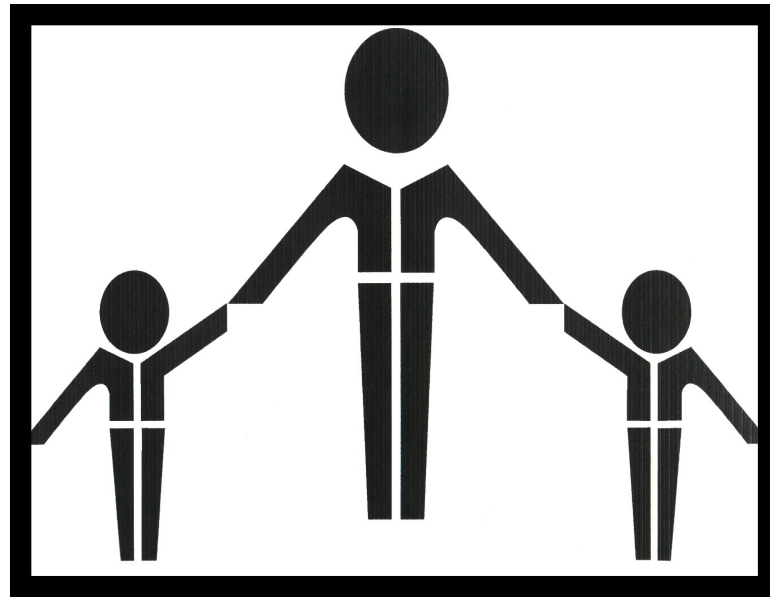


KINDERGARTEN HANDBOOK

2011 - 2012



NORTHMINSTER LEARNING CENTER

Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Northminster Learning Center Policies	
Mission	4
Philosophy	4
Children With Special Needs.....	5
Behavior Expectations.....	5
Parent Involvement	6
Program Goals.....	7
Guidance Procedures.....	7
Religious Education.....	8
Enrollment & Discharge Policy	10
Fees.....	10
Hours of Operation.....	11
Calendar	11
Snack.....	11
Health Examinations	12
Birth Certificate Requirement	12
Drop-off/Pick-up	13
Pesticide Policy	14
Health & Safety/Absence & Illness	14
Daily Schedule	17
Curriculum	
Personal & Social Development	18
Language & Literacy Development.....	19
Mathematical Development.....	19
Scientific/Intellectual Development.....	20
Social Studies Development.....	21
Physical Development/Health.....	21
Creative Art Development	22
Spiritual Development	22
Work Sampling.....	22
Supply List	23
Quick Reference Sheet	24

Welcome!

Welcome to Northminster Learning Center!



Welcome to this overview of Kindergarten at Northminster Learning Center!

We appreciate the confidence you have displayed in us by allowing us to participate in the growth and development of your precious child.

Northminster Learning Center is an integral part of the ministry of Northminster Presbyterian Church. As such, we strive to share the Judeo-Christian values upon which our nation was founded. Please be assured that it is not our intention to “convert” your child or to force religion on him or her.

We believe that it is important for children to learn values that will help them become productive and well-adjusted members of society. These values, such as respect and honesty, are common to all faith traditions and are an integral part of any healthy society. We will endeavor to teach these values to your child as part of the education process at Northminster Learning Center.

We sincerely hope your child’s time here at Northminster Learning Center will be an enriching experience. The members of the Northminster Church family cordially invite you to participate in any of our activities. We especially invite you to worship with us. Our messages are relevant to daily life and the service is a blend of traditional and contemporary worship.

May God Bless Your Family,
Rev. Mike Shirey, Associate Pastor

Northminster Learning Center

MISSION

The programs of Northminster Learning Center are overseen by the Children's Outreach Ministry. The mission of the Children's Outreach Ministry team is to reach out with God's love to families within the community and to support the families within our own Northminster family. By developing and supporting Christ-centered and educational programs, we hope to support and strengthen families, provide a warm, nurturing environment, and reflect the vision and mission of Northminster.

