**Noah’s Ark Christian Academy**

**2301 W. Arkansas, Pantego, Texas 76013**

**Metro 817 303-8799**

**Policies and Regulations**

**PHILOSOPHY**

We believe that the first years of a child’s life are fundamentally important. These years serve as the foundation that shape a child’s future cognitive, physical, social and emotional development. A proper foundation is necessary to prepare students for tomorrow and we begin by preparing them with a biblical foundation.

Children learn more quickly in their early years than any other time of their life, these are the years that have the most rapid brain growth. Early experiences affect the brain’s development. Both positive and negative experiences shape a child’s development and can have lifelong effects. Through nurturing and individualized attention, we take pride in providing a warm, friendly, and fun environment for your child, while ensuring they receive the guidance and structure they need.

Noah’s Ark Christian Academy was founded to provide a safe haven to children from all socio-economic backgrounds, while instilling biblical values. Our goal is to provide preventative measures aimed to reduce the risk factors that increases a child’s probability of entering the criminal justice system.

The purpose of this Parent Handbook is to outline the policies and procedures under which we operate as licensed child care providers.

**ENROLLMENT**

 NACA admits students of any race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to the students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies or other school administered programs.

 In order for the child to maintain enrollment at the school, parents must faithfully meet all financial obligations toward the school. Parents must also faithfully represent the child at all Parent/Teacher meetings.

 A parent’s failure to comply in any of these vital areas will be perceived to mean that the parent is not in agreement with school policies and conditions of enrollment. A student represented by parents who fail in meeting these most important conditions will be dismissed.

 If and when policy changes are made parents will be notified in writing prior to change.

**WITHDRAWALS AND TERMINATIONS**

 All withdrawals must be officially processed through the school office. The child must be officially withdrawn, and the account paid in full before any books or records will be released.

 Please note that each child’s attendance at NACA is a privilege, not a right. Therefore, NACA reserves the right to refuse any child admittance to class either temporarily or permanently. A student may be dismissed from school at any time that he/she is found to be out of harmony with the rules and policies of the school. Should the management of NACA determine for any reason, in its sole discretion, that the expulsion of a child is warranted, the child may be expelled and your agreement terminated. Decisions in these matters are the full responsibility of the administration and further reviews or appeals will not be considered.

 Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center:

 **Parental Actions for child’s expulsion**

* Failure to pay or make arrangements to pay
* Failure to complete required forms including the child’s immunization records
* Verbal abuse to staff
* Excessive tardiness when picking up children
* Failure to communicate with director of child’s absence after 2 weeks

 **Child’s actions for expulsion**

* + - Failure of child to adjust after 30 days
		- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to themselves or others
		- Uncontrollable tantrums
		- Patterns of physical abuse to staff or other children
		- Excessive biting that leaves a bruise

 Prior to expulsion, the director will verbally communicate with parent indicating what the problem is and every effort will be made on the behalf of the center, as well as expected to be addressed by the parent, to correct the problem. If, after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children’s welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. The parent will be given a minimum of one week’s notice to find another center to provide care for this child.

 **TUITION**

 Your enrollment fee, due at the time of enrollment is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 Tuition is due each Monday, in advance of the week, with no deduction or refunds for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Your tuition fee is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 If an enrolled school-aged child is in attendance on a day that public school is in session due to a holiday, snow day, teacher in-service, etc., an additional $10.00 fee will be due on that day.

 Tuition not received by Tuesday morning will be assessed a $10.00 bookkeeping fee.

 If your child is ill for one or more weeks, you are required to pay ½ your regular tuition.

 You will receive two (2) vacation weeks per year without charge. Vacation weeks can only be used when the child is not present during a week.

**COMMUNICATION & FAMILY PARTNERSHIP**

* Daily Communications. Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child’s activities and experiences at the center. Notes will be available electronically using the MyProcare App.
* Bulletin Boards. Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, , holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.
* Family Visits. Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor’s badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving.
* Conferences. Family & teacher conferences occur once a year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child’s strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child’s growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child’s progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

**CURRICULA**

* **NACA** uses the Abeka Curriculum. The mission of this curriculum is to support and equip students, teachers, and parents by providing amazing academic resources based upon biblical values, beginning as early as 18 months.
* For information about your child’s day, please see copies of daily schedules and lessons plans posted in each classroom.

**DISCIPLINE**

 Discipline and guidance at NACA is consistent and based on individual needs and development. We promote self-discipline. Physical punishment is never permitted. Instead, our method consists of redirecting challenging behavior.

**NOTIFICATIONS OF BEHAVIORAL ISSUES TO FAMILIES**

* If a child’s behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child’s individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.
* On rare occasions, a child’s behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:
* A child appears to be a danger to others.
* Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
* Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child’s accommodations for success and participation.

**HEALTH**

 In compliance with state law, current medical immunization records are required prior to enrollment and are to be updated regularly. A copy of a current immunization record is needed on file within 30 days from child’s last birthday.

 Chapter 36 of the Texas Health and safety code requires that all four and five-year olds enrolled in an early childhood center or preschool setting must have both vision and hearing screening within 120 days of enrollment.

