



NATIVITY OF OUR LORD
EARLY LEARNING
CENTER

Parent Handbook 2016-2017

**1900 Wellesley Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55105
(651) 696-5437
www.nativity-mn.org**



**Welcome to Nativity of Our Lord Early Learning Center
Where Christ is Born and Grows**

A child's earliest years include some of the most unique and valuable stages of life. At the Nativity Early Learning Center (NELC), our most important responsibility is to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive setting for every child. We are committed to supporting each child's development by recognizing individual differences and potential.

The NELC is nestled in the heart of Nativity's parish and school, occupying the two lower levels of the Lannan Center at 1900 Wellesley Avenue, directly across the street from Nativity School. This location allows for a convenient connection for families with school age and preschool children. We are the perfect answer for stay-at-home and working parents who need and expect quality education and care for their children.

We invite you to share and discover with us the beautiful treasures that lie within each individual child.

"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God."
-Luke 18:15-16

From the Director

Welcome Parents and/or Guardians,

Thank you for choosing the Nativity Early Learning Center (NELC) for your child. I believe early childhood education is one of the most beneficial programs your child will experience. Our teachers help to shape and guide your children to become successful in years to come. The NELC programs give children the opportunity to develop relationships, self-confidence, respect for others, as well as accepting responsibility for their actions and decisions in a safe and nurturing environment. I know the importance of a Catholic education and am proud of the strong sense of community a Catholic school provides. We are looking forward to working with you and your child. If you have any further questions, please feel free to call me at 651-696-5437 or email me at nmcgie@nativity-mn.org.

Nicole McGie
Director of the Nativity Early Learning Center

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PHILOSOPHY

The Nativity Early Learning Center is devoted to social and emotional development, academic excellence, The Gospel message and community. Children will experience growth and learning in their social-emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and families will feel supported and nurtured in their child rearing efforts. Children will gain competence in their home language as well as their second language.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Nativity Early Learning Center is a partnership of children, parents, and staff dedicated to developing the whole child and preparing each child for a successful school experience.

PROGRAM GOALS

Our educational philosophy comes to life through the following goals established for all children enrolled in the NELC:

- Learn to work independently and accept one's own strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop good character, self-respect, and self-discipline.
- Identify and enhance creative and intellectual skills.
- Develop self-help, creative expression, and speech and language skills.
- Learn to work in groups and to respect human differences.
- Build strong social development skills.
- Develop problem-solving skills.
- Develop the necessary skills to resolve conflict peacefully and respectfully.

The teachers and staff fulfill our mission and philosophy through a commitment to:

- Create a safe, nurturing environment.
- Create an equal partnership of children, parents, staff, and community.
- Create an environment where all children are treated with equal respect and consideration.

NELC CODE OF CONDUCT

The Nativity Early Learning Center has developed and maintains a code of conduct, which reflects Gospel values, self-esteem, and respect for others. The children are expected to use this code of conduct to guide them in choosing appropriate behavior.

1. Show respect for others

- treat others as you want to be treated
- share
- cooperate with others
- include others in play
- be honest
- help others

2. Follow directions the first time they are given

- keep a positive attitude
- show respect for all adults

3. Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself

- respect the personal space of others

4. Stay in assigned areas

- in the classroom
- on the playground
- ask for permission before leaving the group

5. Use appropriate language

- name calling and teasing are not allowed
- speak respectfully to all adults and other children

6. Use equipment properly

- ask before using other people's things and room materials
- toys may not be used to harm others or yourself
- put things back where they belong when you are done using them
- take care of the toys and materials you are using

The NELC uses the method of modeling positive acceptable behavior. Since children copy what they see and hear, staff actions and interactions set the tone. While it is the responsibility of the staff to hold the children accountable for their actions, only appropriate consequences will be carried out in a caring manner. In order to assist the children in living out our code of conduct in every classroom, the staff will:

- Model appropriate behaviors and expressions of feelings with the children.
- Adjust behavior expectations to the developmental level of the child.
- Anticipate problem situations and intervene by redirecting the child to a positive alternative.
- Engage children in cooperative problem solving (examine alternatives, identify consequences, and choose appropriate action).

- Protect the safety of the children and staff by establishing clear expectations and creating a safe environment at all times.
- Provide immediate, directly related, and appropriate consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.
- We feel confident that the children in the NELC can successfully abide by the code of conduct. However, if a child repeatedly refuses to abide by the established code of conduct and is disruptive to the safety of others, it is crucial that we make decisions in the best interest of all children in the program. Therefore, the following actions may be taken:
 - Parent is contacted regarding child's behavior through note, call, or conference. Documentation of contact is placed in child's permanent file.
 - If behavior continues, a meeting between the parents, teachers, and director will be arranged to establish the child's behavior plan.
 - If the child continues to display aggressive behavior that disrupts the classroom, and/or threatens the safety and well-being of those around them, children or staff, and less intrusive methods of behavior guidance have been exhausted, the parent/guardian will be called. The child will be sent home for the remainder of the day.
 - Child may be placed on probation from the program.
 - Child may be removed from the program permanently.

AGES SERVED AND PROGRAMS OFFERED

The NELC has excellent programs with convenient hours and long-term, dedicated, and loving staff. Our staff/child ratios have led to successful social and academic outcomes. The children feel secure and look forward to coming to school because of our supportive and interactive staff/family relationships. The NELC serves families of children ages 33 months to 12 years who typically reside in the communities surrounding Nativity. **All children must be toilet trained before being admitted to the program.** Currently, the center is licensed to care for 137 children.

