

# NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024



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## Table of Contents

<p>Page 4 .....</p> <p>Page 5 .....</p> <p>Pgs. 6-18 .....</p> <p>Accident/Incident/Illness Reports</p> <p>Animals</p> <p>Attendance</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">General Information</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Drop-off / Pick-up Procedures</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Records</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Release of Children</p> <p>Birthdays</p> <p>Breastfeeding</p> <p>Cell Phones</p> <p>Chapel</p> <p>Child Abuse &amp; Neglect</p> <p>Class Composition</p> <p>Clothing/Jewelry</p> <p>Contact Information</p> <p>Curriculum</p> <p>Discipline</p> <p>Dismissal from New Hope</p> <p>Emergency Preparedness</p> <p>Enrollment</p> <p>Extended Care / Holiday Care</p> <p>Facebook Waiver</p> <p>Field Trips</p> <p>Financial Policies</p> <p>Gang Free Zone</p> <p>Health Topics</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Food Allergies (FAAP)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Health Checks</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Hearing &amp; Vision Screening</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Illness/Exclusion</p> <p>Pgs. 19-22 .....</p> <p>Back Cover .....</p>	<p>Mission Statement</p> <p>Non-Discriminatory Admissions Policy</p> <p>Important Contact Information</p> <p>New Hope E-mail Addresses</p> <p>School Hours and Weekly Schedule</p> <p>Topics in alphabetical order</p> <p>Health Topics (cont.)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Immunizations</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Medical Conditions (MCAP)</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Medical Emergencies</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Medication</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Tuberculin Testing</p> <p>Holiday Care</p> <p>Inclement Weather</p> <p>Label Belongings</p> <p>Lost and Found</p> <p>Meals and Food Service Practices</p> <p>Minimum Standards &amp; School Policies</p> <p>Nap/Safe Sleep</p> <p>New Hope Lutheran Church</p> <p>Open Door Policy</p> <p>Parent Communication</p> <p>Parent Participation</p> <p>Personal Belongings</p> <p>Potty Training</p> <p>Recess</p> <p>Social Media and Internet Reviews</p> <p>Special Events</p> <p>Staff Training</p> <p>Supplies</p> <p>Toy Safety</p> <p>Transportation</p> <p>Waiting Lists</p> <p>Water Activities</p> <p>Withdrawal/Leave of Absent</p> <p>A Parent's Guide to Day Care</p> <p>"Your Child Needs" Checklist</p>
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## **Mission Statement**

To develop life-long learners who know Christ and His teachings.

## **Non-Discriminatory Admissions Policy**

NHCS admits students of any race, color, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its policies, scholarships, athletics, and other school administered.

## **Important Contact Information:**

Local Health & Human Services licensing office: 817-321-8604.

Child Abuse Hotline **1-800-252-5400**

Texas Dept. of Family and Protective Services Email: [www.hhs.texas.gov](http://www.hhs.texas.gov)

A copy of Minimum Standards is available at all times in the school office

## **School Communication**

Director – [director@nhcskeller.org](mailto:director@nhcskeller.org)

Assistant Director – [Assistantdirector@nhcskeller.org](mailto:Assistantdirector@nhcskeller.org)

Phone: 817-428-9393

## HOURS & WEEKLY SCHEDULES

### School Year

<b>Preschool Hours</b>	8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Monday – Friday
<b>Extended Care Hours</b>	Before School: 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. After School: 2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
<b>Closings</b>	New Hope is completely closed 12 days each year. Refer to the annual calendar for exact closure dates.
<b>Extended Care/Holiday Care</b>	Available for Extended Care students on days when the Preschool Program is closed for student holiday.  Refer to the annual calendar for exact dates.

### Summer Camp

<b>Camp Hours</b>	9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Monday - Thursday
<b>Extended Care Hours</b>	Before School: 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. After School: 3:00 p.m. – 5:30 pm Friday: 7:00-5:30 (only available to families enrolled in Extended Care)

## **Accident/Incident/Illness Reports**

A New Hope staff member will report to you if there is an injury which requires first aid (ice pack, bandage), if your child is involved in a behavioral incident which warrants parent notification, or if your child develops symptoms of illness specified in these policies (refer to section “Health – Illness and Exclusion Criteria”) that warrant removal from school. If needed, you will be notified by phone, Procure App, and/or a written report. If a signature is required, the appropriate form will be presented to you for signature within 48 hours of incident. The original will be kept in your child’s file and a copy of the report will be provided to you upon request.

## **Animals**

On occasion animals may “visit” New Hope to coincide with special themes. Parents will be notified, and all appropriate safety and hygiene practices will be implemented. A child will never be forced or encouraged to interact with an animal visitor beyond his/her comfort level. We ask parents to please let us know if your child has specific allergies or phobias.

## **Attendance / General**

Regular, on-time attendance helps your child adjust to being at school and he/she will learn more through consistent participation in class. On time arrival is very important and is a requirement. New Hope is a preschool program first and inability to arrive on time (8:40 Preschool / 9:10 Summer Camp) is grounds for dismissal (please see section “Dismissal”)

School starts at 8:30 a.m. during the school year and at 9:00 a.m. in summer.

- Missing “coming in” time is hard on your child emotionally.
- Coming in when lessons or activities have already started disrupts the learning environment.
- Teachers are not able to make-up missed work and activities if you arrive after lessons.

If your child will be late due to an appointment or other delay and you still need to come to school, he/she may not be dropped off during naptime. Please check with your child’s teacher to verify the nap time so that you can plan accordingly.

If your child will be late or absent, please send a message in the Procure App to your child’s teacher or call the office and we will notify the teacher. Your child will be missed and we will be concerned! It is especially important for us to know if your child is sick. We are required to inform other parents of certain illnesses and to report certain illness to the proper agencies. We make every effort to keep track of the spread of illnesses and rely on parents to support these efforts.

