



NORTHSTAR
SCHOOL

2021-2022

Preschool Parent Handbook

ABOUT NORTHSTAR SCHOOL

MISSION

Northstar School aims to promote human excellence by cultivating students, in every grade level, to possess a well-trained mind, healthy body, good manners, and exceptional character. Northstar School provides a holistic education where we present a developmentally appropriate curriculum that fosters love of learning, curiosity, mastery of core concepts, imagination and a deep respect for the natural world in a dynamic way that cultivates spiritual, physical, intellectual and social growth.

COMMUNITY

We believe that Northstar School is not only a learning institute, but also a community. Our teachers inspire students daily to follow an Islamic way of life, first by example and then through instruction; they are primarily responsible for creating an ideal Islamic class environment. Our parents will contribute to the school's efforts by volunteering their time and talents to achieve this shared vision; they are responsible for creating a supportive home environment.

Partnering with families, we share high expectations that students will act with respect, courtesy, kindness, and consideration towards others. In accordance with our Prophetic tradition, we expect that staff and parents will model the same standards of respect, courtesy, kindness, and consideration for our students.

OUR PROGRAM

Welcome to Northstar School's preschool program. We serve children and their families aged 3 to 5 years old. Our program provides developmentally appropriate structure and freedom in a way that allows young children to discover their own talents, interests, and work on their challenges. We hold a growth mindset, that learning is not about being perfect or "ahead" but about an attitude of observation, astonishment and habits of perseverance all of which our curriculum strives to nurture.

Our program provides:

- A warm and nurturing early-childhood learning environment
- Islamic-themed content and etiquettes
- Hands-on experiences
- Multi-sensory exploration and discovery
- Play-based, developmentally appropriate practices

All of the activities and thematic units are meant for the children to experience "Subahan Allah" and "Alhamdulillah" through His signs and a deep admiration and love for Rasul Allah s.a.w. We hope to cultivate their innate faith.

It is our belief that the education and success of a child begins at home. Establishing routines, spending time outdoors, keeping electronics away, providing a healthy diet, and a nurturing home environment prepares children for success. We hope and encourage our families to continue to build on these healthy habits.

PreK Goals:

Spiritual:

Through thematic studies and stories, to give children daily opportunities to experience "Subahan Allah" and "Alhamdulillah" through His signs and a deep admiration and love for Rasul Allah s.a.w. They will learn simple dua, ahadith and short surahs of the Qur'an

Physical:

- Graceful movement
- Strength and flexibility in gross and fine motor
- Independence in daily tasks
- Attention to Order

Social/Emotional:

- Care and courtesy to others
- Effective communication in kindness
- Creativity
- Curiosity
- Making friends and making peace

Academic:

- Concentration
- Comfort in hearing Arabic
- Love for Qur'an
- Quantification of numbers
- Familiarity with geometric shapes and relationships
- Associations of letters and sounds
- Love of the world, exposure to diverse cultures of the world
- Desire to learn about and care for plants and animals

ADMISSIONS

ADMISSION CRITERIA

Before your child is accepted for admission to Northstar School, the following criteria must be met:

- 1.) The parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete a tour of the school and meet with the school principal.
- 2.) A pre-admission interview will be conducted and your child's needs will be discussed to insure appropriate placement.

The following required forms must be completed and returned to complete enrollment:

- Physician's Report (with TB test results)
- Emergency Information Card
- Health History Form
- Admission Agreement
- Parents' Rights
- Personal Rights
- Emergency Card
- Parent Handbook Agreement
- Immunization Record

Tuition Schedule & School Fees

Northstar School's tuition rates are designed to make our educational offering affordable while providing the resources the school needs to deliver the high-quality education to which it is committed. The tuition for the preschool program is \$840/month (\$740/month for siblings of Northstar students.

Families can submit the entire year's tuition in advance to receive a 3% discount off tuition. This type of complete advance tuition payment makes things easier on the school administratively, and is more convenient for some families as well.

<u>Fees</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Refundable/ Non-refundable</u>
Materials Fee	\$200.00	Non-refundable, billed through FACTS
Activities Fee	\$150.00	Non-refundable, billed through FACTS
Volunteer Fee	\$200.00	To be billed through FACTS if the minimum requirement of 20 hours of volunteer service are not completed.

FACTS

FACTS is an online tuition management system. This program is reliably used in more than 6,500 private and faith-based schools across the country. We are excited to be working with FACTS and are confident that this program will provide a positive experience for our families by offering an easy way for you make and track your payments. All parents will be required to sign-up, create an account, and then choose from one of the three payment options in order to secure your child's place on the roster.

Transportation

The parent is responsible for providing transportation to and from school.