The NELC offers the following programs to meet a variety of family needs.

Full Day Preschool

- Licensing requires staff to child ratio of 1:10 in the Tweety and Munchkin Programs; however, we pride ourselves in keeping these ratios at a lower level.
- 33 months to 5 years
- 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Extended Day

- Staff to child ratio 1:15
- For children enrolled in grades K-6 at Nativity School
- 6:30 a.m. to 8:05 a.m. (before school)
- 2:40 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (after school)

Summer Camp

- Ages 33 months to 6th grade
- 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Day Options for Full Day Preschool, Extended Day Programs and Summer Camp Programs

- 5 days a week (M-F)
- 4 days a week (M-Th)
- 3 days a week (M,W,F)
- 2 days a week (T,Th)
- 1 day a week (M-F) *For extended day families ONLY
- Days can be flexible

Classroom Transitions

Children will stay in their current classrooms for the summer and then transition to the next classroom in the fall. The Tweety and Munchkin teachers with the help of administration will work together to make sure that your child will be placed in the best possible environment for them.

THE NELC TOILET TRAINING POLICY

When a child is enrolled in the Nativity Early Learning Center, he or she must be completely toilet trained (this includes both urine and bowel movements). Every child must wear cloth underwear and not diapers, training pants nor pull-ups.

In the event that an enrolled child is found not to be fully toilet trained, the parent (s) will be notified and will need to make other arrangements for preschool. The child may only return to the NELC upon completion of toilet training. Unfortunately, the center is not staffed nor equipped to handle toilet training procedures on a daily basis in the classrooms.

THE NELC OFFERS TWO PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

The Fall Program runs concurrently with the Nativity School calendar. The Summer Camp Program runs between school year calendars.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The NELC is open from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The NELC will be closed for the following holidays:

Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve

President's Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Memorial Day

Christmas Day
New Year's Day

Independence Day

The NELC is also closed for one day following the Fall Program and for three days following the Summer Camp program for teacher in-service.

If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the day will be recognized on Friday or Monday. Holidays are not exempt from your child's regular scheduled weekly tuition.

UTILITY, HEAT AND WATER FAILURE

In the event of water, heat or power failure, the NELC may need to close or use other parts of the facility to conduct business as usual. If the water, heat or power failure is severe or prolonged, parents will be notified to pick up their children and the NELC would be shut down.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In case of severe weather conditions, the NELC will typically close on the same schedule as Nativity School. Closing information is broadcast on television stations channel 4 WCCO, Channel 5 KSTP, Channel 9 KMSP and Channel 11 Kare TV, and through your child's Educate by TADS account (hot lunch program). Closing information can also be found on our website at www.nativity-mn.org and our Facebook page. If an emergency is declared during the business day, all parents must pick up their children WITHIN TWO HOURS of the closing announcement. **Please be advised that the NELC will have a separate notification on all TV stations.*

SCHOOL RELEASE DAYS

When Nativity School is not in session, the NELC provides EXTRA CARE for children in grades K-6. All children must be signed up one week in advance for school release days. The sign-up sheets are posted on the front entry parent information board. There is an additional charge for each extra care day. Please refer to the current tuition rate sheet for applicable charges.

ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Application forms must be completed before your child is considered for admittance to the NELC. Upon receipt of these forms and the registration fee, your child will be added to the enrollment list.

Enrollment at the NELC is on a first come, first serve basis, considering space availability within each classroom or age group and the age appropriateness of the child.

The NELC will guarantee acceptance of all current children for the following year provided the registration procedure be completed before the end of January. Any family that is unable to meet this deadline must notify the NELC Director, in writing, in order to secure a position for the summer and/or school year program.

Beginning mid-January, we will open up fall and summer registration to those families on the waiting list in order to fill all of the available spots. New students will be accepted according to the following priority list:

1. Children who currently have siblings attending the NELC programs.
2. First come, first serve basis according to the waiting lists.

Nativity of Our Lord School Kindergarten Acceptance Policy

Kindergartners must be five years old by the 31st of August of the calendar year in which they intend to enroll at Nativity.

Kindergartners will be accepted according to the following priority list:

1. **Families with children currently enrolled in Nativity School, Preschool-8th grade OR are parishioners enrolled in the NELC preschool programs.**
2. Families who are registered, active members of Nativity of Our Lord Parish. Families are accepted in chronological order according to the official date of registration.
3. **Families who are NOT registered, active members of Nativity of Our Lord Parish but are enrolled in the NELC.**
4. Families who are NOT registered active members of Nativity of Our Lord Parish. Families will be accepted through a lottery system if Nativity School is not able to accept all non-parishioners in a given year.

STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

State regulations require that each child have a health statement and immunizations completed by his or her source of medical care before they begin attending the NELC or 30 days after admission.

Every item in the health care summary must be completed. Your child's health care summary and immunization records will be kept on file in the director's office and are kept confidential.

When new immunizations are given to your child that information must be provided to the NELC immediately.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both must provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for any immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

If you conscientiously oppose immunization, you must provide a notarized statement of your opposition.