## **Attendance / Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures**

When dropping off or picking up, the parent/guardian will use the Procure Touch tablet in the entry area using a finger/thumb print or numeric user password. This will check your child in or out and will open the inside security door so that you may proceed to your child’s classroom. A New Hope staff member will assist you in registering to use Procure Touch. The Procure app on your mobile device can also be used to check your child in/out by scanning the New Hope QR code at the entrance. However, this *will not* unlock the inside door to the school.

*In order to support efforts to reduce the spread of contagious diseases, please be sure to leave appropriate distance between yourself and others who are dropping off or picking up at the same time.*

Drop off:

Preschool students may be dropped off in their classroom between 8:25am and 8:40am. Summer Camp drop off hours are 8:55am to 9:10am. The teachers prepare a wonderful day of fun and learning, and they strive to get started by 8:40

a.m. A quick goodbye and a hug at the door are recommended. If you arrive *after 8:40* (9:10 in summer), please drop your child off in the office and the staff will deliver them to their classroom to avoid a disruption to the class lesson.

Extended Care students may be dropped off is 7:00 to 8:20 a.m. and Summer Camp drop-off is from 7:00 to 8:50 a.m.

Pick up:

Preschool students may be picked up in their classroom between 2:20 and 2:35 p.m. Summer Camp pick-up is between 2:50 and 3:05 p.m.

Extended Care students may be picked up between 2:40 and 5:30 p.m. Summer Camp pick-up is between 3:10 and 5:20 p.m.

### **Attendance Records**

According to state licensing requirements, a system must be in place to track each child coming and going from New Hope. The system must include the name of the child, date, time of arrival/departure and *the name of the individual who has dropped off or picked up*. New Hope utilizes the Procure System. Procure tracks attendance and controls the security system connected to the database management program. Each adult who is authorized to drop off or pick up your child will be registered in Procure from the information provided by the parent/guardian. Please do not give your personal code to anyone or allow another person to utilize the Procure app logged in as you. It is important that we follow state guidelines as described above.

### **Attendance / Release of Children**

Please notify the director or your child's teacher if your child will be picked up by someone other than those individuals who have been registered in Procure. *We will release your child only to individuals listed on your child's enrollment form, unless you advise us otherwise.* We will request to see the proper ID of anyone picking up your child who is not known to the teacher/staff. This is for the safety of the children, and we appreciate your cooperation and support of this policy.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are very special, and we love to celebrate them! It is customary, but not required, for parents to send a special birthday treat for the class to share at snack time. Please coordinate this with your child's teacher.

### **Breastfeeding**

A place will be provided to accommodate nursing mothers. Please feel free to discuss this need with the Director or Assistant Director.

### **Cell Phones**

Please complete cell phone conversations prior to approaching or entering New Hope. Your child and staff look forward to greeting you and sharing important information about their day.

### **Chapel**

Chapel is held daily during the school year - the children enjoy an upbeat time of singing, storytelling, and prayer. This is a time that they learn new songs and prepare for events such as Christmas or Easter presentations. This is by far one of the favorite times for the children at NHCS. Our chapel curriculum is "One in Christ." which can be viewed at: [www.cph.org/t-topic-OneInChrist.aspx](http://www.cph.org/t-topic-OneInChrist.aspx). A modified chapel program is offered during Summer Camp.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

New Hope Christian School staff members are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. They are expected to abide by the law and are permitted to remain anonymous if they so choose. Teachers are required to complete a minimum annual one-hour training course on how to recognize signs of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Additional training is encouraged for both teachers and parents in order to increase awareness, recognition, and prevention techniques.

Seeking counseling, improving parenting skills, and learning coping techniques to handle stress and anger are all ways to help reduce instances of abuse and neglect. The Parenting Center ([theparentingcenter.org](http://theparentingcenter.org) 817-332-6348) is one local organization which offers all these services. Additional resources and information can be located through online searches, your doctor or pediatrician or your county health department. We are always willing to help our families obtain needed education or assistance in these matters.

## **Class Composition**

Class placement is determined by your child's developmental stage as well as his or her age on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Children will be placed in the appropriate class and the class groupings will typically remain the same for the entire school year. NHCS targets the following ratios:

12 mos. – 18 mos.	5:1
18 mos. – 24 mos.	6:1
2 year olds	8:1
3 year olds	10:1
4 year olds	12:1

## **Clothing / Jewelry**

Dress your child in appropriate clothing for play, art, and outdoor activities. Select clothing that is washable, sturdy, free of complicated fastenings, and appropriate for the season. Sturdy and well-fitting shoes are recommended as they protect well, especially on the playground. Flip-flops are not permitted at all, year round. Jewelry of any value is not permitted. Age appropriate, non-expensive jewelry is permitted, providing it is not a safety/choking hazard. If necessary, your child will be asked to put jewelry in his/her backpack. Please label all outerwear garments including hats and boots. *A complete extra set of properly-labeled, seasonally-appropriate clothing should be in your child's backpack at all times. If necessary, you will be called to bring clothes or pick up your child.*

## **Contact Information**

We must be able to reach someone on behalf of your child at all times. In addition to contact information for the parent(s) or guardian(s), we must have the name, complete address, and phone number for the emergency contact on file for your child. This is the individual you designate as first to call if neither the primary nor secondary sponsors can be reached. Please notify the school office immediately if addresses or phone numbers change.

## **Curriculum**

At NHCS we are committed to providing a quality early childhood educational program in a safe, nurturing environment so that your child's experience in our classrooms is positive and enriching. NHCS's program provides a variety of rich learning experiences that are developmentally and age appropriate. We strive to foster the development of vocabulary and language skills, as well as fine and gross motor skills, listening skills and social skills. Our teachers, along with our Curriculum Coordinator, work together to create coordinated lesson plans. Each teacher prepares age-appropriate weekly lesson plans based on the weekly theme which address pre-reading, pre-math, and language arts, as well as activities to help meet physical, social, and emotional milestones. "Centers" promote interest in science, life-skills, music and art as well as providing sensory experiences and opportunities for cooperative play.