PHILOSOPHY

Northminster Learning Center provides a nurturing, safe, and stimulating learning environment. As early childhood educators, we know children learn best through active, engaged, meaningful play; therefore, we firmly believe play is the children's work. We understand children are naturally curious and learn best when allowed to actively explore, involve all their senses, manipulate real objects, work together with adults and other children, make meaningful plans, and build upon what they already know. Our curriculum reflects these needs while fostering independence, empathy, cooperation, and creativity. In-depth explorations of a topic which are motivated by the child's interest, excitement, and curiosity allow the curriculum to be presented in a developmentally appropriate manner. Families support the classroom by their collaboration and participation. Parents are considered partners in the learning journey and the program is dedicated to building strong family partnerships.



CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Northminster Learning Center encourages children of all backgrounds to attend our programs. We do not discriminate on the basis of gender, religion, or ethnic background. When in the best interest of the child, children with special needs are welcomed into our program. We believe children benefit from a variety of experiences with children who may be different from themselves. Our learning community may include children with physical, cognitive, or developmental challenges.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

Children are entitled to a pleasant and safe environment in their classroom at Northminster Learning Center. When a child persistently exhibits negative behaviors or functions at a significantly lower developmental level than most children, the environment, schedule, or activity level of the classroom may be a challenge and Northminster Learning Center is not the best educational placement for the student. In order to best serve all children, Northminster Learning Center cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior or children who have been determined to be significantly delayed developmentally. Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity which may include but is not limited to such behavior that: requires constant attention from the staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, abuses the staff, ignores or disobeys the rules which guide behavior during the school day and program time. Negative or unhealthy behaviors such as spitting or any behaviors which endanger the child (such as leaving the building) will not be accepted. If a child cannot adjust to the program setting and behave appropriately, the child may be discharged. When three incidents of the behaviors listed above are documented, the student will face dismissal from the program. Significant developmental delays include children who function at a

much lower level than a typically-developing child and exhibits the following challenges at a severe level: verbal and written communication, toilet training, attention span, and the ability to interact with other children.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We encourage our families to become actively involved in the Northminster Learning Center. Please plan for you or a family member to visit/volunteer in your child's class at least once each semester. Each year we hold scheduled family nights to strengthen the link between home and school and we encourage our families to attend all these events. We are looking forward to becoming partners in your child's learning journey.



As we provide a well-rounded learning experience, it is difficult to make holidays meaningful for very young children. Most holidays are based on concepts that are beyond your children's understanding. Often, holidays are extremely overdone. Children see signs of the major commercialized holidays everywhere, so they ask questions and families make choices. Within your family, you have the opportunity to involve your child in aspects of a holiday you feel are in keeping with your family's beliefs, values, and traditions. We feel it is more effective to expose children to information and activities that you might not have the time or resources to facilitate as a family.

At Northminster Learning Center we constantly evaluate how we will spend our time, energy, resources, and how we will meet our curriculum goals. As a staff, we are committed to investing time in meaningful experiences, consequently we will not celebrate secular holidays, such as Halloween and Valentine's Day, but instead encourage you to celebrate holidays as you desire.

PROGRAM GOALS

Your child's kindergarten experience may well determine his future success in school. The kindergarten year serves as a bridge between preschool and the primary classroom. Recognizing the importance of this experience, Northminster's kindergarten curriculum is guided by the following goals:

- To encourage each child's development in all domains
- To support each child's ability to function effectively in the classroom environment
- To encourage each child's ability to stay on task and persevere
- To support each child's ability to be actively engaged in the learning process and to take risks during the learning process
- To support each child's natural curiosity in the world around them
- To support each child's social and emotional development
- To encourage each child's development of reading and writing skills
- To encourage each child's development of math skills
- To support each child's development of the creative process and to encourage respect and appreciation of the arts
- To encourage each child's understanding of the natural world
- To nurture each child's spiritual development through our Godly Play activities



GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

Our philosophy, in addition to the laws of the state of Illinois, prohibits physical punishment. We guide children's behavior

positively by creating a supportive environment that:

- Focuses on children's strengths
- Encourages adults to form positive, authentic relationships with children
- Makes a commitment to supporting child's play
- Offers plenty of opportunity for children to make meaningful choices
- Uses re-direction as a guidance technique
- At times, ignores inappropriate behavior
- Has a consistent, yet flexible daily routine
- Provides for both active and quiet times
- Uses positive key phrases to guide children's behavior
- Offers respectful reminders
- Acknowledges each child's individual needs
- Is aware of each child's developmental stage
- Adopts a problem solving approach to conflict
- Has age appropriate expectations
- Allows expression of feelings and emotions



Families will be informed on a regular basis as to their child's success in the classroom. If your child is struggling, we will invite you to share more about your child and his behavior at home. Together we will work to ensure your child's success.

