



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

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

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

The staff and teachers at Nativity Early Learning Center agree that even more important than what children carry in their backpacks are the experiences they carry with them from their earliest years as they grow and mature.

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

"Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

-Luke 18:15-16

**Letter from the Director**

Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing the Nativity Early Learning Center (NELC) for your child. I believe that early childhood education is one of the most beneficial programs that a child will go through. Our role as teachers helps to shape and guide your children to become successful in years to come. The extended day programs give children the opportunity to develop relationships, self-confidence, respect for others, as well as accepting responsibility for their actions and decisions in a safe and nurturing environment. I know the importance of a Catholic education and I like the strong sense of community a Catholic school provides. At NELC, we strive to provide a safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive setting for children. We are committed to supporting each child's development by recognizing and respecting individual differences and potential.

Nicole Clausen  
Director of Nativity Early Learning Center

## PHILOSOPHY

Nativity Early Learning Center is devoted to social development, academic excellence, The Gospel message, community, peace, and justice.

## MISSION STATEMENT

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

## PROGRAM GOALS

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

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

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

- Create a safe, nurturing environment.
- Create an equal partnership of children, parents, staff, and community.

## OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

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

### 1. Show respect for others

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

2. **Follow directions the first time they are given**
  - keep a positive attitude
  - show respect for all adults
3. **Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself**
  - respect the personal space of others
4. **Stay in assigned areas**
  - in the classroom
  - on the playground
  - ask for permission before leaving the group
5. **Use appropriate language**
  - name calling and teasing are not allowed
  - speak respectfully to all adults and other children
6. **Use equipment properly**
  - ask before using other people's things and room materials
  - toys may not be used to harm others or yourself
  - put things back where they belong when you are done using them
  - take care of the toys and materials you are using

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

- Model appropriate behaviors and expressions of feelings with the children.
- Adjust behavior expectations to the developmental level of the child.
- Anticipate problem situations and intervene by redirecting the child to a positive alternative.
- Engage children in cooperative problem solving (examine alternatives, identify consequences, and choose appropriate action).
- Protect the safety of the children and staff by establishing clear expectations and creating a safe environment at all times.
- Provide immediate, directly related, and appropriate consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.

We feel confident that the children in NELC can successfully abide by the code of conduct. However, if a child repeatedly refuses to abide by the established code of conduct and is disruptive to the safety of others, it is crucial that we make decisions in the best interest of all children in the program. Therefore, the following actions may be taken:

- Parent is contacted regarding child's behavior through note, call, or conference. Documentation of contact is placed in child's permanent file.
- Child may be placed on probation from the program.

- Child may be removed from the program permanently.

### AGES SERVED AND PROGRAMS OFFERED

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

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

#### Half-Day Preschool

- Staff to child ratio of 1:10
- Program follows the Nativity School calendar

#### 2 day program

- Tues/Thurs
- 33 months to 4 years (must be 33 months by August 31<sup>st</sup> of year attending)
- 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. or Noon to 2:30 p.m.

#### 3 day program

- Mon/Wed/Fri
- 4-5 years old (must be 4 years old by August 31<sup>st</sup> of year attending)
- 9:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. or Noon to 2:30 p.m.

#### Full Day Preschool

- Staff to child ratio of 1:10
- 33 months to 5 years (must be 33 months by August 31<sup>st</sup> of year attending)
- 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

#### Extended Day Kindergarten Enrichment

- Staff to child ratio of 1:15
- For children enrolled in Kindergarten at Nativity School
- Care provided for the opposite portion of the half-day kindergarten school day
- 6:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. or 11:05 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
- After school, hours for both groups are 2:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- Before school, hours for both groups are 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

#### Extended Day

- Staff to child ratio 1:15
- For children enrolled in grades 1-6 at Nativity School
- 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. (before school)
- 2:45 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. (after school)

#### Summer Camp

- Ages 33 months to 6<sup>th</sup> grade
- 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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

- 5 days a week (M-F)
- 4 days a week (M-Th)
- 3 days a week (M,W,F)
- 2 days a week (T,Th)

### HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

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

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Easter Monday	Day after Thanksgiving
Memorial Day	Christmas Eve
Independence Day	Christmas Day
Staff In-Service Days	

If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the day will be recognized on Friday or Monday. In addition to the above holidays, we will be closed for 2 days before the summer program starts and 2 days after the summer program ends for staff in-service days. Parents will have advance notice of forthcoming days as well as any additional days when the center will be closed. Holidays are not exempt from your child's regularly scheduled weekly tuition.

### EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In case of severe weather conditions, NELC will close on the same schedule as Nativity School. Closing information is broadcast on radio stations WCCO-830 AM, WMNN 1330 AM, and television stations KSTP and KARE TV. If an emergency is declared during the business day, all parents must pick up their children **WITHIN TWO HOURS** of the closing announcement.

### SCHOOL RELEASE DAYS

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

### ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

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

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

NELC will guarantee acceptance of all current children for the following year provided the registration procedure be completed before the yearly registration deadline of March 1st.

Any family that is unable to meet this deadline must notify the NELC Director, in writing, no later than March 1st in order to secure a position for the summer and/or school year program.

Beginning March 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will offer applications to families on the waiting list in order to fill all of the available spots. New students will be accepted according to the following priority list:

1. Children who currently have siblings attending NELC programs.
2. Children of families who are officially registered members of Nativity Parish.
3. Children of Non-Parishioners.

Enrollment in the NELC preschool programs does not guarantee a spot in the kindergarten at Nativity School. Priority is not given to families using the center. This practice is meant to respect all families, including those who choose to stay at home with their children instead of sending them to our center. Please note that the School follows the same priority list as above when accepting children into the kindergarten of the school.

### STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT

State regulations require that each child have a health statement and immunizations completed by his or her source of medical care before they begin attending NELC. Every item in the health care summary must be completed. Your child's health care summary and immunization records will be kept on file.

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

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

### FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

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

1. There is a \$75.00 non-refundable application fee per family payable at the time of application. The application fee for the summer program is \$50.00. There is also a summer field trip fee for the summer program.
2. Families have the option of paying the full monthly rate at the beginning of the month, or paying half at the beginning and half by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.
3. Electronic payment is available and encouraged. Simply download your Electronic Fund Transfer form (EFT form) from the website ([www.nativity-mn.org](http://www.nativity-mn.org)) or request one from the Director, attach a voided check to it and return it with your enrollment materials. Electronic payment is not offered for the summer months of June, July, and August.
4. New and current electronic payment users must sign a new form during the annual enrollment process.
5. All fees must be paid for the days that your child is scheduled to attend.
6. All children in the extended day and full day preschool programs must be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m. All children in the half-day preschool program must be picked up no later than 11:30am or 2:30pm. A fee of \$5.00 per child up to the first five minutes, and \$1.00 per child for each additional minute that follows will be charged. Children become upset when parents are late picking them up. Additionally, when you are late, NELC faces staffing and licensing issues. The late fee is intended to deter parents from

- picking up their children after closing. This includes any delay in exiting the building. The late fee should be paid directly to the closing teacher at that time. The building doors will be locked at 6:00 p.m.
7. With prior written notice to the Director, you may have the option of adding single days, provided there is space available. Trading days within a week is NOT allowed. Requests will be honored or denied based on availability of space.
  8. Any account that is not paid in full by the last day of the month will incur a \$15.00 late fee. The fee will be posted to your account on the first day of the following month. Accounts that fall two months behind may result in your child not being allowed to continue with our program.
  9. There will be a \$20.00 charge for returned checks. If more than three checks have been returned, NELC administration may request that payment be made by either cash or money order.
  10. Refunds or credits will not be given for absences, illness, or holidays.
  11. Checks or money orders should be made payable to NELC or Nativity Early Learning Center. To ensure proper credit to your account, your child's name should be put in the memo portion of the check.
  12. If your family is in a financial situation that is prohibiting you from being able to cover your full tuition obligation to NELC, please call our office as soon as possible to discuss your account. We would be happy to schedule a meeting with your family to discuss the means by which we can work together to help your family establish a payment plan or other financial arrangement with the center.
  13. Once a contract is signed with NELC and a program is set up for your child, any changes in your schedule must be given to the Director in written form. This policy calls for a two weeks notice of changes.
  14. If a family leaves the NELC program and unpaid tuition remains, we may exercise our right to pursue collection with an outside agency.

### VACATIONS

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

### WITHDRAWAL FROM NELC

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

### TERMINATION OF SERVICES BY NELC

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

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

### HOT LUNCH PAYMENT

Please DO NOT include hot lunch payments with NELC tuition. The hot lunch program is a separate program. Please make a separate check payable to Nativity Hot Lunch Program with the child's name written on the memo line. Questions regarding your account balance can be directed to the school kitchen at (651)-696-5415.