If a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health care professional) or the family's beliefs including religious or philosophical beliefs we will do the following if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program:

1. The parents will be contacted.
2. The child may be removed from school for the duration of the outbreak.
3. The NELC will consult with our healthcare nurse for best practice.

Children's health records are protected under state and federal privacy laws and cannot be released without written parental permission unless otherwise mandated by law.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The NELC is a non-profit organization which operates primarily on the tuition fees from each family. Therefore, it is essential that your fees be paid in advance. In order to help manage and control our administration costs, the NELC has implemented the following policies:

1. There is a \$75.00 non-refundable fall registration fee per family payable at the time of application. The summer registration fee is \$50.00 (also non-refundable); this fee is waived for families currently enrolled. The Summer Program also includes a field trip/activity fee.
2. Our Fall and Summer Programs are billed weekly through Tuition Express. Tuition Express is able to process automatic recurring payments via EFT (checking or savings accounts), debit cards, credit cards (VISA and MasterCard ONLY) and FSA (flexible spending account) cards. You can elect your form of payment. We will email weekly statements the Friday before the actual week. Payment is due on the Monday at the start of the week. Automatic payments will be processed each Monday at 3pm based on your tuition agreement.
3. Any account that is not paid in full each week will incur a \$10.00 late fee. There will be a \$35.00 charge for returned payments. Delinquent accounts may result in your child not being allowed to continue with our program.
4. All fees must be paid for the days that your child is **scheduled to attend**. Refunds or credits will not be given for absences, illness, or holidays.
5. All children in the Extended Day and Full Day Preschool programs must be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. A fee of \$5.00 per child will be charged for the first 1-5 minutes after 6:00 p.m. There is an additional \$1.00 charge per child for every minute thereafter. Children become upset when parents are late picking them up. Additionally, when you are late, the NELC faces staffing and licensing issues. The late fee is intended to deter parents from picking up their children after closing. This includes any delay in exiting the building. The late fee will be added to your child's tuition statement. The building doors will be locked at 6:00 p.m.
6. With prior written notice to the Director only, you may have the option of adding single days. Requests will be honored or denied based on availability of space. **Trading days is NOT allowed.**
7. If your family is in a financial situation that is prohibiting you from being able to cover your full tuition obligation to the NELC, please call our tuition manager at 651-696-5435 as soon as possible to discuss your account. We would be happy to schedule a meeting with your family to discuss the means by which we can work together to help your family establish a payment plan or other financial arrangements with the center.
8. Once a contract is signed with the NELC, any changes in your schedule must be given to the Director in written form. **All changes require a two weeks' notice. Tuition accounts will be billed accordingly.**
9. If a family leaves the NELC program and unpaid tuition remains, we may exercise our right to pursue collection with an outside agency or small claims court. If you are a Nativity School and/or NELC family, your NELC tuition account must be paid in full prior to the start of the next school year.

VACATIONS

Families taking vacation must pay ½ of their weekly tuition rate. A two week written notice is required when taking vacation. You may get a vacation credit for up to two weeks during the school year and one week during the summer. **Your child must attend our program a minimum of three (3) days a week for your family to be eligible for the credit.** Families are not allowed to use vacation credit toward their two week notice of termination. Families must use their vacation by the week rather than by the day.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NELC

The NELC requires a written notice prior to your withdrawal from the center. Your account balance must be paid in full at time of withdrawal. **As with any changes in your child's schedule, we require a minimum of two weeks' notice.** NELC families are not allowed to use vacation credit toward their two week notice of termination.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES BY THE NELC

Services will be discontinued at the NELC if any one of the following occurs:

1. Non-payments for child care services and/or lack of adherence to tuition payment policies.
2. Behavior issues that may affect the safety, health, or general well-being of other children or staff at the NELC.
3. Lack of parental cooperation with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings, conferences or outside referral.
4. Abusive behaviors and/or verbal threats by parents/guardians toward program staff, other parents or children.
5. Necessary enrollment forms have not been submitted within the designated time frame.

HOT LUNCH PROGRAM

The hot lunch program is a separate program through your family's Educate by TADS account (formerly Cornerstone). Please write a separate check payable to Nativity Hot Lunch Program with the **child's name written on the memo line.** This year's hot lunch costs may be found on the hot lunch menu. Hot lunch operates on a **pre-paid basis** and families are expected to carry a positive balance throughout the year. Paper statements will be printed and sent home twice per month with the youngest/only child if the account has fallen below zero dollars at the time the statements are printed. **Lunch accounts need to be replenished within one week of the statement being sent home.** Families that are unable to bring their account current and reload for future use within the one week time period will be asked to send their child (ren) with a cold lunch until they are able to do so.

Families may call the kitchen at 651-696-5415 to determine the amount in their account to help ensure that they do not reach a negative balance. We ask that phone calls be made between 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 – 3:30 p.m. The kitchen is busy preparing, serving, and cleaning up from lunch between 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. so staff will not be able to take your phone call during these times.

We are doing our best to offer our students and their families an affordable, balanced lunch program and appreciate everyone's cooperation and responsiveness to our request for compliance with these policies. Thank you for helping us maintain a strong hot lunch program which benefits all our children.

