Aid kit, emergency contact numbers, and an operational fire extinguisher.
- Display the NCA name and contact information visibly on the exterior.

3. Child Safety and Supervision

- All children must be seated and secured in a safety seat or seat belt appropriate for their age, height, and weight.
- Children will be loaded and unloaded only at designated safe locations, with staff supervising at all times.
- A roll call will be conducted during boarding and upon arrival at each destination to ensure no child is left behind.
- Staff will conduct a final walkthrough of the vehicle after each trip to confirm that no children or belongings remain inside.

4. Emergency Preparedness

- All drivers and staff are trained to handle transportation emergencies, including vehicle breakdowns, accidents, or medical incidents.
- Each vehicle will carry a written emergency action plan and contact numbers for local authorities and NCA administration.
- In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be notified immediately, and appropriate measures will be taken to ensure children's safety.

5. Field Trip and Off-Campus Transportation

- Parents/guardians must provide written consent for each field trip or off-campus activity requiring transportation.
- Staff-to-child ratios for field trips will comply with Texas licensing standards and may exceed minimum ratios for additional safety.
- Transportation schedules, itineraries, and emergency contacts will be shared with parents/guardians before the trip.

6. Arrival and Departure Procedures

- Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring children arrive at the designated pick-up location on time.
- Children will only be released to authorized individuals as indicated on their enrollment forms. Identification may be required for verification.

7. Compliance and Monitoring

- Transportation policies and practices will be reviewed annually to ensure ongoing compliance with Texas State licensing guidelines.
- Periodic audits of vehicles, driver records, and transportation logs will be conducted by NCA administration.
- Any violations or incidents involving transportation will be documented, reported to the Texas Department of Health and Human Services as required, and addressed promptly.

8. Parent Responsibilities

- Ensure children are ready and appropriately dressed for transport.
- Notify the school immediately of any changes to contact information or authorized pick-up people.
- Communicate any concerns regarding transportation services to NCA administration.

As we come to the end of our parent handbook, we want to express how grateful we are for the opportunity to partner with you in shaping the hearts, minds, and spirits of our children. At Northshore Christian Academy, we are blessed to serve not just as educators, but as a community that upholds and nurtures each child's potential through faith, love, and care.

We believe that every day is a new opportunity to grow in knowledge and grace, knowing that God has a special plan for each child. Together, as a team of parents, staff, and students, we can continue to shine His light and love in all that we do. We thank you for being a part of the Northshore Christian Academy family. May God bless you, your children, and your family abundantly, and may His guidance lead us all toward a future full of hope, joy, and faith!

With warm blessings and gratitude,
The Northshore Christian Academy Team