### DAILY DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

- A parent or authorized person will be responsible to bring your child into the center each day, help your child remove outdoor clothing and place it on his/her hook, sign your child in on the sign-in sheet in the classroom, and leave your child in the care of a classroom staff person. Please do not drop your child off in front of the center and let them enter the building by themselves. Prior notice is appreciated when someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up or dropping off a child. **NELC is not responsible for children left unattended.**
- For the respect of your child and all children at the center, we recommend that your child be in attendance by 9:00 a.m. NELC should be notified by 8:00 a.m. if a child is to be late or absent for any reason. NELC staff will call home to verify children's whereabouts when they are not present at school.
- All children in the extended day and full day preschool programs must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. All children in the half-day preschool programs must be picked up by 11:30a.m. or 2:30p.m. When leaving NELC, please be sure to notify staff and sign your child out with the appropriate staff member. If you have multiple children at our center, we assume that the same person will pick up all children at the same time. If there is a scheduling conflict that does not allow you to do this, you must notify staff in advance of the changes.
- We must have authorization to release your child to someone other than a parent or guardian. Please notify NELC in writing or by phone if someone different is picking up your child. **WE WILL RELEASE CHILDREN TO AUTHORIZED PERSONS ONLY.** Photo ID **MUST** be shown by the person picking up your child.
- Our staff will assume that once you are present to pick up your child, responsibility for your child is now yours.

- NELC closes at 6:00 p.m. All children must be picked up and out of the building no later than 6:00 p.m. Please see financial arrangements section for information on late fees.
- In the event that your child is still at NELC after closing time and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps:
  1. Attempt to reach you at work or home.
  2. Call the people listed as emergency contacts on the emergency card.
  3. Call Social Services.

### CHANGE OF CONTACT INFORMATION

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

### PARENT - STAFF RELATIONS

We at NELC are committed to open communication.

- Generally, verbal communication is best. You will find, however, that at times availability of staff at drop-off/pick-up times is limited.
- There are telephones with direct numbers located in each classroom. At times, you may be able to reach a teacher during the day, but please keep in mind, when a teacher spends time on the phone; they are not able to fully meet the needs of the children. Therefore, we ask that you direct your calls to the Director's telephone at (651)-696-5437.
- Notices are posted at the parent information board by the front entrance of NELC. Notices about the week's lessons and specific classroom information are posted on the bulletin boards located at the front entrance of each classroom.
- Notices are often placed in each child's folder or cubby. The location of the information varies considering the subject matter of the notice.
- Informal parent/teacher conferences are offered twice a year for our preschool/half day preschool and kindergarten enrichment programs. These conferences are optional, but highly recommended. Additional conferences can be arranged by either the parent or teacher as the need arises.
- Parent participation and observation is encouraged, and parents should feel free to visit the center at any time. It is appreciated if parent/guardians visit at times that are less disruptive to the classrooms. Please check with your child's teacher to find out which times are best to visit your child's classroom. Prior notice is also greatly appreciated.
- To further communicate with the parents, a monthly newsletter is published, and some classrooms may send out weekly class updates with information about lessons and activities planned for that class.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS**

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

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

### **PARENT ADVISORY BOARD (PAB)**

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

### **HEALTH AND ILLNESS**

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

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

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

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

- An illness, which prevents participation in normal daily program activities (including outdoor play). The child may not return to the NELC until he/she is able to participate in normal daily program activities.