Program Timing

The program timing is 8:30 am – 2:30 pm, Monday to Thursday and 8:30 am – 12:30 pm on Friday. An extended care program is available to the siblings of Northstar students, Monday-Thursday. The extended care program timing is 2:30-3:30 pm.

*Program timing may be modified due to covid-19 school modifications.

Arrival

Morning classes begin with a greeting between child and teacher and recitation of dua. Arriving late may affect the child's day adversely, and is disruptive to the class in general. Morning supervision begins at 8:15 a.m. Students should arrive at school between 8:15–8:30 a.m. If you arrive early, please stay with your child until 8:15. **Parents are required to sign students in and out daily with a full signature.**

Departure

The school dismissal time is 2:30 p.m. Students should be picked up promptly from the assigned pick up area. Students must be signed out by an adult. The “grace period” for picking up your child is until 2:40 p.m at which time remaining children will be sent to the office and late charges will apply.

For your child's safety, it is our policy to dismiss a child only to the parent or regular carpool driver. Any change in the usual pick-up procedure should be communicated to the office and the classroom teacher. When picking up your child please come to the classroom door or assigned area and accompany your child to the car. Please refrain from talking about your child to the teacher in front of other parents and children. If you need to speak with your teacher, call or email him/her for a conference. Children are not to be left unattended in the parking lot.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illness

For the protection of the child and other students, parents should not send their child to school if he/she shows any of the following symptoms:

- High fever
- Nausea or vomiting
- Evidence of a communicable disease
- Severe headache or stomach ache
- Persistent cough
- Rashes

Should any student develop any of these symptoms during school hours, parents will be notified and they will need to make arrangements to pick up their child as soon as possible. All students should be free of such symptoms for at least 24 hours before coming back to school. If your doctor has prescribed an antibiotic, your child should be kept home for 24 hours after starting the medication (after which time s/he is considered non-contagious). If treatment involves homeopathic remedies, the child should be kept home for 10 days to two weeks (after which time s/he is considered to be non-contagious; for example, treatment of strep throat). The State of CA Public Health Department makes these restrictions, and the school is required to make them known to our parents.

Emergency Forms

All students are required to have a completed emergency information form on file before the first day of school. The form must be renewed and signed each year. In the event of an emergency, you will be notified immediately. If you cannot be reached, we will contact an adult whose name and number you have given on the form.

It is extremely important that you notify us of changes to telephone numbers listed on your form. This form is also used to call you if your child falls ill at school or has an accident and needs to go home.

Special Medical Needs

The office manager is trained to administer simple first aid in case of an accident on the playground, but the school is not staffed with medical personnel. If your child has special medical needs, you must bring them to our attention upon enrollment and give regular updates to your child's teacher.

Medications

The law requires that students not carry medications nor keep them in their possession in any way during the school day. All medications must be given to the office manager with a parental note stating the purpose of the medication, when it is to be administered, how much is to be administered, and the timing of the last dose. Any prescription medication must be accompanied by

a physician's order and the parent's authorization for school personnel to administer it. (Forms are available in the school office.) All medication must come to school in a professionally labeled bottle. Your pharmacist will usually give you an extra bottle for school if you request it at the time your prescription is filled. The school will not administer any non-prescription medicines by mouth (aspirin, Tylenol, etc.) without permission from parents.

Immunization

Before children under the age of 18 may be admitted to any private or public school, California Law requires that an immunization record be presented to the staff by the parent or guardian.

Physical or Sexual Abuse

All professionals who deal with children are mandated by state law to report suspected child abuse victims. As professional educators, we intend to report suspected physical, sexual, and emotional abuse to the proper authorities. We have a common responsibility to prevent these tragedies and to provide our young people with the opportunity for happy and healthy lives.

Department of Social Services Rights

Licensing agency rights state code 101200 B and C state that, “ The Department of Social Services or Licensing Agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff without proper consent.. The licensee shall ensure that provisions are made for private interview with any children or staff members. The Department has the authority to inspect, audit, ;and copy child or child center records upon demand during normal business hours. Records may be removed if necessary for copying

DISCIPLINE

Northstar School DOES NOT allow corporal punishment. Our discipline techniques provide safe and appropriate boundaries but are respectful of emotional and physical development. We use a positive discipline approach that is aimed at helping each child develop internal self-control and problem-solving skills. We do this by using positive interactions, redirection, providing appropriate boundaries/limits and by using and teaching conflict management skills.

