



Student Handbook

2026-2027

**Northstar Kids Academy
2440 St. Andrews Blvd.
Panama City, FL 32405**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Northstar Kids Academy! We are happy that you have chosen to partner with us in your child's early education journey.

As we begin our very first year, we are excited to create a preschool environment where children feel loved, valued, safe, and encouraged to grow. Our goal is to provide a strong foundation for lifelong learning while nurturing each child's social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual development.

At Northstar Kids Academy we believe that every child is a unique gift from God and deserves to be treated with kindness, respect and compassion. We strive to provide a Christ-centered environment where children can develop confidence, curiosity, creativity, and a love of learning. Through hands-on experiences, age-appropriate curriculum, and meaningful relationships, we aim to help each child reach their full potential.

As a new preschool ministry of Northstar Church, we are committed to building strong partnerships with families. We recognize that parents are a child's first and most important teachers, and we look forward to working alongside you as we support your child's growth and development.

While this is our inaugural year, our team brings decades of experience in early childhood education and a deep passion for serving children and families. We are grateful for the opportunity to establish a preschool community built on faith, excellence, and genuine care for every child entrusted to us.

Thank you for being a part of the Northstar Kids Academy family. We are honored to share in these important early years and look forward to a wonderful year of learning, growth, and discovery together.

Sincerely,

Susan Ackermann
Preschool Director

Mission Statement

At Northstar Kids Academy, our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, Christ-centered learning environment where children are encouraged to grow spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Through meaningful relationships, hands-on learning experiences, and developmentally appropriate practices, we strive to inspire love of learning, build strong character, and equip children with a solid foundation for future success.

Philosophy

At Northstar Kids Academy, we believe every child is a unique gift from God and deserves to be loved, valued, and respected. We are committed to providing a safe, nurturing, Christ-centered environment where children can grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically.

We believe young children learn best through hands-on experiences, purposeful play, and positive relationships with caring adults. By partnering with families, and modeling Christian values, we strive to foster confidence, curiosity, kindness, and a lifelong love of learning while helping each child reach their God-given potential.

Objectives

At Northstar Kids Academy, are objectives are to:

- Provide a safe loving environment
- Foster spiritual growth
- Encourage social development
- Promote emotional growth
- Support physical development
- Encourage curiosity, creativity, and problem-solving
- Prepare children for future academic success by introducing age-appropriate concepts in literacy ,math, science, and social studies.
- Foster a love of learning
- Teach responsibility
- Promote kindness, compassion,honesty, and respect as a part of daily interactions
- Help children develop positive self-esteem and confidence

**Northstar Kids Academy
Calendar 2026-2027**

Teacher Planning/Room set-up.....	Mon-Thur	August 3-6
Preschool Open House.....	Friday	August 7
First Day of Preschool.....	Monday	August 10
Labor Day Holiday (School Closed).....	Monday	September 7
Fall Break (School Closed).....	Friday	October 9
Columbus Day (School Closed).....	Monday	October 12
Veterans Day (School Closed).....	Wednesday	November 11
Thanksgiving Holiday School Closed.....	Mon-Fri	November 23-27
Return from Thanksgiving Holiday.....	Monday	November 30
Christmas Holiday (School Closed).....	Monday	December 21
Return from Christmas Holidays.....	Tuesday	January 5
Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday (School Closed)	Monday	January 18
President's Day (School Closed).....	Monday	February 15
Spring Holidays (School Closed).....	Mon-Fri	March 15-19
Return from Spring Holidays.....	Monday	March 22
Good Friday (School Closed).....	Friday	March 26
K4 Graduation.....	Monday	May 24
Last Day of Preschool.....	Wednesday	May 26

Northstar Kids Academy Policies

1. Northstar Kids Academy is in session for 10 months, August through May and will follow the Bay District School calendar for starting and ending dates, days closed for holidays and inclement weather closures.
2. Preschool hours are from 8:30 - 12:00, Monday through Friday for students registered for our morning program and 7:30-5:30 for students registered for full time care.
3. Children must be 1, 2, 3 or 4 years of age by September 1st in order to enter his/her class accordingly.
4. Parents must complete all enrollment forms and pay all fees prior to the first day of school. Each child must receive all immunizations upon admission to the preschool unless there is a medical reason certified by a health care provider stating why these immunizations should not be made.
5. School physical form (HRS 3040) and up to date immunization record (HRS form 680) and a copy of a birth certificate are required for all students. Physical forms are good for two years.
6. Northstar Kids Academy will make every possible effort to protect the health and safety of the children. Cooperation from parents in helping prevent the spread of communicable diseases is of great importance. **See attached Health Policies and Guidelines.**
7. Children will only be released to those listed for pick-up on your application. If a child is to go home with another adult, the parent must notify the preschool director.
8. Parents are asked to see that children do not bring toys to school without prior knowledge of and approval of the teacher.
9. Children should wear clothing appropriate for learning, running and climbing.
10. All personal belongings and clothing must be marked with the child's name.
11. Outdoor play is an important part of our program. Please see that your child is appropriately dressed to play outside. We are outdoors 30 minutes daily, except in extreme weather.
12. Teachers cannot accept verbal messages from children. Please email the director at susan@northstar.cc or contact your child's teacher if there is information you need to share with us.
13. Children will need to bring a water bottle and a snack each day. Healthy snacks are recommended. Full time students will need to bring a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. All items will need to be labeled as such and include their name.
14. Registration and supply fees are to be paid once each school year at the time a child is registered. All fees are non refundable. Tuition is due the first of each month and is considered late after the 5th of the month. and is subject to a \$25.00 late fee. All fees will be paid through your Procure account. **Full tuition is due for months in which there are holidays or inclement weather. Credit is not given for absences**

15. Students entering a 3 or 4 year old program must be completely potty trained.

16. Registration dates will be determined by the preschool director and will allow enrollment by church members and current students and their families during the first week of registration. Next, we will register children from our current waiting list.