## **Discipline**

NHCS stresses a positive classroom atmosphere that, (a) provides rules, (b) gives praise to children displaying appropriate behavior, and (c) maintains high expectations for each child. It is school policy that no harsh verbal punishment and no physical punishment be administered to a child in our care. Children are taught from the beginning of their time with us, in an age-appropriate manner, that they may not do anything to cause harm to themselves or others, or to intentionally break or destroy property. We appreciate parental support in reinforcing these basic rules with your child.

The teachers will take the following disciplinary steps: redirection, warning, time-out, and then counseling with the Director or Assistant Director. Parents will receive written notices if counseling is needed or if unacceptable behaviors are a repeated problem. We encourage parents to counsel with teachers and work together to solve any behavioral or disciplinary issues.

After all these measures have been taken, if the child's behavior continues to be harmful to others, destructive, or extremely disruptive, then the child will be dismissed from the program.

## **Dismissal**

NHCS reserves the right to dismiss a child for the following reasons:

1. If payment is more than one week late and payment arrangements have not been made.
2. In the event that a child or parent has been unable to adjust to the program and comply with the policies in this handbook and other supporting documents. Please reference the prior sections, "Discipline" and "Attendance" for specific information related to behavior and on-time arrival.
3. If the child's admission records are incomplete and parent is unresponsive to efforts to obtain complete information.

## **Emergency Preparedness**

As required by Minimum Standards 746.5201 and for the safety of the children and staff, NHCS has an Emergency Preparedness plan which includes: Exit route diagrams and procedures, designated shelter area, designated outside meeting place, monthly and quarterly fire and sheltering drills, and evacuation/relocation procedures. The Emergency Procedures Manual is kept in the school office and is always available for your review.

## **Enrollment**

Annual enrollment occurs each year starting in February. Currently enrolled families and church members have a two-week window for priority enrollment after which available spaces will be offered to new families. Enrollment packets, including financial details and instructions are available in February. This allows time for families to review documents, consider their enrollment options and make any inquiries necessary. Enrollment continues throughout the entire year as long as space is available. Registration fees must be paid in order to reserve a place for your child in the appropriate class. Tuition and activity fees are due on or before the first day your child attends.

Documents required for registration include:

- 1) Completed and signed registration form
  - a. New Students--Admission Information form
  - b. Returning students—Schedule request and Child Information report (review, edit, and sign)
- 2) Immunization records
- 3) Financial Policies and Tuition Agreement
- 4) Photo Waiver, and
- 5) Important Policies notification.

We are required to have a physician's statement on file stating that your child is able to attend preschool. There is a section of the Admission Information form for this signature. If you are not able to obtain this signature before school starts, please sign the "Parent Statement" option and obtain a physician's statement as soon as possible.

### **Extended Care / Holiday Care**

Activities during the Before and After School Program may include, but are not limited to: indoor/outdoor playtime, story time, centers time, arts and crafts projects, games, snacks, G-rated movies, music, cooking, and reinforcement of the daily curriculum and Bible story. Our teachers are committed to providing a fun and enriching environment for our Extended Care students.

Holiday Care is provided on certain days the Preschool Program is closed for a student holiday but New Hope is still open for our Extended Care families. Please reference the 2023-2024 Calendar for exact dates. If enrolled in Extended Care, your child may attend on their normal days. We will request an RSVP for Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year, and Spring Break days. This enables us to properly build the classes and to assign staffing. Classes and teachers will vary during Holiday Care.

### **Facebook Waiver**

Other than pictures you receive through the Procure App, the primary place that New Hope displays pictures is on our Facebook page. We will only post your child's image if given permission. You are required to complete a Facebook Waiver. Permission options include: 1) In groups or individually, 2) Only in groups, and 3) Do Not Post. We assure you that we will do our best to comply with your wishes. You are welcome to alter your permissions at any time - just stop by the school office.

### **Field Trips**

Children must be four years old and be developmentally ready to participate in field trips. Should we feel that your child is not yet ready to participate in field trips, we will conference with you about our concerns and discuss alternatives. The bus is specifically designed for small children, therefore we will use a car seat ONLY if a child, who meets the age requirement for the trip, does yet not meet the weight requirement. (See "Transportation" for more information).

You will be notified of upcoming field trips and will need to provide a signed permission slip in order for your child to attend. Parents are welcome to attend, but we ask that you drive separately, that your child stay with the group, and that your child understands that he/she must follow the direction of the teacher. If you would like to attend the field trip, please coordinate directly with your child's teacher, who will in turn coordinate with the director or assistant director.

### **Financial Policies**

Please refer to the 2023-2024 Discount, Tuition, and Fees Schedule for detailed financial policies. As a part of the enrollment process, the rate for your child or children will be calculated and a Tuition and Financial Policy Agreement will be completed and signed by the Director or Assistant Director and parent. If any changes are made during the school year, a new agreement will be completed.

Class Roster: As outlined in the 2023-2024 Discount, Tuition, and Fees Schedule, a \$125 registration fee must be paid to secure your child's place on the class roster. Tuition must be paid on an ongoing basis to keep your child's place in the class.

Tuition Charges: NHCS has established reasonable tuition amounts for each of its programs (Preschool/Summer Camp and Extended Care) for the number of days per week attended. For the school year, the total tuition is divided

into nine or ten payments which provides stable operating income for the school and provides a consistent payment for the payor. As such, we do not give refunds or reductions if your child is absent, for weather closures, or if the payment period includes scheduled closings. If your child is absent or if the school is closed for a scheduled holiday or other unforeseen closure, *full tuition must still be paid.*

Tuition charges will be posted to your Procure account on the 1<sup>ST</sup> day of each month and payment is due the first week of the month, by the 7th. You may pay in full or make two equal payments each month without any special approval. To avoid late fees and/or interruption of care, payment in full or half must be made *during the first week of the month and the account must be paid in full no later than the 21st.* A \$35 late payment fee will be posted on the 8th and/or the 22nd of each month, unless other arrangements have been made. Variations to these payment options, whether ongoing or as a special request, require the Director's approval.