Northstar School has three basic rules which must be adhered to by the children:

- Respect yourself
- Respect the rights of others
- Respect your surroundings

Children generally display negative behavior when they don't understand their feelings – feelings of frustration, anger, fear, etc. The staff at Northstar School will remove a child from a situation where he or she has broken one of our rules. The adult will quietly and privately remind the child that

he/she has broken a rule (verbally repeating the offense and broken rule) and telling the child that we will not allow him/her to do so. We will ask the child to talk about the situation, reminding him/her of his/her responsibility for the negative action. One of our goals for children is to help them develop self-discipline and guidelines. "Time-out" and talking about the situation is often quite effective in handling most situations. When talking with the child, we keep in mind that it is the action and not the child that we are addressing.

We ask that the parent(s) discuss with the school any problems or situations that have occurred, are occurring or may occur with the child that could affect his/her behavior. We have found that an open communication with the home will help us in understanding the child and his/her feelings.

FOOD AND NUTRITION EXPECTATIONS

Snack and Lunch

We believe good nutrition is an important component in the overall development of every individual. Ideally, we would like to see every child bring to school a wholesome and well-balanced lunch and natural snacks. Fresh foods, with minimal sugar, are recommended.

Per revised health and safety guidelines, children are to bring their own healthy snack and lunch to school daily.

Recommended Foods: vegetables, fruits & dry fruits, sandwiches on whole wheat with cheese, turkey, tuna, yogurt, granola mix, rice, cheese, pasta, quesadillas

Foods to Avoid: processed and packaged foods, food with artificial coloring, flavoring, high-fructose corn syrup, and preservatives

Not permitted: high-sugar drinks including boxed juice, soft and sport drinks, high-sugar snacks, chips, cookies, brownies, gum, and candy

In accordance with Northstar School's Media-Free school environment, TV or movie character lunch boxes or packaging are not permitted. Due to limited facilities, we are not able to provide refrigerators, hot water, or microwave use for student lunches/snacks.

Water

Every student should bring a reusable water bottle to assure she is replenishing with fluids throughout the day.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Volunteer and Service Opportunities

We all know that it takes a village to raise a child, so imagine a whole school full of children. Volunteers provide a valuable service to our school and over the years we have come to the understanding that parents who are involved in their child's school will have students who are dedicated to education.

Parent Support

- Read to your child daily
- Communicate with teachers any significant happenings in your child's life that will impact his/her school experiences
- Regularity in the lives of children is important – regular bedtimes, regular mealtimes, and basic rhythm are essential
- Plan your weekend activities so that you are home early on Sunday and your child can have a “recovery time.” Your child can't be alert and responsive on Monday morning when he/she spent a full weekend of lively, stimulating, tiring activities and had no time to recover.

Screen Time and Media

Northstar School encourages a culture of restricted media and television viewing and exposure. Media-free environments, at home and school, support exploration, imagination, self-confidence in intellectual skills, and the development of strong social connections. Research has shown that electronic media exposure shortens a child's attention span and has a detrimental effect on the development of a child's imagination.

In young children, exposure to the scripted stories of media characters in movies and television impact their ability to engage their own imaginations and create original play scenarios. Television, video games, and internet usage also expose children to violence, sexual content and cynical language affecting the child's natural fitra state. It can negatively influence the child's behavior and their interaction with their peers and adults. Parents are strongly encouraged to limit and monitor screen time and computer use.

COVID-19 Protocols

Enhanced Classroom Health and Safety Program Configuration for Preschool & Pre-K (per Public Health Department Regulations and DSS, CCL for childcare):

- Maintain staff: child ratio in stable groups of 12 or fewer (“stable” means that the same 12 or fewer children are in the same group each day)
- Teachers will remain solely with one group of children
- Groups will stay in separate rooms or separated by a physical barrier
 - Groups will not mix or co-mingle
- Limit non-essential visitors and volunteers

- Hand sanitizers are readily available at entryway, playgrounds & high traffic areas
- Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - All staff will be required to wear a mask or face covering
 - Children over the age of 2 are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering as tolerated
- Parents/Caregivers are asked to take their child's temperature before coming to school

Encourage all children, families, and staff to follow preventative actions at home and on site:

- Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible
- Ask parents and caregivers to wash their own hands and assist in washing the hands of their children before drop off, prior to coming for pick up, and when they get home
- Parents/ Caregivers are required to wear face coverings when on campus
- Parent/Caregiver must report reason for any absence to the school within 24 hours
- Seek immediate medical care if symptoms become more severe, e.g., high fever or difficulty breathing
- Use “respiratory etiquette”
 - Cover cough with a tissue or sleeve
 - Encourage children, families, and staff to avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
 - Provide adequate supplies within easy reach, including tissues and no- touch trash cans
- Wash hands frequently: At arrival, before and after meals, after using the restroom, when coming into the classroom from outside, throughout the day as needed, prior to leaving from home, prior to leaving school
- Follow CDC travel guidance and quarantining guidelines as restrictions are lifted before returning to school