17. It is the responsibility of the director to assign children to classrooms.

18. Discipline Policy and Procedures

Quite often, when we hear the word “discipline”, we think of negative consequences to an action that was chosen. We often equate punishment with discipline. Proverbs 10:17 says that “He who heeds discipline shows the way to life, but whoever ignores correction lends others astray.” Proverbs 29:15 says that “To discipline a child produces wisdom....”, so we are shown that discipline is a positive action.

At Northstar Kids Academy, we use discipline rather than punishment, to help guide our children to better choices and actions. We believe that when children are taught and guided to responsible and respectful behavior, they begin to adopt these behaviors themselves.

- Children will not be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating or frightening.
- Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting.
- Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited.
- Children may not be denied active play as a consequence to misbehavior.

Strategies used in our discipline procedures

1. Encourage children to use their words when having a disagreement with another child. Facilitate children in their attempt to settle disputes.
2. Redirecting to a more acceptable behavior.
3. Counseling children individually regarding their behavior.
4. Setting clear boundaries.
5. Reinforcing positive behavior.
6. Modeling
7. Praising appropriate behavior.
8. Separating a child from the group (“Time-Out”)- one minute away for each year of age.
9. Making parents aware of disciplinary concerns.

At times, children need redirecting from “disruptive” behavior.

The following is considered “disruptive behavior”:

1. Inflicting physical or emotional harm on another child or adult.
2. Disrespect for other people and/or materials.
3. Consistently disobeying the rules of the classroom/playground, etc.
4. Requiring constant attention from the staff.

Discipline procedures for disruptive behavior:

Disruptive behavior will be addressed in an incident report. This will be completed to document any inappropriate behaviors that directly impact other children, staff Members, or the group as a whole. This report will be shared with the parent. Reports will be signed by the parent, teacher and director and will be kept on file.

If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents will be asked to meet with the child’s teacher and preschool director.

If the child’s behavior continues to be inappropriate, consistently disruptive, and/or dangerous, it may be necessary for the child to be sent home for a time to be determined, or removed from the preschool program altogether.

Children cannot become self-disciplined unless adults teach them right from wrong. At Northstar Kids Academy, children will be taught the expectations for correct behavior and encouraged to live and act accordingly. When children know something is wrong, and choose to do it anyway, consequences will follow to communicate that the behavior is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. This is in line With God’s relationship to us. He has given us His Word so that we may know how to live, and He has promised to discipline us if we belong to Him. (Proverbs 3:11-12 “My Son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in”).

Northstar Kids Academy Health Policies and Guidelines

The health and well-being of our children and staff are very important to us. Because young children are in close contact with one another throughout the day, illness can spread quickly. We ask parents to carefully monitor their children and keep them home when they are ill.

Children should remain home if they exhibit any signs of a contagious illness or are unable to comfortably participate in normal classroom activities.

A child should not attend preschool if he or she is experiencing the following:

A fever of 100 F or higher

Vomiting

Diarrhea

A persistent or severe cough

Unexplained rash

Excessive nasal discharge accompanied by other symptoms of illness

Conjunctivitis (pink eye)

Strep throat

Bronchitis

Croup

Flu-like symptoms

Any contagious disease or condition that may be spread to other children

Children diagnosed with a contagious illness must remain home until they have been receiving treatment and are fever and symptom free for 24 hours without medication.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, a parent will be notified and the child must be picked up in 45 minutes.

If medication is to be given at school, it must remain in the original container and a medication permission must be completed and signed by the parent.

Arrival/Departure and Security Policies

Access doors to the preschool are located on the back side of the building.

Doors open at 7:30 for full time students and for those who have secured a spot in our early drop-off program. Please bring your child to their classroom and sign them in on your Procure App. Children registered for the morning program (8:30-12:00), will be allowed to enter at 8:30.

Doors will remain locked throughout the day. **You are welcome at the school at any time.** These security measures are in place for the safety of the children and our staff.

It is only normal for some children to feel anxiety in a new situation or when being left in someone else's care. We find that with a child, the sooner a teacher can get them involved in classroom activities the more quickly the child adapts to the new environment. **We strongly urge parents to say their "good-bye's" quickly at the door and not enter the classroom.** You are encouraged to wait out of sight until your child has settled down, or feel free to call the preschool office at any time during the day to check on them.

Departure time begins at 12:00. Please come to the classroom to pick up your child.

Parent Agreement

I, _____ whose child _____ is enrolled in the 2026-2027 school year at Northstar Kids Academy, have received a copy of the *Student Handbook*. I have read and understand the policies and guidelines as described in the handbook, and agree to abide by them.

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)

(Date)

*****Please return to the preschool office as soon as possible.*****