

# AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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**2026-2027**

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\* Changes from last year are in red

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## **Welcome!**

Welcome to Northminster Learning Center's After School Program! We are excited that you chose us to care for your child(ren).

Northminster Learning Center (NLC) and its programs are ministries of Northminster Presbyterian Church. As such, we strive to offer a safe, educational and Christian environment for the children in all of our programs. In addition, our programs are state licensed by DCFS and taught by certified teachers.

This handbook contains valuable information about the After-School Program (ASP) regarding policies and procedures. Please take the time to read it and share the information with your child as you see necessary. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Michelle Lundquist, Director at [michellel@northminster.us](mailto:michellel@northminster.us) or 309-691-6322.

Again, welcome! We look forward to getting to know you and your child(ren).

## **GOALS**

The program will provide quality childcare throughout the school year, as defined by the Dunlap Community School District calendar.

The program will offer a variety of activities which include recreation, games, arts and crafts, reading, music, time to work on homework, and "free time" for the children to pursue their own interests in a safe, friendly, Christian environment.

## **PARENT'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM**

Parents may expect their children to be cared for in a safe, supportive environment. Anytime parents have a question, he or she should feel free to ask a staff member or talk with the Director of the program. We believe communication between staff and families is key to a good experience in our programs. Parents can expect to be informed of daily activities, upcoming holiday camps, and other special events.



## **PROGRAM'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARENTS**

The program expects parents to pay fees on time and keep children's records up-to-date. Parents are expected to pick up children by 5:30 p.m. and notify the program

if their children will not be attending on a given day through Seesaw or phone. Parents should follow the health policy and pay attention to any communications from the program staff.

## **PROGRAM'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE CHILDREN**

The program expects children to be responsible for their actions and respect the rules and staff of Northminster Learning Center. Children are expected to stay with the group at all times until their parent arrives and signs them out. Children need to take care of materials and equipment properly and return them to their place when done or before taking out new ones. Children will refrain from using profanity or discussing inappropriate subjects while attending the program.

## **ENROLLMENT**

NLC encourages children of all backgrounds to attend. We do not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, disability, religion, national origin or ethnic background. Children must be in grades Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup>.

A child will be enrolled and allowed to attend the program once all necessary paperwork is completed and returned. These forms include a school physical with record of immunizations and TB and lead screenings, a certified birth certificate, program agreements, EFT and releases, along with emergency contact information. We ask that parents be responsible for updating NLC with any change in information.

In addition to the necessary paperwork, prior to attendance, the non-refundable registration fee must be prepaid. A child's place in the program is not secure without the payment.

## **FEES AND PAYMENT POLICY**

The Learning Center's salaries, supplies, and administrative expenses are supported entirely by the tuition.

### **Afterschool Tuition Schedule**

|                                                                                     |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Annual Registration Fee Sept. - Aug.                                                | \$75.00 per family |
| Full-time Students (Monday - Friday)<br>(Including about 7 holidays and 4 SIP days) | \$92.00 per week   |
| Part-time (less than 5 days)                                                        | \$22.00 per day    |
| Holiday Camp Full Day for part-time                                                 | \$39.00 per day    |
| Holiday Camp Half Day for part-time                                                 | \$28.00 per day    |



**Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, & 23<sup>rd</sup>. (Winter Break) and March 29<sup>th</sup>– April 2<sup>nd</sup>. (Spring Break) are optional days for both full-time and part-time students. If you use those days, you will be charged \$39.00 per day but if you choose not to use them there will be no charge. If we do not have enough children sign up for those days, we will cancel them.**

Northminster Learning Center requires all families to pay their weekly tuition through Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). EFT's will be sent close to the 15th of each month beginning in August and ending in May. Your payments will be conveniently transferred two to five business days following the "send" date of the 15th. Payment will be taken out of your bank account or added to your credit card. If there are insufficient funds to your account, you will be assessed a late fee of \$25.00. If fees are not paid in full within two weeks of the 15th of the month, your children will be discharged from the program. Reinstatement may occur on a space-available basis when all fees have been paid in full.

You are responsible to pay for scheduled days even when you choose not to send your child due to family vacations, illnesses, etc. The only exception is if a family is traveling for over two weeks. Fees will not be charged for part-time children when there are snow days.

**If your child is leaving the program, a written statement must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the withdrawal date, or you will be responsible for the tuition.**

### **RECEIPTS FOR FLEX ACCOUNTS**

An itemized statement will be emailed to you prior to the EFT transaction. The taxpayer identification number is included on the statement.

### **ADDITIONAL FEES**

- Annual \$75 registration fee per family (non-refundable) to hold your spot for the next school year
- \$10 per key fob to be able to enter through the Security Doors
- If you choose to use a Credit Card for payment, there is an additional 3% fee for processing.
- If you have missing paperwork as of January 1st, you may be charged a late fee of \$10.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION AND ATTENDANCE**

The After School Program runs from 2:50 PM – 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday, and follows the Dunlap Public School Calendar. The program closes at 5:30 p.m. and the doors will be locked at that time. Parents whose children remain past 5:30 p.m. must pay overtime fees. When parents are late, staff must be paid extra for their time. **A fee of \$5.00 will be assessed every 10 minutes until a parent arrives.** Late fees will be noted on the parents' tuition statement.