New Hope's preferred method of payment is auto-draft from a checking account—Tuition Express, ACH. Second preferred payment option is checks or cash. Payments made by debit/credit card will incur a 3% service fee. Credit/debit cards may be used online via MyProcure.com, or you may pay in person in the school office.

Notification of balance due: We do not bill or send statements each month. We do post "Tuition Due" reminder signs on the school doors at the beginning of each month. You will receive a paper statement or an email if your account becomes delinquent. You can check your balance, make payments and generate reports from your Myprocure.com account. Register with the same e-mail account you provided New Hope. To avoid late fees, consider signing up for Tuition Express to auto-draft from either your bank account or a debit/credit card.

Discounts: *New Hope Lutheran Church members receive a 20% tuition discount.* A 10% discount is given for KISD full time employees, for 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> children enrolled and for any 2-day program that includes a Monday. A 3% tuition discount is offered for those who pay the full school year or the full calendar year with a check or cash.

#### Penalty Fees:

For preschool, a late pick-up fee of \$35.00 per family will be assessed for any portion of the first 10 minutes that you are late, starting at 2:35 p.m. Additionally, \$2.00 per minute will be assessed for each additional minute after 2:45 p.m. After school care for preschool children is available only by reservation, according to availability. It cannot be assumed that we will have space for your child on any given day.

Extended Care Children: A late fee of \$35 will be assessed immediately at 5:31 p.m. and an additional \$2.00 per minute will be charged for each minute you are late past 5:41 p.m. Pick-up can be made at any time prior to closing. It is *especially* important that you call or send a Procure App message, if possible, if you are going to be late for Extended Care pick-up.

A \$50.00 returned check fee is assessed for the first returned check. In the event that a second check is returned, a \$60.00 fee will be added to your account and future payments must be made in cash, credit card or money order.

#### **Gang Free Zone**

Engaging in certain gang-related criminal activity or in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of New Hope Christian School is a violation of section 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code. Prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law.

## Health – Food Allergies

You must provide a Food Allergy Action Plan (FAAP) for each child that has been diagnosed by a health-care professional with a food allergy (with or without a prescribed Epi-pen). The plan must be complete, signed by both the health care professional and parent, and **must** be provided before the child may attend. This plan must include a list of each food the child is allergic to, possible symptoms if exposed and the steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction. Any medications included in the action plan must be on site and properly authorized before the child may attend (see “Health - Medications”). The FAAP will be posted in the kitchen and in any classroom in which your child receives care.

## Health – Health Checks

New Hope Christian School does not conduct general health checks.

## Health – Hearing and Vision Screenings

The Special Senses and Communication Disorder Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36 requires a screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems for first-time enrollees who are four years of age or older and all children enrolled in programs who are four years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. New Hope conducts vision and hearing screenings for all children for whom this requirement applies unless they have already been screened by a health care professional. If your child has already been screened, please provide New Hope with the screening results. New Hope will arrange for screening to be conducted on site for children who have not yet been screened. You will be notified of the screening dates and the fee, if any, that you will need to pay for the screening.

## Health – Illness and Exclusion Criteria

For the protection of your child and others, please do not send your child to school with any of the following symptoms:

1. **Un-medicated** fever within the last 24 hours that is at or above 99.4 under armpit or 100.4 oral
2. Vomiting within the last 24 hours
3. Yellow/green or any heavy discharge from the nose
4. Sore throat
5. Persistent cough
6. Diarrhea
7. Earache
8. Rash
9. Swollen glands
10. Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)

*A parent will be contacted and asked to come get his/her child as soon as possible should these symptoms of illness occur during the day.* Children may not return to school the next school day. Children may return when symptom free for 24 hours without medication. Your child may return to school at any time with a doctor’s note stating that he/she has been examined and is well enough/not contagious. We do ask that you please adhere to the arrival time policies when returning your child back to school after being sick, arriving by 8:40 a.m. if possible and not arriving during nap. Parents are required to notify the Director whenever a child has been exposed to a contagious disease. Certain contagious disease exposure will be posted in order to keep all parents informed. Even if not contagious, severe runny noses present a hygiene/cleanliness challenge for the teacher, therefore we may request that your child stay home until drainage is under control.

New Hope may choose to or be required to implement stricter illness/exclusion criteria in response to the spread of contagious diseases. This includes viruses such as Covid-19, Influenza, and RSV. Please understand that decisions will be made in the interest of safety for our children, staff and their families.

### **Health – Immunizations**

**Child:** Each child in attendance at New Hope Christian School must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services Immunization Requirements. All immunizations required for your child's age must be completed by the date of admission. Exemptions from immunizations must meet criteria specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services rules in 25 TAC 97.62 (relating to Exclusions from Compliance). Appropriate documentation of exemption must be provided by the first day of attendance. Please provide an updated record each time your child receives new immunizations.

**Employee:** Texas State Minimum Standards defers to individual centers to establish employee immunization requirements. New Hope does not require employees to have specific immunizations, allowing staff members to use their own discretion regarding personal immunizations.

### **Health – Lice**

According to the Center for Disease Control, lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school *has nothing to do with getting lice*. If a child or children shows signs of having lice, they will be checked by a staff member. If live lice are discovered, the child must be picked up and receive treatment. They may return to care as soon as the next day, provided that no live lice are present. New Hope does not have a "no nit" policy. Presence of nits does not preclude attendance however, parents are expected to continue to remove nits and follow all other recommended steps for affective treatment for the child, housemates, and the home environment. The affected child and his/her classmates will be checked at New Hope every 2-4 days in order to prevent reoccurrence and catch any transmission that may occur at school. Information on lice in general, signs/symptoms of having lice, and treatment can be found on the websites of the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and Texas Health and Human Services. Many other sites have information, as well. A notification letter will be sent to the parents in the affected child's class. If several cases occur in different classes, notification will be sent to the entire school.

### **Health – Medical Condition Action Plan (MCAP)**

If your child has a temporary or ongoing medical condition (i.e. Diabetes or non-food allergies requiring an Epi pen), you must submit a detailed written plan prepared by a parent and/or a medical professional. The plan should include a summary of the condition, signs/symptoms of an issue that requires attention, and instructions for both routine maintenance and in response to onset of signs/symptoms. Any medications included in the action plan must be on site and properly authorized before the child may attend (see 'Medications'). Update the plan regularly, as needed.