- An illness that results in more care than the program can provide without compromising the health and safety of others.
- Vomiting within the last 24 hours. The child may not return to the NELC until vomiting has stopped (Vomiting is defined as two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours).
- Diarrhea within the last 24 hours. The child may not return to the NELC until diarrhea has stopped within the last 24 hours. (Diarrhea is defined as one or more episodes in the previous 24 hours).
- Undiagnosed rash or a rash that can be contagious. The child may not return to the NELC until a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not those of a communicable disease that requires exclusion.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or pus draining from the eyes or ears. The child may not return to the NELC until the child has been evaluated by the healthcare provider and until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins, or until the healthcare provider has cleared the child for readmission.
- Head lice or nits. The child may not return to the NELC until the first treatment is completed and no live lice are seen.
- Chicken pox. The child may not return to the NELC until all the blisters have dried into scabs and no new blisters or sores have started within the last 24 hours.
- 100 degree Fahrenheit temperature auxiliary (under arm) or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness - until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the program. CHILDREN MUST BE FEVER FREE FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION BEFORE RETURNING TO THE CENTER.
- Bacterial infection such as strep and impetigo. The child may not return to the NELC until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and until the child is without fever for 24 hours.
- Acute Bronchitis (Chest Cold), Influenza, Pneumonia, Respiratory Infection, Croup, Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease. The child may not return to the NELC until fever is gone for 24 hours and the child is well enough to participate in routine activities.
- Measles. The child may not return to the NELC until 4 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps. The child may not return to the NELC until 9 days after swelling begins.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough). The child may not return to the NELC until 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment begins.
- Ringworm, Scabies. The child may not return to the NELC until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Rotaviral Infection. The child may not return to the NELC until diarrhea has stopped.
- Rubella (German Measles). The child may not return to the NELC until 7 days after the rash appears.
- Respiratory distress that causes breathing difficulties, wheezing, or uncontrollable coughing.
- Unusual color of skin, eyes, stool, or urine. The child may not return to the NELC until a medical exam indicates the child does not have hepatitis A.
- Mouth sores associated with inability to control saliva. The child may not return to the NELC until a health care provider states child is noninfectious.
- Signs of possible severe illness including unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty with breathing, or when a child is unable to participate in our program without requiring more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

Please inform the Director or classroom teacher immediately if your child has been exposed to or contracted a contagious disease, since other children and families may have been unknowingly exposed. NELC will take the responsibility of informing other families with the utmost confidentiality. We appreciate calls reporting the reason for a child's absence.

Children and staff who have the symptoms noted above should be excluded from NELC until:

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

A child may return to NELC after a “same day” doctor visit if:

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

### MEDICATION

If a child needs oral or surface medication while at NELC, please fill out a medical permission form available in each classroom. **All medication must be in its original packaging with label intact.** The medicine will be kept in a secure cabinet or refrigerator (if required). **By state law, we can administer only medicine prescribed for the child in the labeled and dated prescription bottle or other medicine with a signed note from the doctor or parent.** Please do not send medicine with your child to keep in their backpack for self-medication. This includes medicines such as cough drops and inhalers.

### ACCIDENTS AND SAFETY

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

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

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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

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

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

First Aid kits are located in each classroom. They are taken on all walks, field trips, and on the playground.

## FIELD TRIPS

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

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

## PARENT/GUARDIAN VOLUNTEERS

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

## RESEARCH/PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

Occasionally, NELC may be involved in research activities or a public relations event. We will obtain written parental permission before each occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity involving a child. No child will participate unless prior permission from the parent has been obtained. Furthermore, none of these above mentioned activities is allowed to interfere with or compromise the care of the children at NELC.

## REST TIME

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

Children may nap 1 ½ to 2 hours. If a child is not asleep after 30-40 minutes, the child is welcome to get up from his/her cot and engage in quiet activities so as not to disturb other children who are resting.

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

### CHILD ABUSE REPORTING PROCEDURE

Our top priority at NELC is the safety and well-being of the children in our care. Therefore, any person, including staff, Director, or parents of children in NELC may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.

- Any staff member of NELC is legally required or mandated to report suspected abuse or neglect and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to the Director or to anyone else at NELC.
- If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children will be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at 651-297-4123.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 651-266-4500 or local law enforcement at 651-291-1111 or 911.

### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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

### PETS

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

### WHAT YOUR CHILD SHOULD WEAR TO NELC

Your child should be comfortably dressed according to the season. Each child must have at least one full change of clothing appropriate for the current season, including extra shoes (no sandals please), socks, underwear, shirts, shorts, pants, etc. stored in their cubby or backpack at the center. Please check your child's cubby regularly to ensure that it is properly stocked with appropriate clothing. All clothing and other belongings must be labeled with your child's name.

Following the recommendation of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) NELC staff will remove hood and neck drawstrings from children's outerwear, including jackets and

sweatshirts. Drawstrings are a hazard that can lead to deaths and injuries when they catch on such items as playground equipment, bus, car doors, etc.

Proper footwear is essential for the safety of your child. Clogs and sandals have been proven unsafe. They do not give enough support to the foot, causing children to trip and fall. Tennis shoes or regular shoes will give your child's feet support and make walking, running, and climbing safer and more fun. Please send your child in close-toed shoes, no sandals.