DAILY DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

- A parent or authorized adult will be responsible to bring your child **into** the center each day, help your child remove outdoor clothing and place it on his/her hook, sign your child in on the sign-in sheet in the classroom, and leave your child in the care of a classroom staff person. Please do not drop your child off in front of the center and let them enter the building by themselves. Prior notice is appreciated when someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up or dropping off a child. **The NELC is not responsible for children left unattended.**
- For the respect of your child and all children at the center, we recommend your child be in attendance between 8:30- 9:00 a.m. The NELC should be notified by 8:00 a.m. if a child will be late or absent for any reason. The NELC staff will call home to verify child (rens) absences when they are not present at school and no notification has been received.
- All children in the extended day and full day preschool programs must be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. by a parent or authorized adult. When leaving the NELC, please be sure to notify staff and sign/check your child out with the appropriate staff member. If you have multiple children at the NELC, we assume that the same person will pick up all children at the same time. If there is a scheduling conflict that does not allow you to do this, you must notify staff in advance of the changes.
- We must have authorization to release your child to someone other than a parent or guardian. Please notify the NELC in writing, email, or by phone if someone different is picking up your child. **WE WILL RELEASE CHILDREN TO AUTHORIZED PERSONS ONLY.** Photo ID **MUST** be shown by the person picking up your child.
- Our staff will assume that once you are present to pick up your child, responsibility for your child is now yours.
- The NELC closes at 6:00 p.m. All children must be picked up and out of the building no later than 6:00 p.m. Please see financial arrangements section for information on late fees.
- In the event that your child is still at the NELC after closing time and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:
 1. Attempt to reach you on your cell, work or home phone.
 2. Call the people listed as emergency contacts on the emergency card.
 3. Call Social Services.

PARISH OFFICE AND NELC VISITORS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The Parish and The Nativity Early Learning Center assure all visitors receive a warm, friendly and professional welcome, whatever the purpose of their visit. Our security policy states that all visitors must check in at the Parish office prior to touring, meetings and/or picking up a child at the NELC. The entry door into the NELC from the parish office will now be secured (locked). The Parish Office Secretary, will unlock the door for you. All visitors and NELC parents without their key FOBs will be asked to sign in and sign out on the Visitors Record Book. They should be ready to produce formal identification upon request. Please let your child's teachers know if someone other than you will be picking up your child. Please inform the adult picking up your child of the sign in and sign out policy. If you enter the facility without a key FOB, you must sign in and sign out each time. This simple procedure ensures the safety of our children.

CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

The NELC should be notified immediately of any change of address, telephone numbers, change of emergency contacts or their information, and employment. This is extremely important because we must be able to contact parents or guardians at all times.

PARENT – STAFF RELATIONS

The NELC is committed to open communication. Generally, verbal communication is best. You will find, however, that at times availability of staff at drop-off/pick-up times is limited.

There are telephones with direct numbers located in each classroom. At times you may be able to reach a teacher during the day, but please keep in mind when a teacher spends time on the phone; they are not able to fully meet the needs of the children.

- Notices are posted at the parent information board by the front entrance of the NELC.
- Notices about the week's lessons and specific classroom information are posted on the bulletin boards or doors located at the front entrance of each classroom.
- Notices are often placed in each child's folder or cubby. The location of the information varies considering the subject matter of the notice.
- Twice a year we will sit down with you and talk about your child's achievements and accomplishments during our parent/teacher conferences (for full day preschool children). During these conferences, teaching staff will share with you developmental checklists, observation notes and some samples of your child (ren)'s work. At this time, we would also like for you to bring observations about your child's development at home as well as any questions or other relevant information you would like to discuss. We strive to provide communication to all families in a manner that is sensitive to family values, culture, identity and home language. This is a time to talk both about what your child has learned in our program as well as what they have to look forward to!
- Parent participation and observation is encouraged, and parents should feel free to visit the NELC at any time. It is appreciated if parent/guardians visit at times that are less disruptive to the classrooms. Please check with your child's teacher to find out which times are best to visit your child's classroom. Prior notice is also greatly appreciated.

- To further communicate with the parents, a monthly newsletter is published, and some classrooms may send out weekly class updates with information about lessons and activities planned for that class.
- The director's work hours vary each day. If the director is not available please reference the director's office door postings or the calendar on the office door. It is the director's wish that all parents know our door is always open for concerns about the program, staff or children attending. If you wish to schedule a meeting, please contact the director at 651-696-5437 or nmcgie@nativity-mn.org.

CHILD OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT PLAN

At The Nativity Early Learning Center (NELC) we use a variety of assessment tools including observations and developmental checklists in order to continuously monitor and support your child's development. Constant interaction with the children allows teachers to appropriately assess their skills and developmental levels as well as their interests and needs. Our curriculum and activities are then modified based on these assessment results to meet the needs of individual children. Our assessment results also indicate areas where the NELC will plan program improvement.

The formal assessments are organized by the NELC's goals and objectives. This enables classroom teachers to align curriculum and lesson planning with a clear grasp of program goals and objectives. When curriculum is created and activities are assessed, appropriate developmental checklists are considered. During curriculum meetings assessments and checklists are used to help guide curriculum and classroom planning.

Developmental checklists help teachers observe, record, and evaluate children's skills and knowledge. The checklists are closely linked to the developmentally appropriate activities that our program offers.

Each of these assessment tools will be administered in your child's classroom with their primary teacher. It is important that children are able to participate in assessment in an environment that is familiar to them. If the results of these assessments indicate a concern, the NELC will work along with the family to arrange for a developmental screening or referral for a diagnostic assessment for the child. Results of all assessments will be kept confidential and will remain stored in the center's locked office.