### **Health – Medical Emergencies**

In case of a medical emergency, the Director or Acting Director will be responsible for assessing the situation.

Emergency measures, in order of increasing severity, may include:

1. Administration of or supervising the administration of any necessary advance care (1<sup>st</sup> Aid and/or CPR), including calling 911 if appropriate.
2. Attempting to contact parents or guardian, either directly or through any of the persons listed on the student's enrollment form.
3. Attempting to contact the child's physician.
4. If unable to contact a parent, guardian, or the designated physician, any of these steps may be taken as deemed necessary by the acting director:
  - a. Calling another physician
  - b. Calling 911

- c. Sending the child via ambulance to a hospital in the company of a staff member.

Any expenses incurred in Step 4 will be the responsibility of the family.

### **Health – Medication**

Medication must be dropped off and signed in on the medication permission form at the school office. If no one is in the office, you may sign it in with your child's teacher and the teacher will bring to the office. Frequently administered medication or those which need to be kept on site may be signed in and stored in the school office. Please do not put any medication in your child's bag or backpack. All medication must be in its original container and unexpired. Medication will only be given according to the dosages listed on the label or as amended in writing by a physician.

Epi-pens must be signed in as described above and also be accompanied by a Food Allergy Action Plan or a Medical Condition Action Plan.

### **Health – Tuberculin Testing**

Texas State Minimum Standards defers to the testing requirements of the Health Department in the County in which a school is located. Tarrant County does not require testing. It is New Hope's policy, however, to provide this test for all newly hired staff.

### **Inclement Weather**

Listen to your local broadcasts for any changes in the school schedule due to inclement weather. *If the Keller I.S.D. is closed or delayed, then NHCS is likewise closed or delayed.* If bad weather is moving in to the area, we encourage you to pick up your child early. However, if we have taken shelter, we will not risk the safety of the children or the staff by releasing children from the shelter. If Internet is available, closures will be posted on the New Hope Facebook Page and website. Currently, the best way to communicate is through the Procure App.

### **Label Belongings**

It is very important that your child's personal belongings are labeled. Your child's daily teacher may be familiar with his/her belongings, however a substitute or other staff member who is assisting may not be. Please label backpacks, lunch boxes/bags, plastic containers, cups, coats, back-up clothing sets, bedding, and any other items that your child has at school.

### **Lost and Found**

A lost and found box is located in the school; please ask if you are missing an item. Unclaimed items will be donated to the Keller Community Storehouse.

### **Meals & Food Service Practices**

Lunch: Please provide a well-balanced, nutritious lunch with a non-carbonated drink. Refrigeration is offered only in the nursery. Microwave heating is available for the nursery, toddlers, and two's, however, we do request that you primarily send foods that do not require heating. New Hope Christian School is not responsible for the nutritional value of the lunches provided by parents. No candy or soda, please.

Snacks: Snacks are provided daily – between 9:00 and 9:30 a.m. and again for Extended Care children between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. On occasion curriculum may call for special foods and/or child-prepared snacks. Watch the communications from your child's teacher for opportunities to help at these times. The monthly snack calendar is posted on the information board in the entryway, if you would like a copy please ask. We will provide a comparable substitute for children with allergies. You may provide an alternative snack if necessary based on dietary needs or preferences. New Hope is not responsible for the nutritional value of snacks provided by parents.

Party Food: Several times each year the children will enjoy holiday parties with their teachers and classmates. Typically, we have parties for fall, Christmas, Valentine's, Easter and end of year. Lunch on these days usually includes pizza provided by New Hope together with side dishes and desserts provided by the parents. Sign-up sheets will be posted in the lobby or on your child's classroom door.

Sipper Cups/Water Bottles: Please provide a clean sipper cup or water bottle *each day*. It will be returned daily and a clean one will need to be provided the next day. This cup is for water only – you are welcome to send milk or juice for your child's lunch.

New Hope is subject to an annual inspection by the Tarrant County Health Department. Inspection reports are kept in the school office and available to view. Deficiencies are corrected in a timely manner.

### **Minimum Standards and Operational Policies**

Copies of the state minimum standards handbook and the NHCS operational policies (Parent Handbook) are located in the school office for your review. The Director or Assistant Director is available to discuss any questions or concerns about minimum standards or operational policies. Any changes to the Operational Policies (this parent handbook) will be printed, emailed to you, and posted on the website. You will receive a form to sign and return, acknowledging receipt of and your agreement to adhere to the new or revised policies.

### **Naptime / Safe Sleep**

Per licensing requirements, a supervised sleep or rest period is provided after lunch for all children in care. We do not force children to sleep and after one hour of rest or sleep an alternate quiet activity is provided for children who are awake. The teachers provide a set routine leading to rest time, quiet music or nature sounds, and an appropriately darkened room. Nap or rest time is required and alternate accommodations are not available for children who are disruptive during rest time. Please provide a bedroll for nap time or a child size blanket and small pillow in a handle tote or bag. Send only one personal item for nap. Nap items are stored in a cubby or hung up on a hook.

NHCS recognizes the importance of "safe sleep" procedures for infants. Babies who cannot roll over on their own must be placed to sleep on their back. All teachers who work with infants are required to complete training which includes "safe sleep" instruction.

### **New Hope Lutheran Church**

New Hope Christian School is a ministry of New Hope Lutheran Church. The church membership is very committed to supporting the school. Church members serve on our School Board, volunteer at events, support school fundraisers and regularly pray for the children, families and staff of NHCS.