In Northminster kindergarten, we help facilitate resolution of conflict by involving children in the 2nd Step Violence Prevention curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Religious education is appropriate for the kindergarten child.
- Religious education can provide a foundation for development of a mature faith.
- Guidelines exist for religious education at these age

levels and these guidelines have a sound basis in research on the cognitive and emotional development of young children.

Incorporating these guidelines, religious education at Northminster kindergarten shall focus on the development of attitudes. These attitudes include the following:



Foundational Attitude of Faith

1. The child will learn to trust the dependability of the parent.
2. The child will learn to appreciate nature.
3. The child will develop faith in the predictability of events.

Foundational Attitude of Hope

1. The child will develop a positive attitude toward life.
2. The child will develop a joyful attitude toward learning.

Foundational Attitude of Love

1. The child will develop positive self-regard.
2. The child will develop a positive orientation towards others.

Bible stories are an appropriate method of developing these foundations. In using the Bible, teachers will:

1. Teach the importance of the Bible and how to use it respectfully.
2. Use adapted and shortened versions of the Bible stories, often telling rather than reading.
3. Choose Bible stories that promote a positive attitude towards God and Jesus.
4. Teach the meaning of the stories through play and other forms of enactment.

Kindergarten children are capable and interested in prayer. These years are an opportune time to begin prayer. In the use of prayer:

1. Prayer should focus on adoration and thanksgiving.
2. Prayer will be modeled and incorporated throughout the day and children will be encouraged to say their own prayers.

3. Some short prayers may be memorized. In religious education at Northminster kindergarten, the child's attention span, need for activity, and the importance of child-initiated learning will be respected.



ENROLLMENT AND DISCHARGE POLICY

To enroll, a completed registration application and a \$100.00 registration fee must be submitted to the director. If all of the child's required enrollment forms are not completed and returned to the director by the day the child is scheduled to start the program, the child will not be allowed to attend until these completed forms are submitted. The parent/guardian will be responsible for payment of fees in order to reserve the enrollment spot until such time as the completed forms are returned. If classes are full, the child's name will be placed on a waiting list and the registration fee returned. Enrollment is complete when all necessary forms have been completed and returned to the director, along with the registration fee and first month's tuition.

Any child who does not meet the behavior policy, cannot benefit from our program, or whose presence is detrimental to the other children and program, shall be dismissed by the director.

Parents who fail to call in to excuse their child's absence more than five times may be dismissed from the program. Children missing more than 15 days of school may also be dismissed from the program.

FEES

Tuition for Northminster kindergarten is \$415 per month. Pre- and after-school care is an additional \$125.00 per month, which includes holiday camps. **Spring break will be a separate charge of \$30.00 per day.** Payment is due on the first day of each month and may be placed in the **black tuition box** outside the offices. Payments made after

the 10th of the month will be assessed a late fee of 15%. **You are encouraged to have your tuition automatically deducted from your bank as an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).** Tuition is withdrawn around the 6th of each month **beginning in October and ending in May.** This method of payment is convenient and will alleviate the possibility of late fees. **Following two late payments, families will be required to use EFT in order to hold your spot.** A child attending any of a given month will be required to pay for that month. You are responsible for tuition fees even when you choose not to send your child due to family vacations, illnesses, etc. **Parents of students enrolled on March 1st will be responsible for completing tuition payments through May of the current school year.** If your child is leaving the program, a written statement must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the withdrawal date.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Northminster kindergarten is in session Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Before school care begins at 7:30 with the children joining their kindergarten class at 8:00. After school care begins when kindergarten is over until 5:30 p.m., or when you arrive to pick up your kindergartener.

Northminster kindergarten closely follows the Dunlap District #323 school calendar. When Dunlap schools are closed, so is Northminster kindergarten.

CALENDAR

Upon enrollment, you will receive a calendar listing evening events, parent teacher conferences, and school holidays. We follow the Dunlap School calendar when determining the days school will not be in session. This policy also holds true for snow days.