We will meet with you twice a year to discuss your child's achievements and accomplishments during our parent/teacher conferences. During these conferences, teaching staff will share with you developmental checklists, observation notes and some samples of your child (ren)'s work. At this time, we would also like for you to bring observations about your child's development at home as well as any questions or other relevant information you would like to discuss. We strive to provide communication to all families in a manner that is sensitive to family values, culture, identity and home language. This is a time to talk both about what your child has learned in our program as well as what they have to look forward to!

CHILD AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Teaching staff are familiar with family support services and specialized consultants who are able to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services. They use this knowledge to suggest

and guide families to these services as appropriate. The NELC has a Ramsey County Child and Family Services Guide that is kept on the front table as you enter the NELC. Parents may email the director directly for a copy of this resource guide.

CONFIDENTIALITY/PRIVACY PROTECTION

The NELC shall not disclose a child's record to any person other than the child's parent or guardian, the child's legal representative, employees of the NELC, and the Department of Human Services unless the child's parent or guardian has given written consent or as otherwise required by law.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS

An open line of communication is valued at the NELC. Please use the following procedure for bringing grievances to our attention:

1. If there is an issue or concern related to a classroom situation, address it first with your child's teacher at a time that does not interfere with the care of the children.
2. If the issue or concern is related to the NELC policy or administration, address the issue or concern with the Director.
3. It is expected that most issues or concerns can be resolved within a day. However, some instances may require more attention.

PARENT ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)

The Parent Advisory Board (PAB) is composed of parents with currently enrolled children at the NELC. All parents are welcome and strongly encouraged to attend PAB meetings; no prior notice of attendance is required. You are encouraged to join the group at any time. Monthly meetings are held and meeting reminders, with location and time, are posted in the monthly newsletters. The goal of the PAB is to provide input and feedback to the Director and staff of the NELC and to encourage parent participation in the center.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

The goal of the NELC is to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment for the children in our care. Since the NELC is equipped and licensed to care for well children, a child that shows signs of illness in the morning (fever, sore throat, headache, rash, upset stomach, or unusual fatigue) should NOT be brought to the NELC. Please arrange for alternate care for your child in the event of illness. Also, please call the NELC no later than 8:00 a.m. to inform us of your child's illness and absence.

Should a child become ill during their day at the NELC, the following steps will be followed:

- The ill child will be separated from the other children and attempts will be made to comfort the child.

- The parents will be contacted to pick up the child.
- If the parents are unavailable and/or fail to pick-up the child within one hour (unless otherwise determined), the emergency contacts will be notified.
- The child will be observed for other symptoms.
- If the child is severely ill, 911 will be called.
- If the parents and/or emergency contacts fail to pick up the ill child within one hour, it will be at the discretion of the Director to call 911 and/or child protection.

Children must be kept at home or the parent/guardian will be notified if the following symptoms occur during the child's day at the NELC.

- An illness which prevents participation in normal daily program activities (including outdoor play). The child may not return to the NELC until he/she is able to participate in normal daily program activities.
- An illness that results in more care than the program can provide without compromising the health and safety of others.
- Flu. The child must stay home for at least 7 days after onset of illness; or until free of symptoms (including fever) for 24 hours, whichever is longer. Avoid close contact with others as much as possible, even at home.
- **Vomiting within the last 24 hours. The child may not return to the NELC until vomiting has stopped (vomiting is defined as one episode in the previous 24 hours).**
- **Diarrhea within the last 24 hours. The child may not return to the NELC until diarrhea has stopped (diarrhea is defined as one episode in the previous 24 hours).**
- **Undiagnosed rash or a rash that can be contagious. The child may not return to the NELC until a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not those of a communicable disease that requires exclusion.**
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or pus draining from the eyes or ears. The child may not return to the NELC until the child has been evaluated by the healthcare provider and until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins, or until the healthcare provider has cleared the child for readmission.
- Head lice or nits. The child may not return to the NELC until the first treatment is completed and no live lice are seen.
- 100 degree Fahrenheit temperature auxiliary (under arm) or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness – until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the program. **CHILDREN MUST BE FEVER FREE FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION BEFORE RETURNING TO THE NELC.**
- Chicken pox. The child may not return to the NELC until all the blisters have dried into scabs and no new blisters or sores have started within the last 24 hours.
- Bacterial infection such as strep and impetigo. The child may not return to the NELC until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and until the child is without fever for 24 hours.
- Acute Bronchitis (Chest Cold), Influenza, Pneumonia, Respiratory Infection, Croup, Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease. The child may not return to the NELC until fever is gone for 24 hours and the child is well enough to participate in routine activities.
- Measles. The child may not return to the NELC until 4 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps. The child may not return to the NELC until 9 days after swelling begins.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough). The child may not return to the NELC until 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment begins.
- Ringworm, Scabies. The child may not return to the NELC until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Rotaviral Infection. The child may not return to the NELC until diarrhea has stopped.
- Rubella (German Measles). The child may not return to the NELC until 7 days after the rash appears.