Our school families have many opportunities to participate with the church, as well. You are always welcome to attend the Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. and special events such as the Back to School Bash, Trunk or Treat, midweek services during Lent and Advent, Spring Festival, and other events. *Members of New Hope Lutheran Church receive a 20% tuition discount!* *If you are interested in learning more about New Hope, the Pastor is happy to provide more information. Please call 817-498-4339 or stop by the church office to schedule a time to meet with the Pastor.*

### **Open Door Policy**

NHCS has an open-door policy—you are permitted to arrive unannounced to check on your child. In order to maintain security of the facility, you are required to check-in at the office and then you will be escorted to your child's location. We ask that you do not disturb your child's program—when young children see a parent, they often think that it is time to go home. There is ample opportunity to observe your child through the window in the door, from the back of the

chapel, or through an inside window if the children are on the playground. Upon check-in, we will determine the location of your child's class and help you to observe in a discreet manner.

### **Parent Communication**

*Communication between parent and school staff is essential.* Methods used to notify parents of important information and school activities include Procure App messages, monthly newsletter, posting notices on the doors and by the Procure Touch, email, website, and Facebook. We encourage our parents to visit our website frequently and to follow us on Facebook.

The teachers will post classroom information outside their door, send notices home in your child's backpack, and utilize the Procure App for daily reports about your child's day and upcoming activities. It is your responsibility to regularly check these sources. Feel free to call or e-mail the office at any time if you have questions or concerns. You may also reach your child's teacher through the Procure App messaging system. During the school day, the teachers' primary responsibility is to care and teach the children, therefore they may not be able to respond immediately. We ask that you not send messages outside of New Hope's normal operating hours unless it is an important update such as reporting an attendance variance or illness.

Parent/teacher conferences may be scheduled upon request with your child's teacher and/or the Director. We believe that open communication is essential to the success of your child. Parents are welcome to meet with the Director to discuss New Hope Policies & Procedures, your child's classroom activities and teachers, and the state minimum standards requirements for licensed Child Care. Please let us know if we can help.

The current Licensing inspection report, Health Department Report, Fire inspection, Staff Report and other required documents are either posted in the school lobby or available for your review in the church office.

### **Parent Participation**

You may contact your child's teacher to find out what is needed to support the classroom activities. Please watch for other opportunities to volunteer posted through the app and by email communications. If volunteering onsite, please remember to check in at the school office upon arrival. Parent volunteers may not be alone in the direct care of any child or children, other than their own.

If necessary for infectious disease control, we will temporarily suspend or limit the ability for outside adults to be present in the building (this does not alter the Open Door Policy).

### **Personal Belongings**

Personal toys and items must be left at home or in the car. Personal items from home, even if stored in the backpack, are a distraction. We don't want to risk toys from home getting lost or broken. One special soft toy or item may be brought to school for naptime - please label this item. The item must be small enough to fit in the child's nap bag or backpack. Teachers will remove any item that interferes with the learning process or that is disruptive or distracting. Items brought to school as an assignment (such as show-and-tell) must remain in the backpack until requested by the teacher. We will not be responsible for lost or broken items. Personal Electronics should not be at New Hope unless requested by your child's teacher for a specific purpose.

### **Potty Training**

Signs of readiness include a desire to sit on the potty, diaper dry for long periods of time, and the child is not afraid of a flushable toilet. If you feel your child is ready, rest assured that your child's teacher is committed to supporting your effort. Please communicate what techniques you are using at home—we need to know what words you use, how often you send/take, whether your boy stands or sits, etc. Let us know what your wishes are concerning diapers vs. pull-ups



vs. underwear and please send plenty of extra clothes (including socks and shoes). If your child participates in the before and after care program, written reports from teachers and written instructions from parents are very helpful, as several teachers are involved.

Please understand that it is common for children to do better at home than at school, and sometimes vice-versa. This is normal - communication and consistency are the keys to eventual success in both settings.

Three year old and Pre-K students must be independently potty trained. They may not wear pull-ups and must be able to ask/tell their teacher when they need to use the restroom. While we require a high level of mastery, please know that we will always provide loving care if a child has an accident.

### **Recess**

Outdoor playtime and fresh air are an essential component of your child's experience at New Hope. It is a state licensing standard (746.2206(1)) that the children go outside every day. Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play, apply sunscreen when appropriate and send a jacket or coat every day, whether it is the cool months or is warm with the AC running. Temperature, air quality, precipitation, and wind will all be considered in determining whether the children go outside and for how long.

New Hope does not provide "sick care," therefore all children who are well enough to attend school will be taken outside. Exceptions will only be made for circumstances such as injuries or surgeries requiring a specific time of recovery per doctors instructions.

New Hope does not supply or apply insect repellent. If your child must be protected from mosquitos due to a medical need, please follow school policies in section Health-Medical Condition Action Plan (MCAP). Required insect repellent must be provided by the parent and left in the office and signed-in on the medication log. Do

### **Social Media and Internet Reviews**

New Hope enjoys having a positive presence on social media and sites such as Google, Yelp, and Care.com. We always appreciate any positive reviews and feedback that you may wish to share. Please remember, if you have concerns or complaints, we would very much appreciate the opportunity to resolve those issues with you in a timely and appropriate manner. If parents and staff choose to be "friends" with one another on social sites, please limit communication about New Hope only as it relates to the child/ren of your family. We have a Facebook page and an active website where you will find information about upcoming events, photos of events and reminders. Please feel free to share links to the school and/or church website to help spread the word about events and fundraisers.

### **Special Events**

Please check the annual calendar, website, emails, and teacher's daily notes for information about special events that are planned throughout the year. We have activities such as Meet the Teacher, Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas Pageant, and Spring Parent Breakfast. Teachers also plan end-of-the-year events and field trips to local events or attractions. NHCS is a ministry of New Hope Lutheran Church and special events will be planned each year to foster this relationship. If necessary for infectious disease control, we will temporarily suspend or modify scheduled events. You will be notified of changes as soon as able via Procure App and email.