SNACK

A morning snack and apple juice will be provided during each class session. If you would like to



provide a healthy snack, you are welcome to sign up on the snack calendar located on the parent bulletin board outside the classroom. Per DCFS, all snacks must be commercially prepared. Due to numerous allergies, snacks containing peanuts and peanut butter will not be served.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

Each child is required to have a dental exam and a physical exam record including immunizations in their enrollment folder. A child's physical must be less than 6 months old. A lead screening (or waiver) and TB test (or waiver) must also be included.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENT

*(As required by the Dept. of Children and Family Services
407.250)*

Beginning in the fall of 2010, all families will be required to prove a certified copy of their child's birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity and age within 30 days of enrollment. If a certified copy of the birth certificate is not available, the parent or guardian must submit a passport, visa or other governmental documentation as proof of the child's identity and age and an affidavit or notarized letter explaining the inability to produce a certified copy of the birth certificate. Northminster Learning Center will accept a copy or will duplicate and return the original certified copy to the parent or guardian no later than the end of the next business day after receipt.

Northminster Learning Center is now required by law to notify the Illinois State Police or local law enforcement agency if the parent or guardian fails to submit proof of the child's identity within the 30 day time frame. Additional steps and guidelines regarding failure to adhere to this

policy can be found at <http://www.state.il.us/DCFS/docs/407.pdf>.

DROP OFF / PICK UP

Parents need to park in the lot and bring their child into the building. Parents are expected to drop children off at the classroom door after helping children hang up their coat and bag. Parents need to stop at the restroom and help their children wash their hands before entering the classroom. Taking children to the classroom assures safety of students and provides parents with an opportunity to visit with the classroom teachers on a daily basis.

You may drop children off five minutes before class begins. Parents picking up more than five minutes late will be assessed a \$5.00 late fee. If a parent has not contacted the program 15 minutes after the end of class, the staff will begin calling emergency contacts. The staff will make a minimum of three phone calls to emergency contacts in order to arrange for someone to pick up your child. Without success of finding a contact person who will take your child home, the police will be called. After an hour, if your child is still at Northminster Learning Center and no one is available to care for him or her, your child will be placed in the custody of the police. In order to avoid this very disturbing situation, it is critical for parents to contact the program if they are going to be late and to make sure a child's emergency contact information is always current and correct. Please be assured that while your child is here, Northminster Learning Center staff will continue to provide care and will reassure the child that he or she is safe and that everything will be okay. The child will never be held responsible for his/her parents' tardiness and the issue will always be discussed with the parent and not the child.



PESTICIDE POLICY

*(As required by the Dept. of Children and Family Services
407.370)*

Northminster Presbyterian Church has contracted Peoria Pest Control Co. as their pest control company. Every month, Peoria Pest Control Co. sends a technician to the church to evaluate any pest issues the church may have. Typically the visits occur toward the end of each month. Northminster Learning Center takes preventative measures including daily classroom cleaning and trash removal to provide a safe, clean environment for our children and staff. If you wish to have notification sent to you when our pest control technician is scheduled to visit, please let Nanette Mulvey know. You may also contact Roy Saatkamp for more detailed information regarding the integrated pest management program at Northminster.

HEALTH & SAFETY/ABSENCE & ILLNESS

In the event that your child is ill, please refrain from bringing him/her to kindergarten. Children who are obviously ill or who have a temperature will not be allowed to stay at the program. Keeping your child home when they are ill allows your child to be more comfortable and helps prevent the spread of illness.

You must call the program when your child will be absent.

If your child is unable to attend class for any reason, reimbursement for that day is not available. Each day of class we plan on your child attending and schedule staff and purchase materials accordingly.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms or illnesses, please keep them home from school.

1. Children with diarrhea and those with a rash combined

with fever (oral temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or under the arm temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher) shall not be admitted to the kindergarten while those symptoms persist. Children shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is at school.

2. Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists, in which case exclusion from the center is required:
 - a. Illness which prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
 - b. Illness which calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
 - c. Rash combined with fever over 101° Fahrenheit (oral)
 - d. Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness
 - e. Diarrhea
 - f. Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration
 - g. Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his/her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious
 - h. Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be non-communicable
 - i. Purulent conjunctivitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
 - j. Impetigo, until 24 hrs after treatment has been initiated
 - k. Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours
 - l. Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment
 - m. Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment
 - n. Chicken pox (varicella), until at least six days after

- onset of rash
- o. Whooping cough (pertussis), until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed
 - p. Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling
 - q. Measles, until four days after disappearance of the rash
 - r. Symptoms which may be indicative of one of the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690).
3. Space shall be provided for a child who becomes ill at the center. Such space shall be ventilated and heated, within sight and hearing of an adult and equipped with a cot and materials that can be easily cleaned and sanitized.
 4. The center shall report any known or suspected case or carrier of communicable disease to local health authorities and comply with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690).
 5. If a child needs emergency care because of an accident or illness that occurs while the child is in care, the center shall attempt to contact the child's parent(s) at the phone numbers provided for that purpose. If unable to locate the parents, the Learning Center's attempts to do so shall be documented in the child's file.
 6. Major and minor accidents or illnesses which happen to a child at the Learning Center shall be recorded in the file, and parents shall be notified.

In case of accident or illness, parents of the child will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle for treatment and the parents will be called as soon as possible.

DAILY SCHEDULE

- 8:00 - 8:15 Table Toys
- 8:15 - 8:40 Morning Meeting (good morning song, calendar, morning message)
- 8:40 - 9:00 Writing Workshop (journals, poetry, Handwriting without Tears)
- 9:00 - 9:15 Snack
- 9:15 - 9:40 Math Workshop (Math-their-Way tubs, small group math instruction)
- 9:40 - 10:00 Godly Play
- 10:00 - 10:15 Gross Motor Time (gym or playground)
- 10:15 - 11:30 Reading Workshop (literacy/phonics activities, small group instruction)
- 11:30 - 12:00 Lunch
- 12:00 - 12:30 Quiet Time
- 12:30 - 1:00 Gross Motor Time (gym or playground)
- 1:00 - 2:00 Project Time/Learning Centers
(developmental centers like blocks, dramatic play, easel painting, sensory tables, manipulatives, computers, also block of time for project work)
- 2:00 - 2:15 Snack
- 2:15 - 2:50 Afternoon Activity
- 2:50 - 3:00 Large Group Meeting (review the day, plans for the next day, individual students sharing work, pack up for home)
- 3:00 Home



Curriculum

All of the programs at Northminster support our fundamental philosophy and belief that children learn by being actively engaged in the learning process. Core to all NLC curriculum are in-depth explorations. Modeled after the project approach (Katz and Chard), our in-depth explorations are motivated by what interests the children – what they are excited and curious about in regard to a subject or topic. Our goal is to engage children’s minds, giving them plenty of opportunities to obtain a deeper understanding of the world around them.

Northminster kindergarten will integrate academic subjects throughout the day in activities that are meaningful to five and six year-olds. Using project work, small and large group instruction, and one-on-one time with the teachers, the kindergarten curriculum will support the objectives in each developmental domain listed below.

PERSONAL & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Demonstrate self confidence
- Show initiative and self-direction
- Follow classroom rules and routines
- Use classroom materials purposefully and respectfully
- Manage transitions and adapt to changes in routine
- Demonstrate eagerness and curiosity as a learner
- Sustain attention to a task, persisting even when encountering difficulty
- Approach tasks with flexibility and inventiveness
- Interact easily with one or more children
- Interact easily with familiar adults
- Participate in the group life of the class
- Show empathy and caring for others
- Seek adult help and use simple strategies to resolve conflicts



LANGUAGE & LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Gain meaning by listening
- Follow directions that involve a series of actions
- Demonstrate beginning understanding of phonemic awareness
- Speak clearly and convey ideas effectively
- Use expanded vocabulary and language for a variety of purposes
- Demonstrate interest in and knowledge about books and reading
- Demonstrate understanding of concepts of print
- Identify upper and lower case letters and their corresponding sounds
- Print upper and lower case letters
- Print first and last name
- Identify selected sight words
- Comprehend and respond to fiction and non-fiction
- Represent stories through pictures, dictation, and play
- Understand the purpose for writing



MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Begin to use and explain strategies to solve math problems
- Understand relationships between quantities
- Demonstrate understanding of numbers and quantities
- Count to one hundred
- Sort objects into subgroups, classifying and comparing according to a rule

- Recognize, duplicate, and extend a pattern
- Recognize and describe attributes of shapes
- Identify number symbols to 100
- Demonstrate understanding of and uses positional words
- Order, compare, and describe objects by size, length, capacity, and weight
- Estimate and measure using non-standard and standard units
- Demonstrate awareness of the concepts of time (clocks, days of the week, months)
- Collect data and make records using lists and graphs
- Demonstrate understanding of coins and their value
- Recognize equation terms and symbols used when adding and subtracting ($-$, $+$, $=$)
- Begin to add and subtract objects



SCIENTIFIC/INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Seek information through exploration, observation, and descriptive investigations
- Use tools and equipment to extend the senses and gather data
- Form explanations and communicate scientific information
- Identify, describe, and compare properties of objects
- Observe and describe characteristics, basic needs, and life cycles of living things
- Explore and identify properties of rocks, soil, water, and air
- Observe and describe seasonal and weather changes



SOCIAL STUDIES DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Identify similarities and differences in people's characteristics, habits, and living patterns
- Demonstrate beginning understanding of state and country
- Show some awareness of time and how the past influences people's lives
- Demonstrate understanding of how people rely on others for goods and services
- Describe people's jobs and what is required to perform them
- Show awareness of technology and how it affects life
- Demonstrate understanding of rules and the need for them
- Show understanding of what it means to be a leader
- Express beginning geographic thinking
- Show awareness of the relationship between people and where they live



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH

Your child will...

- Move with balance and control
- Coordinate movements to perform tasks
- Use strength and control to accomplish tasks
- Use eye-hand coordination to perform tasks effectively
- Use writing tools with control
- Perform self-care tasks competently
- Show beginning understanding of and follow health and safety rules

CREATIVE ART DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Participate in group music experiences
- Participate in creative movement, dance, and drama
- Use a variety of art materials to explore and express ideas and emotions
- Respond to artistic creations or events

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Your child will...

- Participate in faith-based activities such as Godly Play
- Develop a foundational attitude of faith
- Develop a foundational attitude of hope
- Develop a foundational attitude of love
- Participate in prayer



WORK SAMPLING

Our children are evaluated using the work sampling system. This assessment tool evaluates the children in seven developmental domains: Language, Math, Intellectual Disposition, Social Studies, Spiritual Development, Social, and Physical Development. Teachers collect children's work and organize it into a portfolio; they record their growth using developmental checklists, and write a summary report at the end of each collection period. This information is shared with the child's family two times a year in a conference format. The work sampling goals correlate and support the Illinois State Board of Education kindergarten learning standards.

Supply Lists

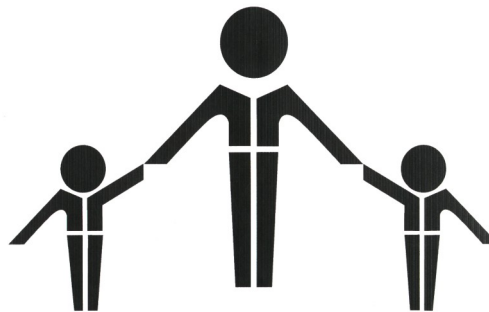
Stickers - any variety
1 box of #2 pencils
Box of 24 Crayola crayons
Bottle of Elmer's glue
Crayola washable markers – fine line
2 ultra fine black Sharpie markers
Masking tape - 1 rolls
Package of colored copy paper for drawing
Package of construction paper
1 box of Kleenex
Paper towels - 3 rolls
Lysol disinfectant wipes
Lysol food surface sanitizer
Rubber gloves - box found in First Aid supplies
1 package D batteries
Extra clothes including underwear and
socks, marked with name
Backpack



Quick Reference Sheet

Director: Stacy Berg

Northminster Learning Center
Northminster Presbyterian Church
10720 N. Knoxville Avenue
Peoria, IL 61615
Phone: 691-6322
Fax: 691-6031
Email: stacyb@northminster.us
Website: www.northminster.us



**Thank you for participating in the programs
at Northminster Learning Center!**