- Respiratory distress that causes breathing difficulties, wheezing, or uncontrollable coughing.
- Unusual color of skin, eyes, stool, or urine. The child may not return to the NELC until a medical exam indicates the child does not have hepatitis A.
- Mouth sores associated with inability to control saliva. The child may not return to the NELC until a health care provider states child is noninfectious.
- Signs of possible severe illness including unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty with breathing, or when a child is unable to participate in our program without requiring more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

Please inform the Director or classroom teacher immediately if your child has been exposed to or contracted a contagious disease, since other children and families may have been unknowingly exposed.

The NELC will take the responsibility of informing other families with the utmost confidentiality. We appreciate calls reporting the reason for a child's absence. Children and staff who have the symptoms noted above may not attend the NELC until:

- A health care provider has determined the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent.
- There is no longer a threat to the health of children and/or staff in the program.
- The child is well enough to participate in normal daily activities.

A child may return to the NELC after a "same day" doctor visit if:

- The child is returning from a well child check-up.
- The child has a note from the doctor allowing a same day return to the NELC and the child has not had a fever above 100 degrees Fahrenheit auxiliary in the past 24 hours.
- None of the above-listed exclusion criteria is present.

MEDICATION

Non-Prescription Medications

Written permission from the parent is required for the administration of any non-prescription medication such as Tylenol, Benadryl, skin lotions, cough drops and lip balm. These will be administered according to the manufacturer's instructions unless written instructions are provided by a dentist or physician. In addition, a signed authorization from the parent or guardian is also required.

Prescription Medications

For prescription medications to be administered, the NELC will follow written instructions from a physician or dentist before administering. Signed authorization from the parent or guardian is also required. The pharmacy label on a bottle constitutes the prescription.

Medications must be kept in their original container and be properly and legibly labeled with the child's full name and current prescription information. By state law, we can administer only medicine prescribed for the child in the labeled and dated prescription bottle. Medication will be kept out of the reach of the children in a secure location in the classroom or refrigerator (if required).

Medications will not be given after the expiration date and unused portion will be returned to the child's parent.

Parent must state dosage, time and duration the medication is to be given. Parents should inform staff of the last time the medication was given.

Please do not send medicine with your child to keep in their backpack for self-medication. This includes medicines such as cough drops, lip balm and inhalers.

ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY

Responsible supervision is a top priority of the NELC. Children are never left alone. All NELC staff are required to be trained in First Aid, CPR, Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control and Emergency Procedures. The NELC program is to be operated in a manner which minimizes accidents and injuries to children and staff. Should an accident or injury occur staff will do the following:

- If the injury is less serious, the NELC staff will administer the necessary first aid and an accident report will be filled out for parents to sign and return. The report will be filed in an annually reviewed accident report book.
- If the injury requires more attention, the parent/guardian will be contacted as soon as possible. However, there may be situations when the emergency services will be contacted before the parent/guardian.
- If the accident requires immediate emergency treatment, we will proceed to call 911. If necessary, the child will be taken to Children's Hospital or the Hospital indicated on the emergency card.
- A report of injury must be made to the Department of Human Services within 24 hours of treatment by a physician or emergency medical service.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency numbers are posted near all telephones: 911, Poison Control, Department of Licensing, Department of Public Health, and Child Protection. Emergency information and phone numbers for all children are kept in all classrooms, the Director's office and on all field trips and walks.

Procedures for tornadoes and fire evacuation are posted in each room of the building. Safety and emergency procedures are a regular part of the planning and discussion of the staff and are part of the curriculum for the children.

Fire drills are performed monthly and tornado drills are performed monthly from April-September. If alternative shelter is necessary, children will be taken to the Nativity School building at 1900 Stanford Avenue.

Fully equipped first aid kits are located in each classroom. Teachers take at least one fully equipped first aid kit to the outdoor play areas as well as on field trips and outings away from the NELC.

FIELD TRIPS

During the year, we will be taking the children on field trips and neighborhood walks. These ventures are an important part of a child's learning experience. Field trips are not included in the tuition and written permission is required for all off-site field trips. Advance notice of all field trips will be posted as early as possible on the parent board in each classroom. Permission slips will be sent home with each child or kept on file if applicable.

There may be times when it is important for us to have additional help with a field trip in order for us to have an outing that will be safe for the children. We will ask for parent volunteers in advance for specific field trips.

PARENT/GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERS

The NELC welcomes parents to share their time and talents, hobbies or careers in their child's classroom. Please talk to your child's teacher or the Director if you can spare some time or talent for the enrichment of the children at the NELC.

RESEARCH/PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Occasionally, the NELC may be involved in research activities or a public relations event. We will obtain written parental permission before each occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity involving a child. No child will participate unless prior permission from the parent has been obtained. Furthermore, the above mentioned activities are not allowed to interfere with or compromise the care of the children at the NELC.

REST TIME

Rest time is provided daily as a time for quiet and to gather energy. Naps are to be peaceful and supervised. Rest time is part of the daily routine of the full day preschool programs. The school age extended day programs do not have rest times.

If a child is not asleep after 30-40 minutes, the child is welcome to engage in quiet activities on his/her cot so as not to disturb other children who are resting.

Please send a soft item such as a blanket and/or one stuffed animal with your child to encourage a soothing and peaceful rest time. Large amounts of rest time things or stuffed animals that make noise tend to cause disruptions during rest times.

MALTREATMENT OF MINORS MANDATED REPORTING POLICY FOR DHS LICENCED PROGRAMS

Our top priority at the NELC is the safety and well-being of the children in our care.