## **Staff Training**

New Hope teachers are required to complete a minimum of 24 clock hours of continuing education training each year. Additionally, the following training is completed by our teachers:

- In Service Training for new staff

- First Aid / CPR

- Recognition and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

- SIDS/Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention

- Transportation Safety for bus drivers

- Health and Safety Topics as specified by state licensing guidelines

## **Supplies**

New Hope provides all necessary supplies and educational materials that are used daily. Occasionally we may ask you to save certain household items for special projects. Your child's teacher may ask for a small item for a specific project. NHCS will provide a waterproof, washable mat for rest/nap time. Mats are sanitized each time they are used. Please provide a bedroll for nap time or a blanket and a small pillow in a handle tote or bag. Nap items are stored in a cubby or hung up on a hook. Each child should have a lunchbox and full size backpack to carry to and from school each day.

## **Toy Safety**

Your child's safety is very important; therefore the staff at New Hope strives to provide toys and equipment that are safe and well-maintained. Broken and unsafe toys are discarded and recall notifications are carefully monitored.

## **Transportation**

New Hope provides transportation for field trips according to the Field Trip policy. We strictly adhere to regulations for age, height, and weight when placing a child on the bus. The bus and drivers meet state requirements for safety. Each of our drivers is over 25, covered on New Hope's auto insurance policy, and have taken a state required Child Care Transportation Safety course.

## **Waiting Lists**

A waiting list for the current year's full classes will be maintained throughout the entire year. When filling openings, requests for additional days or schedule changes made by currently enrolled families will have priority over waiting list families. When openings become available, parents will be notified by phone or email about the opening. Waiting lists apply only to the term in session, they do not carry forward to the next term. Registration for summer and school year is in February and is on a first come, first served basis. Current families have a 2-week priority registration window.

## **Water Activities**

Water activities at New Hope are limited to water table play, sprinklers, and shallow pools. A blanket permission for water activities is on the registration form. During summer camp, special field trips may be planned to local water venues – we will strictly adhere to all state minimum standard rules for supervision and we will obtain a specific permission from the parent or guardian for this type trip.

## **Withdrawal / Leave of Absence**

NHCS requires a two weeks written notice and payment of current tuition prior to withdrawal from the school. This requirement for notice also applies to long term absences. In the event that you need to take a leave of absence from the school and are not willing/able to pay regular tuition to hold your child's place on the roster, you will need to withdraw. Prorated activity fees will be refunded. If/when you return you will be required to pay a new registration fee and will need to pay prorated activity fees. NHCS cannot guarantee that there will be a space available for your child.

## **A PARENT'S GUIDE TO DAYCARE (Required per State Licensing)**

When you choose licensed child care, you and your family join your child in new experiences and relationships. You, the director, child-care staff, and other people in the center have a responsibility to protect the health, safety, and well-being of your child. The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Licensing Division, is part of this partnership, too.

Minimum standards require your child-care provider to give you a copy of this pamphlet. You need to sign the receipt form to verify that you have received it and discussed the material with facility staff.

### **What is day-care licensing?**

The Licensing Division was established by law to regulate child-care facilities to help protect the health, safety, and well-being of children in care.

With the assistance of child-care providers and experts in areas such as child development, early childhood education, fire safety, health, and sanitation, the Licensing Division develops minimum standards.

Licensing staff inspect child-care centers, private kindergartens and nursery schools, some unaccredited private schools, group child-care homes, and drop-in care centers to be sure that minimum standards are met. The staff also investigates complaints about violations of the minimum standards and the child-care licensing law.

Your child-care facility is responsible for meeting minimum standards. Many child-care programs exceed these requirements. Licensing does not regulate child-care fees, collection policies, or the kind of learning program your child-care facility offers. Each facility has its own special personality and approach to educating and caring for children. Parents can choose the kind of program that best meets the needs of their child and family.

### **It is important for you to know**

- When you visit a child-care facility, ask to see the license. The license means that the child-care facility met the minimum licensing standards the last time it was inspected for such things as fire, sanitation, and safety; the number of child-care staff required; staff qualifications; and requirements for special services.
- Minimum standards prohibit persons who have been convicted of certain crimes from having contact with children in care.
- Compliance with minimum standards does not guarantee high quality child care. They are called “minimum standards” because no one is allowed to operate below these standards.
- A copy of the minimum standards is available for you to review at your child-care facility. You can also request a copy of these standards from your local child-care licensing office. A list of these offices may be found on the DFPS website: [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us) or by calling the Child Care Information Line at 1-800-862-5252.

### **Establish a good relationship with the child-care facility**

- Spend time at the child-care facility before you enroll your child. Ask questions about the program and observe the activities. Make sure the child-care facility has all the information needed about your child and family to provide good care.

- Work with the staff of the child-care facility you choose. Parent involvement is an important part of a successful experience with child care.
- Read all the material the child-care provider gives you. In addition to material required by licensing standards, each facility has its own policies and requirements. It's important that you understand these requirements before you enroll your child. It's equally important, once your child is in care, to read the notices, special requests, notes, and other materials the child-care provider sends home.
- Drop in occasionally during the day to observe how your child interacts with staff and other children, and get a good picture of the day-to-day activities at the center. Be careful not to disrupt activities.
- Keep your side of the bargain. Pick up your child on time.
- Discuss concerns with the child-care director. Be aware that the teacher's main responsibility is working with the children. Don't be offended if the teacher can't spend much time talking with you when you drop off or pick up your child. If you need more time to talk about your child, set up a conference.
- It's important to let the child-care facility know about things at home that may affect how your child is doing in child care.

### **When your child starts child care**

- Remember that it's normal for a child to have some fears and misgivings about starting child care. Children need time to get used to new situations. Prepare your children for the change as far in advance as possible. Discuss their concerns. If you're enthusiastic, chances are they soon will be, too.
- Depending on their ages, some children will temporarily "act out" their feelings by clinging to you and refusing to let go, forgetting their toilet training, having bad dreams, sucking their thumbs, or other such behavior.
- Work with the child-care director and your child's teacher on this.

### **Talk things over with your child**

Make an opportunity each day to gently ask questions when your children are quiet and feeling secure and protected. Share their excitement about new friends, new skills, and new abilities; listen to their concerns; and give them a chance to boast about their achievements.