 Local health authorities do not require children to have documentation of a TB test to be on file at this time.

* All NACA caregivers are required to have a TB test verifying that the employee is free of active tuberculosis.

 If your child has any special care needs, a statement is needed on file. This includes, but is not limited to, allergies, existing illness, previous serious illness and injuries, hospitalizations during the past 12 months, and any medications prescribed for continuous, long-term use.

 Children with any type of allergy should have a completed food allergy emergency plan for the child on file prior to enrollment, as well as, some type of epinephrine injection.

**ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS**

 Parents are expected to escort their children into the center, sign them in, see that they are under proper supervision before leaving the premises. When picking up children, parents are expected to reenter the building and sign their children out, notifying the proper supervisor before leaving premises.

 Children should arrive no later than 10:30am; Exceptions will be made in cases of a doctor’s appointment accompanied with a doctor’s note and other special circumstances that have been approved by the director. A phone call should be made to the center, prior to a late arrival, in these circumstances.

 A late pick-up fee of $1.00 per minute will be assessed beginning at 6:31p.m.

 The center prohibits children from leaving the premises with any individual other than the parent unless written permission is granted by the parent. Proper identification will be required and a copy of the ID will be made and placed in the child’s file.

 In the event of inclement weather, NACA follows the same emergency closings as the Arlington Independent School District. The center will close when the AISD Schools close for weather. All closings will be announced by 6:30 a.m. on the local weather stations.

 When the AISD announces a delayed opening due to weather, NACA will follow their delayed opening. When the AISD announces a delayed opening, but then changes to closing, NACA will close as well.

 If the AISD closes early after initial opening at the regular time, NACA will also close early. In this event, parents will be contacted at their emergency number.

**ABSENCES**

* If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 10:30 AM, please call us at (817) 303-8799 or email us at noahsarkacademy@hotmail.com. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.
* If a school age child will not be attending before or after school care, please notify us at (817)303-8799 or by text message to (682) 438-1162. Failure to communicate absences causes our buses to be delayed when picking up children from our other schools.

**OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS**

 The center will be opened from 6:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

 The center will close at 12:00 noon for the following holidays: Thanksgiving Eve, New Year’s Eve, and Christmas Eve.

 The center will be closed for the following holidays: New Year’s Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, the entire week that July 4th falls in, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following, and Christmas Day.

 Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit at any time during regular business hours

 As long as your visit does not upset your child or disrupt the class routine. No appointment is necessary.

**ILLNESS**

 For the welfare of your child and others in the school, all children who are sick must be kept at home. When the child is well enough to participate in the normal school day, please send hat, coat, etc. as an aid to prevention of future illness. The class does participate in outdoor activities each day, weather permitting.

 Parents will be called and expected to immediately retrieve children who become ill. Under no circumstance should a child who exhibits signs of illness, or is running a low-grade fever be allowed in the center. Children absent due to a contagious illness will not be permitted to return to the center without a signed and dated statement from a physician.

 A child who was ill may return to NACA when the child is free of symptoms of illness for 24 hours or you have obtained a health care professional’s statement that the child no longer has an excludable disease or condition.

**MEDICATION**

 NACA will not administer medicine to children, with the exception of breathing treatments. Medication that is needed as a part of a child’s daily regimen, or other special circumstances, will be granted, based on the discretion of the director and assistant director.

 If a child is to receive any medication during the school day, the parent or guardian must have on file in the office an Authorization for Administration of Medication. This form is available in the school office. The medicine to be dispensed will be kept in the office and dispensed according to the doctor’s instructions. Prescription medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child’s name, date, directions and the physician’s name.

 Non-prescription medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child’s name and the date the medication is brought into the center.

 If your child requires medication during school hours and we do not have a signed authorization, it will be necessary for you to stop by and personally administer the medication. Teachers cannot be held responsible for carrying out these duties. No student will be allowed to dispense his or her own medication.

 No medications will be given without the proper signed consent from the parent or guardian.

 In case of medical emergency, every effort will made to notify parents and to contact your child’s physician or dentist immediately. If it is necessary to transport or have your child transported to a hospital, we will take your child to the nearest hospital.

**MEALS**

 Breakfast will be served at 8:00 a.m. ***No child will be served breakfast after 8:30 a.m.*** Please feed your child breakfast if you plan to arrive later than 8:00 a.m. Breakfast cannot be guaranteed if a child arrives after 8:20am. Adequate snacks and a hot nutritious lunch will be provided daily.

 NACA does not permit outside food, with the exception of parties or other special occasions. Substitutions will be provided for children with a food allergy that have the proper paperwork on file.

 Infant parents that are breastfeeding are welcome in the nursery to feed at any time, or you may provide us with breast milk for your child while in care.

**NUTRITION PROGRAM PRACTICES**

* Liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees F are kept out of children’s reach
* All staff are educated on food allergies and they take precautions to ensure children are protected
* On days that providers serve meals, prepared food that is brought into the program to be shared among children is commercial prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health officials
* Healthy snacks (as listed by the Texas Department of Agriculture) are available for school-aged children as children arrive.
* On days that provider serve meals, milk, fresh fruit and vegetables are available for children who bring lunches from home.