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 431-6600.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 651-266-4500 or local law enforcement at 651-291-1111 or 911.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 431-6600.

What to Report

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and should be attached to this policy.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

Failure to Report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

Retaliation Prohibited

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of

Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

Internal Review

When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the facility must complete an internal review within 30 calendar days and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care. The internal review must include an evaluation of whether:

- (i) Related policies and procedures were followed;
- (ii) The policies and procedures were adequate;
- (iii) There is a need for additional staff training;
- (iv) The reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved; and
- (v) There is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.

Primary and Secondary Person or Position to Ensure Internal Reviews are Completed

The internal review will be completed by the director. If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, Parish Business Administrator will be responsible for completing the internal review.

Documentation of the Internal Review

The facility must document completion of the internal review and make internal reviews accessible to the commissioner immediately upon the commissioner's request.

Corrective Action Plan

Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or the license holder, if any.

Staff Training

The license holder must provide training to all staff related to the mandated reporting responsibilities as specified in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556). The license holder must document the provision of this training in individual personnel records, monitor implementation by staff, and ensure that the policy is readily accessible to staff, as specified under Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision 14.

The mandated reporting policy must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment and must be made available upon request.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The NELC aims to meet the needs of all children. We welcome children of all levels of ability and need. Every attempt will be made at the NELC to support your child with special needs and contribute to their well being and success.

When NELC staff suspect that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner. It is

also provided with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment.

Special Educators

Some children in the NELC receive services for a variety of special needs. These services are in place to strengthen particular skills and to support the child's goals for their participation in our community and the larger society. Although they are here for one child, they also interact with the other children and the teachers. These specialists are part of our community. The specialists may work directly in the room with the child and include others or they may work with a child in a separate classroom.

PETS

Pets may be a part of our program. Parents will be notified before a new pet is added to a classroom. If a child has an allergy to a pet, the pet will be excluded from the setting. Staff will supervise children closely in the event of a pet being present in the classroom, and strict sanitary guidelines will be followed with regard to the animal.

WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD WEAR TO THE NELC

Your child should be comfortably dressed according to the season. Each child must have at least one full change of clothing appropriate for the current season, including extra shoes, socks, underwear, shirts, shorts, pants, etc. stored in their cubby or backpack at the center. Please check your child's cubby regularly to ensure that it is properly stocked with appropriate clothing. All clothing and other belongings must be labeled with your child's name.

Following the recommendation of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), NELC staff will remove hood and neck drawstrings from preschool children's outerwear including jackets and sweatshirts. Drawstrings are a hazard that can lead to injuries when they catch on such items as playground equipment, bus, car doors, etc.

Proper footwear is essential for the safety of your child. Flip flops have been proven unsafe. They do not give enough support to the foot, causing children to trip and fall. Tennis shoes or regular shoes will give your child's feet support and make walking, running, and climbing safer and more fun. Please be sure to send your child in closed toed shoes.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Toys and items of value should remain at home. These items can lead to competition, jealousy, and unnecessarily difficult situations. An exception to this policy is when teachers ask your child to specifically bring an item for show and tell or other special event. Please do not leave medications, including over-the-counter medications, in your child's cubby. Blankets, extra clothes, or special stuffed toys that offer security at naptime are welcome. Please take these items home on a regular basis to be cleaned.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an important part of your child's day at the NELC. We believe it is vital to the total health of a child. We will go outdoors each day, weather permitting. **ALL CHILDREN WHO ARE WELL ENOUGH TO BE AT THE NELC WILL BE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES.**

Appropriate clothing must be sent with your child at all times. For cold weather, appropriate clothing includes snow pants, warm coat, hat, waterproof mittens, scarf, and waterproof boots.

In hot or rainy weather, general precautions will be taken in determining appropriate outdoor time. At times when a heat or weather advisory has been issued, the children will be kept indoors.

Children will have the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun, they may wear sun protective clothing, applied skin protection, or both. Applied skin protection will be either sunscreen or sun block with UVB and UVA protection of SPF or higher that is applied to exposed skin. Public health authorities recommend using repellents only containing DEET. Staff apply insect repellent no more than once a day and only with written parental permission.

Wind Chill:

We will not go outside if there is a negative wind chill or air temperature.

Heat Index:

We will not go outside if the temperature is 95 degrees or above.

We receive email alerts from the MN Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). We follow their recommendations when there is air pollution advisory.

FOOD SERVICE

The NELC is a **peanut and nut free** program. This change was made to accommodate the increasing number of children that are allergic to peanuts, nuts, and peanut oil. Nut allergies can be life threatening. This is not only through direct ingestion, but can be through smell, and touching of only trace amounts. **We require that you do not send any lunch items, snacks or birthday treats which contain peanuts or nuts or are processed on shared equipment.** We request your cooperation and thank you in advance for adhering to this policy for the safety of all children. If you accidentally send a peanut and/or nut product with your child (ren), we will send home a friendly reminder. Whenever possible, we will label and return the item that contained nut with the following note:

We noticed your child's lunch today contained a "peanut and/or nut" product. Please be advised we are a "peanut and/or nut" free program. We need to follow this policy in order to ensure the safety of all children enrolled at the NELC.