### **Parent responsibilities**

The child-care facility must get certain information and records from parents to ensure the child's health and safety, handle emergencies, and meet minimum standards. If you do not provide this material, the child-care facility will not be in compliance with the minimum standards.

- Complete an enrollment form that includes basic information about your child; telephone numbers where you can be reached during the day; authorization for emergency care for your child; and written permission for swimming, other water activities, and transportation services.
- Tell the caregiver about any special concerns or needs, including allergies, medical history, and current medications.
- Give the child-care facility a copy of your child's immunization record showing immunizations against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, Haemophilus influenza type b, Hepatitis B and varicella. In some parts of Texas, a tuberculosis test report and Hepatitis A vaccine is also required. For school-age children, you can sign a statement that these records are on file at the school.
- Provide a doctor's statement that your preschool child is physically able to participate in the child-care program.

- Inform the child-care facility in writing about who is permitted to take your child from the facility. Generally, the child-care facility may only release your child to you or to an adult you designate.
- The facility may allow a school-age child to leave the facility alone or allow an older brother or sister to pick up a child if you request this in writing. The facility is only allowed to do this when all safety considerations have been met.
- Make sure that child-care staff know the child has arrived. Make sure that staff are aware when you come to pick up your child. Don't leave your child at the front door, and never leave your child at the facility before opening or after closing.
- Other requirements must be met if the day-care provider gives medication to your child, if your child is an infant, or if your child needs special care or a special diet.

### **What happens if your child is ill or injured?**

- The child-care facility is not allowed to admit a child who seems to be sick unless a doctor or nurse gives approval in writing. This may cause problems for parents, but it is necessary to prevent a sick child from infecting other children.
- If your child has been absent because of a contagious illness, the child-care facility must follow guidelines concerning when the child can return to child care.
- If your child appears seriously sick or injured while at the center, the caregiver must call you immediately. It's important that you pick up your child as soon as possible.
- If your child needs immediate medical attention, the center must call your child's physician, take the child to the nearest emergency room or minor emergency clinic, or call for an ambulance. This is why the child-care facility must have your authorization for emergency medical care.

### **Liability insurance requirements**

- Ask the child-care director whether or not the facility carries liability insurance. Texas law requires child-care facilities to carry liability coverage in the amount of \$300,000 per occurrence to cover a child when the child is in care of the facility.
- Liability insurance coverage is not required if the insurance cannot be secured due to financial reasons; if the licensee is unable to locate an underwriter willing to issue a policy; or if the current policy limits have been extended. You are to be notified, in writing, that the coverage is not available.

### **Take a good look**

As you become more familiar with your child's child-care program, you will see many strong points. Almost all child-care facilities strive to provide a warm, loving, safe, and healthy environment for children. Look for these characteristics, but also be aware of warning signals that tell you something is wrong.

Feel secure when you see that:

- The facility welcomes you to visit any time, and you are invited to observe the class or participate in activities.
- Staff are alert and involved with the children.
- Staff seem warm and interested in the children. There is spontaneous laughter, hugging, and eye-to-eye contact.
- Staff are gentle, but firm when necessary.
- The facility is clean and attractive.
- Your child is relaxed and happy after the initial adjustment period.

- Your child seems physically well cared for. Staff inform you of minor accidents and tell you when your child doesn't feel well.
- Children seem involved with constructive activities, and they get individual attention.

**Be seriously concerned when you see that:**

- Parents are not encouraged to visit the facility.
- Children are left without direct adult supervision.
- Adults spend much time scolding, ordering, and yelling at children.
- Adults are physically rough with children or allow rough play.
- The building is dirty, or you see unsafe conditions.
- Your child is unhappy about being left at the facility, and this doesn't improve with time.
- A child comes home bruised or injured, and the center can't explain what happened. (The child may not remember minor bruises and scrapes received when playing, however.)
- Children seem aimless, bored, angry, or frustrated, or there are too many children to supervise.

**When things aren't going well**

You may find yourself displeased about something that has happened at the facility. Talk about these things with facility staff. There may be a misunderstanding that can easily be resolved.

If the situation isn't resolved and you believe minimum standards are not being met, call the local child-care licensing office. They will handle your call discreetly.

A licensing representative will investigate your complaint. The licensing representative may need to interview you and your child and may also interview other children at the facility.

If the licensing representative finds that a standard has been violated, the facility will be notified and a time set for the facility to correct it.

Licensing staff may revoke a license if a facility doesn't meet minimum standards. The department does not take action to revoke a license unless children are in immediate danger or the licensee refuses to comply with standards.

**If you suspect child abuse**

Most child-care facilities, like most parents, take good care of children. Child abuse is rare, and it is very unlikely that anything like this will happen to your child.

If you do suspect that your child has been abused or sexually molested, report the situation immediately. Use the toll-free Child Abuse Hotline number 1-800-252-5400 or 1-512-834-3784 to report abuse or neglect that has occurred in Texas. The situation will be investigated immediately, and you will be given referrals or recommendations for help for your child and family.

Should agency staff interview or examine your child during an abuse investigation, a reasonable effort will be made to notify you within 24 hours after the interview or examination.

Parents who suspect or believe that their child has been abused in child care sometimes remove their child from care, but don't report the problem. This leaves other children in danger. State law requires everyone, including child-care providers, to report suspected child abuse or neglect immediately.

**Immunity**

When people make a report of suspected child abuse in good faith, they are immune from any liability. When the department investigates a complaint, the identity of the complainant is not revealed.





## Your Child Needs

- \_\_\_\_\_ Full Size Back Pack
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch Box with a healthy lunch everyday
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extra Set of clothes, including socks & shoes (Correct size and season, replace as needed)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Nap items: small blanket and pillow or bedroll
- \_\_\_\_\_ One small comfort item, if needed, for naptime
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tote bag with handle for nap items
- \_\_\_\_\_ Jacket or light sweater, all year (even summer, just in case AC is too cool for your child)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reusable, fresh water bottle every day

### Younger children:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pacifier, if needed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Diapers and/or re-sealable pull-ups
- \_\_\_\_\_ EXTRA extra clothes if potty training