**PERSONAL ITEMS**

 Every pre-school child must have a clean change of clothing left at the center for “emergencies”. All articles of clothing must bear the child’s name. Infants and toddlers’ bottles, bottle lids, pacifiers and sippy cups must be labeled. The center is not responsible for lost clothing.

 In the event that a child does not have items needed for the day, parents will be called and expected to provide items.

 Toys and other personal belongings are not to be brought to the center except for a prearranged Show-and-tell. The center is not responsible for any articles or personal belongings brought from home.

**CLOTHING**

* Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.
* Flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

**ACTIVITIES**

 Children are encouraged to play outdoors on the playground daily except during intense heat or other inclement weather conditions. Please send adequate protective clothing for colder days. Protective wear for warm days such as hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen may be provided by parents. Sunscreen will be applied to children by a caregiver or under the supervision of a caregiver. NACA will provide sunscreen, when necessary, with parental consent.

 Children should wear appropriate foot wear to avoid accident or injury during outdoor play. Sandals that cover the heel of the foot are appropriate, but not flip flops.

During the summer, field trips are planned for ages 4 & up. Parental consent is given for children to go on field trips when the costs are paid prior to event, as well as when children are dressed in proper attire, which is a NACA t-shirt.

 Field trip schedules will be posted in advance, on the Friday before the scheduled week of outdoor activities, or at least 48 hours prior to.

 As required by state law, every preschool child will have an afternoon nap/rest period.

**OUTDOOR/PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDE**:

* climbing, sliding, jumping, running, balls, jump rope, racing, water balloons, parachute, catch, bubbles, follow the leader, squirt bottles, ride-on toys, wagons, tunnels, safe water toys, various games, water table, painting, neighborhood walks, exploring nature/weather, soccer, and yes falling. As you know, children play hard and will get some bumps and bruises from time to time. During the summer months (June, July and August) we allow for more outdoor activities and creative art projects. Weather permitting, we play outdoors every day.

**ELECTRONIC MEDIA/SCREEN TIME**

* Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a free choice, and limited to no more than 60 minutes per week per child.

**PARTIES**

 The main parties of the school year will be held in each individual classroom on the last day of school before Christmas and Valentine’s Day. Thanksgiving is celebrated school-wide with a “feast”. Being a Christian school, we do not celebrate Halloween. Teachers may acknowledge individual birthdays, but there will be no birthday parties during the school day. If a parent desires to furnish a special treat, it will be served after nap time by the teacher. Please bring only bakery goods and unopened drinks. Invitations may be handed out in class only if the entire class will be included.

**TRANSPORTATION**

 NACA does not provide transportation to and from home. However, we do transport to and from school and on various field trips.

**WATER ACTIVITIES**

 NACA does not have a swimming pool nor do we take the children to public swimming facilities. We do have “Wet Down” days where the children play in the sprinklers.

**ANIMAL**

 It is our policy not to have live animals inside our facility.

**CONCERNS**

 Parents with questions or concerns that need the attention of the director may call the center anytime during business hours.

 Parents wishing to participate in activities such as parties, field trips, etc. must check with the director prior to.

 A copy of the requirements regarding Gang-free zones are included in the parent’s handbook.

**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

 In case of an emergency evacuation, vans and staff vehicles will relocate children to The Montessori Academy of Arlington at 3428 W. Arkansas Lane (817) 274-1548.

 Each teacher will have with them their enrollment book containing all children in attendance. Also, the daily sign in sheet from the front desk will be available to help account for children.

 Included in our emergency preparedness kit is a copy of each child’s admission form which contain parent’s emergency contact information, and authorization for emergency care. The director, assistant director, and\or the person in charge is responsible for this kit.

 Local authorities will be called immediately. Parents and Licensing will be notified as soon as the children are out of danger.

**EVERY PARENT SHOULD KNOW**

 The number to your local licensing office is 817-321-8604.

 The Child Abuse Hotline number is 1-800-252-5400.

Caregivers obtain a minimum of 24 clock hours of training annually relevant to the age of children for whom they provide care for.

t least one clock hour of the annual training focuses on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and neglect

s part of an employee’s training that focuses on prevention, recognition, and reporting of child abuse and

 Neglect, materials covered include:

A) factors indicating a child is at risk of abuse and neglect

B) Warning signs indicating a child may be a victim of abuse and neglect

C) Procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect; and

D) Community organizations that have training programs available to child-care center staff members, children, and staff.

 Parents needing additional information may look on the Protective and Regulatory Services website at: <https://hhs.texas.gov/>.

 A copy of the minimum standards is available for you to review at this center any time.

 Also, A copy of the center’s most recent Licensing inspection report is also available for your review.

* Our center policies included in this handbook are reviewed annually and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.

**Parent’s Acknowledgement**

This is to acknowledge that **Noah’s Ark Christian Academy** has provided me with an updated copy of the Operational Policies and discussed its contents with me.

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Signature Date