SPECIAL TREATS/BIRTHDAYS

It is always a joy to have celebrations at the NELC. Many staff celebrate holidays with the children in their classroom. We encourage parents to share holidays and celebrations from their heritage with children at the NELC.

A child's birthday is another important occasion for celebration. Parents who would like to celebrate their child's birthday should talk to teachers the week before so we can plan accordingly. The NELC prefers non-food alternatives to share, such as colorful stickers, simple games or crafts, or birthday accessories such as hats or plates. **Any food items brought to the NELC from home must be purchased from a store and brought to the NELC in the original wrapper or container.** Please be advised that we are a peanut and nut free program. Please also be considerate of food allergies in your child's classroom. Check with the classroom teacher if you are unsure of present food allergies.

The NELC discourages using the center as a place for making arrangements, picking up children, or passing out invitations to private birthday parties. Children's feelings can be hurt when they are excluded from a celebration.

MEALS AND SNACKS

The NELC provides breakfast and a morning and afternoon snack. Breakfast is served between 6:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Children may bring their own breakfast to eat at this time. It is important that children have their breakfast completed by 8:00 a.m. as it is vital to the scheduling of the day. Parents must plan their arrival times accordingly.

Lunch times will generally be between 11:15 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. Typically, lunch begins shortly after 11:15 a.m. Parents may provide cold lunches from home for their child or they may purchase hot lunch on school days only. **Menus for hot lunch are sent home monthly** with each child and are also posted in each classroom. Milk will be served with lunch. Bag lunches are not kept refrigerated and we do not reheat your child's food. If you send leftovers, make sure it is something that can be enjoyed cold, or send it in a preheated insulated thermos. All uneaten food will be placed back in your child's lunch box so that you have a clear understanding of what and how much your child eats.

What a child eats can directly and greatly affect a child's mood and behavior. With this in mind, please ALWAYS send high quality, nutritious meals with your child that meet the USDA guidelines for your child's age. A USDA food guide pyramid is included below.

When packing lunches, avoid the prepackaged lunchables, snack cakes or juice that is not 100% juice. These are loaded with extra sugar children do not need. Prepackaged lunches contain far more fat, saturated fat, and sodium than your child needs in a day. Also, please be mindful of portion size. Children often have too many choices in their lunch and become overwhelmed. Fewer options cause less anxiety and provide for a more productive lunchtime.

The following are bag lunch requirements for a healthy and well-balanced lunch for your child:

Ages 3-5 years old	Ages 6-12 years old
Fluid Milk: 3/4 cup of 1% or Skim Milk	Fluid Milk: 1 cup of 1% or Skim Milk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat, Poultry, Fish or Cheese: 1/2 oz. • Or Cottage Cheese, Cheese Food, or Cheese Spread: 3 oz. • Or Egg: 1/2 • Or Cooked Dry Beans, or Peas: 1/8 cup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat, Poultry, Fish or Cheese: 1 oz. • Or Cottage Cheese, Cheese Food, or Cheese Spread: 4 oz. • Or Egg: 1/2 • Or Cooked Dry Beans, or Peas: 1/4 cup

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Or Sunbutter/Soynut Butter: 1 T. • Or Sunflower Seeds: 3/4 oz. • Or Yogurt: 1/4 cup <p>Or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Or Sunbutter/Soynut Butter: 2 T. • Or Sunflower Seeds: 1 oz. • Or Yogurt: 1/2 cup <p>Or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternates</p>
Vegetables and/or Fruit: 1/2 cup	Vegetables and/or Fruit: 3/4 cup
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grains/Bread or Bread Alternate: 1/2 slice • Cereals, Pastas, Noodles, Grains: 1/4 cup <p>Or an equivalent service of acceptable bread alternate such as cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins etc. made from whole grain or enriched meal or flour, or a serving of cooked enriched or whole grain rice or macaroni or other pasta products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grains/Bread or Bread Alternate: 1 slice • Cereals, Pastas, Noodles, Grains: 1/4 cup <p>Or an equivalent service of acceptable bread alternate such as cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins etc. made from whole grain or enriched meal or flour, or a serving of cooked enriched or whole grain rice or macaroni or other pasta products.</p>
USDA BASED CHILD CARE FOOD GUIDE	USDA BASED CHILD CARE FOOD GUIDE

The NELC promotes good nutritional habits, manners, and self-help skills at meal times. Staff members eat with children and guide the social and learning experience associated with mealtimes.

LICENSING

The Minnesota Department of Human Services Division of Licensing licenses the NELC to provide childcare. They can be reached at (651) 296-3971. The Inspections & Environmental Protection Department of the City of Saint Paul licenses the NELC to provide food to the children in our care and can be reached at (651) 266-9090.

NAEYC ACCREDITATION

The Nativity Early Learning Center is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We pursued NAEYC because of their high standards that raise the quality of early childhood educational programs. NAEYC is the highest honor that can be bestowed on any early childhood programs succeeding.

HEALTH CONSULTANT

The NELC has a contract with Health Consultants for Child Care for visits, periodic advice, health training, and an annual review of Health and Safety Policies as stipulated under the Department of Human Services Division of Licensing.



We accept the rights and responsibilities of being a member of the Nativity Early Learning Center. We understand the program goals and code of conduct and will follow the guidelines defined in the parent handbook.

Parent Signature

Child's Name (s)

Date

Please return to your child's teacher