If pick up will be late, the parent is required to call the center at 309-691-6322, option 2. If a parent has not contacted the program by 5:35 p.m., 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 may be called. At 6:30 p.m., 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 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 parents' tardiness and the issue will always be discussed with the parent and not the child.

**\*After school care services may be withdrawn if three overtime charges occur.**

The program will be available on early release days, ½ days of school, teacher's institute days, and during most school holidays. Payment for these days is included in the full-time weekly tuition fees. Please see the list below of holiday closings. The program is available when school is dismissed early due to weather, water, heating, electrical problems, etc., as the buses are routed to NLC. If school is canceled **prior** to the start of the school day due to weather, water, heating, electrical problems, etc., programs will be closed.

**The program will be closed on the following holidays:**

Labor Day  
Thanksgiving  
Friday after Thanksgiving  
Christmas Eve through New Year's Day, Dec. 24th –Jan. 1st  
Good Friday  
Memorial Day  
Days between end of school and start of summer camp  
Days between end of summer camp and start of school



Please watch for announcements of specific dates of holiday camps and school holidays. **Parents wishing to use the holiday camp program, need to sign-up 5 days in advance of the camp day. Parents not following this guideline will be required to provide lunch for their child, pay an extra \$5 and may be denied holiday camp services.**

Please note, Northminster Learning Center is closed from Christmas Eve through New Year's Day. Please plan ahead for this lapse in programming.

If your child(ren) will not be attending the program due to a scheduled appointment, vacation, or other planned absence, please notify the office in advance. Absentees without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child resulting in unnecessary concern and time spent in searching for the child. If a child does not arrive at the program as intended, the director will contact the child's parents or emergency contact person. Failure to call in absences more than three times may result in withdrawal of services.

Children will arrive and leave the program according to the information provided by their parents. Children will only be allowed to leave with persons other than their parents if permission has been given to the office on the enrollment form or in a written and dated note signed by the parent. Identification may be requested to confirm that the correct person is picking up your child(ren). In emergency cases, a phone call can be made to the program staff and the office.

## **REGISTRATION**

To register, the parent must complete a registration form and submit it with a \$75.00 nonrefundable registration fee per family to the director. Registration fees are good from September through August. Registered children, who cannot be immediately enrolled, will be placed on a waiting list. A child may be registered for enrollment in the program at any time. Children must be in grades K -5th to be eligible for enrollment.

Enrollment: Parents of registered children will be contacted regarding enrollment in the program.

1. If the parents wish to enroll their child(ren), the parents will be provided with a set(s) of enrollment forms. Prior to the child's first day of attendance, the parent(s) will complete all forms and submit them to the director. A completed set of forms is required for each child enrolled in the program.
2. Upon enrollment, the parent must make payment to the director of a nonrefundable registration fee or it may be taken out through your EFT. The parent must sign and return all enrollment forms.
3. Children will be allowed to attend the program only after all forms have been completed and returned, and the EFT form has been submitted.

## ENROLLMENT FORMS

Parents will be asked to complete the following:

Enrollment Form

Handbook Agreement

Medication Release (as needed)

Discipline Policy

Transportation Form

D.C.F.S. Receipt Form

E.F.T Form

Certified Birth Certificate

School Physical/Record of Immunizations/TB & Lead screenings



The program expects forms to be kept current. The parent must provide new information to the director regarding information on forms such as: emergency persons, names, employers, phone numbers, arrival/departure changes.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

**Parents wishing to withdraw their child from the program must provide a statement in writing at least two weeks prior to the discontinuation of this service or you will be responsible for tuition. Children absent from the program for more than ten consecutive school days may be assessed a re-enrollment fee of \$75.00.**

## **DISTRIBUTION OF MEDICATIONS**

As a general rule, the program staff will not dispense medication to the students. If your child has a special medical condition requiring medication, you are to speak to the director to work out possible arrangements. If your child requires an afterschool medication, please see the office to fill out a medication form. Medicines must be in an original bottle.

## **PESTICIDE POLICY**

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

Northminster Presbyterian Church has contracted American Pest Control as their pest control company. Every month, American Pest Control sends a technician to the church to evaluate any pest issues the church may have. Typically the visits occur 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 contact the Director of Operations for more detailed information regarding the integrated pest management program at Northminster.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

Children shall be screened upon arrival daily for any obvious signs of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the after care staff shall determine whether they are able to care for the child safely, based on the apparent degree of illness, other children present, and facilities available to care for the ill child.

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms or illnesses, we will call parents to come to the program:

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 after care while those symptoms persist. Children shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in care.

- Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists 1. in which case exclusion from after care 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 degrees 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 or 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 hours 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 serious, communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases Code (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690)
3. Children who do not feel well will be allowed to rest in an area which can be supervised by the staff with the door remaining open.
  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, after care'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 after care 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.

In the case of someone appearing on the premises with a firearm, the emergency number (911) should be called and children should be taken out of danger and given aid.

Staff are to make every effort to keep a child from getting into a car with a parent under the influence of drugs or alcohol. They should call the police to give the child and parent a ride home. Staff should not under any circumstances give transportation to a parent who appears to be impaired by drugs or alcohol because the program insurance does not cover transportation related to the program.

The program's license requires staff to report suspected cases of child abuse. This includes the reporting of parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

## **INSURANCE**

The program carries minimal liability insurance, however has no financial resources of its own. Families are encouraged to provide their own insurance coverage. Many families are covered by the parent's policy at work, and/or their own private policies. Public school students may sign up for accident insurance in the fall of each year. Parents who wish to enroll should check with the school office.

## **SNACK**

We serve nutritious snacks in the afternoon program. Upon agreement of the staff, commercially prepared foods may be brought in occasionally by parents as part of birthday celebrations. Food brought in for this purpose must arrive unopened as packaged by the bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted. Due to numerous allergies, snacks containing peanuts, nuts and peanut butter will not be served.

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

Upon arrival at Northminster, children will be checked in and then offered a snack in the fellowship hall. At about 3:15, the children will take their things and put them on a hook in the hallway. At that time, they will be able to go in the gym/outside or the classroom. At 4:15, the children will return to the Aftercare classroom and have a brief group time. During this group time children might hear stories, study a devotion, or discuss a current topic. The goal of this time is to discuss making good choices, peer interactions, family times, etc. When the group is finished, learning centers will begin. Children will rotate through activity centers which include art, reading area, blocks, games, and dramatic play. We also encourage children to work on homework, though we cannot guarantee that it is completed or that every answer is correct.

## **CLOTHING**

Parents are to provide the necessary clothing (i.e., mittens, gloves, scarves, hats, etc.) for the children to participate in outdoor activities. If the necessary clothing is not provided, the child will remain indoors and not be allowed to participate in outdoor activities.

Children will play outside unless the temperature (including wind chill) falls below 20 degrees. Please send outdoor clothing accordingly. Outdoor play is scheduled daily except:

- when the temperature is under 20 degrees
- threatening weather (ex. lightning)
- rain
- hazardous conditions
- extreme heat & humidity



## CHILD'S PERSONAL PROPERTY

Children's personal property (coats, clothing, school bags, etc.) will be stored on their hook. Although the program attempts to help children stay organized, the program cannot be responsible for lost or stolen personal property.

**Children should not bring money, toys, food or other items not necessary for school activities to the program without checking with staff members.**

## GUIDANCE POLICY AND TRANSITION PLAN

### Guidance Procedures

Northminster Learning Center's philosophy in addition to the laws of the state of Illinois prohibits physical punishment. We positively guide children's behavior 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 schedule.

Provides for both active and quiet times.

Uses positive key phrases to guide children's behavior.

Offers respectful reminders.

Acknowledges each child's developmental stage.

Adopts a problem-solving approach to conflict.

Has age-appropriate expectations.

Allows expression of feelings and emotions.



We have chosen a few simple rules.

1. Respect others and yourself.
2. Respect your teachers.
3. Respect your environment.

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 may not be the best educational placement for the student. All children at Northminster, preschool and above, are involved in the Second Step program that teaches identifying emotions, problem solving skills, and social emotional support. Teachers are also given training on Trauma and other childhood behaviors

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. Teachers will document these behaviors with a date and description of the situation.

When a child is demonstrating these kinds of behaviors, the parents will be informed to discuss possible solutions to the problem. We will give them information on having a developmental screening in their district and help them get in contact with the appropriate people and services. If it is determined that a different classroom environment would be more appropriate, we will write a behavior transition plan with the parents to be able to smoothly transition the child to a more appropriate environment.

### **RECORD RELEASE**

Student's files and records will only be released with signed permission from a parent or guardian except when legally required. Permission forms can be from the party requesting the documents or a Northminster record release form.

## **QUICK REFERENCE SHEET**

**Michelle Lundquist-Director**

**Jessica Stanton– Associate Director**

**Jennifer Loer-Administrative Assistant**

Northminster Learning Center

Northminster Presbyterian Church

10720 N. Knoxville Avenue

Peoria, IL 61615

Phone: 309-691-6322

Fax: 309-691-6031

Email: [michellel@northminster.us](mailto:michellel@northminster.us)

[jessicas@northminster.us](mailto:jessicas@northminster.us)

[nlcoffice@northminster.us](mailto:nlcoffice@northminster.us)

Website: [www.northminster.us](http://www.northminster.us)



**Thank you for participating in the After School  
Program at Northminster Learning Center!**