#### PERSONAL BELONGINGS

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

#### OUTDOOR PLAY

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

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

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

#### FOOD SERVICE

Nativity Early Learning Center is a **peanut and nut free** program. This change has been made due to the increasing number of children that are allergic to peanuts, nuts, and peanut oil. Nut allergies can be life threatening. This is not only through direct ingestion, but can be through smell, and touching of only trace amounts. We require that you do not send any snacks, birthday treats, or lunches, which contain peanuts or nuts. We request your cooperation and thank you in advance for adhering to this policy for the safety of all children.

We understand that this policy may pose an inconvenience for our school community; however, we ask for your full cooperation as we work to provide a safe environment for our students.

If you accidentally send a nut product with your child, we will send home a friendly reminder. Whenever possible we will label and return the item that contained nuts. Please see below:

#### FOOD ALERT

We noticed that your child had a "peanut" product in their lunch today. Please be advised that we are a "peanut" free program. We need to follow this policy to protect the safety of all of the children enrolled.

Thanks for helping us maintain a safe and healthy environment.

### SPECIAL TREATS/BIRTHDAYS

It is always a joy to have celebrations at NELC. We believe that it is part of a child's understanding of other cultures to be exposed to as many holidays as possible. We also believe in the importance of sharing in the holidays of Our Church with the children. Many staff celebrate holidays with the children in their classroom. We encourage parents to share holidays and celebrations from their heritage with children at NELC.

A child's birthday is another important occasion for celebration. Parents who would like to help prepare a birthday celebration that will include all children in the classroom should talk to teachers the week before so it can be part of curriculum planning. NELC prefers non-food alternatives to share, such as colorful stickers, simple games or crafts, or birthday accessories such as hats or plates. **Any food items brought to the center from home must be purchased from a store and brought to the center in the original wrapper or container.** Please be advised that we are a peanut free program. Please also be considerate of food allergies in your child's classroom. Check with the classroom teacher if you are unsure of present food allergies. Sometimes a celebration can develop around an inexpensive gift to the classroom, such as a book or game to share.

NELC discourages using the center as a place for making arrangements, picking up children, or passing out invitations to private birthday parties. This is intended to prevent children's hurt feelings at being excluded from a celebration.

### MEALS AND SNACKS

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

Lunch times will generally be between 11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Typically, lunch begins shortly after 11:00 a.m. Parents may provide lunches from home for their child or they may purchase hot lunch on school days only. Menus for hot lunch are sent home with each child and are also posted in each classroom. Milk will be served with lunch. Bag lunches are not kept refrigerated and we do not reheat your child's food. If you send leftovers, make sure it is something that can be enjoyed cold, or send it in a preheated insulated thermos. All uneaten food will be placed back in your child's lunch box so that you have a clear understanding of what and how much your child eats.

What a child eats can directly and greatly affect a child's mood and behavior. With this in mind, please ALWAYS send high quality, nutritious meals with your child that meet the USDA guidelines for your child's age. A USDA food guide pyramid is included in the handbook. When packing lunches, avoid the prepackaged lunchables, snack cakes or juice that is not 100% juice, these are all loaded with extra sugar our kids do not need. Prepackaged lunches contain far more fat, saturated fat, and sodium than your child needs in a day. Also, please be mindful of portion size. Children often have too many choices in their lunch and become overwhelmed. Fewer options cause less anxiety and provide a more successful lunchtime.

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

**Grain Group (4-5 ounces each day)**

- Whole Grain- brown rice, oatmeal, popcorn, breakfast cereals, whole wheat bread, pasta, crackers, and tortillas.
- Refined Grains- cornmeal, corn tortillas, crackers, flour tortillas, pasta, noodles, pita bread, pretzels, and white bread and rice.

**Vegetable Group (1 ½ cups each day)**

- Broccoli
- Lettuce
- Spinach
- Potatoes
- Cauliflower
- Green beans
- Celery
- Cucumbers
- Beans
- Squash
- Carrots
- Corn

**Fruit Group (1 to 1 ½ cups each day)**

- Apples
- Bananas
- Berries
- Grapes
- Melons
- Oranges
- Peaches
- Pears
- Raisons

Note: fruit snacks and fruit roll-ups DO NOT count as a serving of fruit

**Milk Group (2 cups each day)**

- Yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Cheese slices or cubes
- Milk
- Pudding- if made with milk

**Meats and Beans Group (3-4 ounces each day)**

- Beef
- Ham
- Pork
- Turkey
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Dry Beans and Peas- veggie burgers, kidney beans, black beans, split beans, tofu
- Fish

**Fats and Sweets (minimal)**

- No fat or sweet food needs to be included in your child's lunch – family preference.

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

### LICENSING

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

### HEALTH CONSULTANT

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