Daily Health Check for Every Staff/Visitor/Child Upon Arrival:

- Conduct visual wellness checks of all children
 - Parents/Caregivers will need to confirm their child is well
 - Staff will monitor student health throughout the day
- Take temperature upon arrival
- Disinfect thermometer using 60% isopropyl alcohol after each use
- Any staff, visitor, or child with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher will not be permitted to enter

School Opening/Closing Procedures (for staff):

- Wash hands upon arrival/before leaving for the day
- Daily temperature check
- Open classroom doors and windows for ventilation/close at the end of the day
- Clean and disinfect toys and surfaces (counters, tables, chairs, doorknobs, light switches, sinks/faucets, etc.)
- Ensure all supplies (i.e.: soap, paper towel, gloves and toilet paper dispensers) are full and tissue boxes are available in each classroom
- Ensure a separate storage/tub designated to hold any toys that are mouthed or otherwise that need to be cleaned and sanitized before returned to the classroom shelf
- Classrooms will be thoroughly cleaned nightly by janitorial staff

Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures:

- Restricted access
 - Parent/Caregivers are not allowed on school grounds beyond the designated pick up/drop off area(s)
 - Parents/Caregivers are to promptly exit the campus upon picking up or dropping off
- Parents/Caregivers are required to wear a face covering on campus at all times
- Pick up/Drop off area(s) will allow for physical distancing
- Parent/Caregivers will wait with their child until they are handed off safely to a staff member
- No group gatherings in the parking lot or school premise allowed
- Parent/Caregiver must contact the office in advance to notify the teacher of late drop off, early or late pickup and the reason of school absence

Classroom Practices:

- Handwashing practices will be integrated into the curriculum
- Developmentally appropriate activities, that do not require close physical contact, will be available throughout the day
- Increased distance between children during table work and circle time
- Minimize time standing in lines
- Have children drink water from disposable cups or own personal water bottle (clearly labeled with the child's name) instead of fountains
- Minimize the number of loose toys and remove any toys that are difficult to clean and disinfect
- Pause the use of sensory tables, large pillows or stuffed animals and other materials that are difficult to clean

Outdoor Play:

- Staggered and adjusted schedules to reduce the number of children in the same area
- Groups will use outside play areas separately and not intermingle
- Student play materials will be cleaned and sanitized daily

Personal Items:

- All personal items should be clearly labeled and will be kept inside the child's designated cubby or coat hook
- Permitted personal items are as follows: lunch box, water bottle, jacket, small blanket
- Personal toys/items are not permitted and should be kept at home

Before Preparing and Serving Snack (for staff):

- Wash hands
- Put on clean gloves
- Clean and disinfect food prep area and tables
- Keep food covered to limit exposure
- Shared treats/food is no longer permitted

If a child should show symptoms of illness (i.e.: fever of 100 degrees or more, cough, wheezing, congestion, runny nose, diarrhea, fatigue, extreme fussiness, shortness of breath, etc.):

- Remove the child from the group, isolate, with adult supervision, in the designated "quarantine space" until a family member can come to pickup
- Children over 2 will be asked to wear a mask
- Immediately contact the parent(s); if parents cannot be reached, contact friends or family designated on the emergency form as authorized for pickup of the child
 - Designated pickup person must call upon arrival from the parking lot and child will be escorted to the dismissal area

When is a child permitted to return to school after being sent home due to illness?

If a child is NOT tested and has no medical evaluation, they may return after:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
- There have been at least 3 consecutive days (72 hours) with NO fever, without taking medication to lower a fever (i.e.: acetaminophen, ibuprofen) AND
- Respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), if present, have been improving for at least 3 consecutive days.

If a child is NOT tested but has a medical evaluation, they may return before 10 days has passed IF:

- Symptoms have resolved AND
- The medical evaluator (doctor, nurse practitioner or a certified physician assistant) provides a letter indicating both of the following:
 - An alternative diagnosis has been made
 - The symptoms are NOT due to COVID-19

If the child gets tested, and the COVID-19 test is NEGATIVE, they can return after:

- The child is feeling better AND
- There have been at least 3 consecutive days with NO FEVER, without taking medication to lower a fever (i.e.: acetaminophen, ibuprofen)

If a child IS TESTED for COVID-19, and the test is POSITIVE, the child may return after:

- At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
- There have been at least 3 consecutive days with NO fever, without taking medication to lower a fever (i.e.: acetaminophen, ibuprofen) AND
- Respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath), if present, have been improving for at least 3 consecutive days.

In the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19:

- Immediately notify local health officials
 - Alameda County Acute Communicable Disease Control:
 - Weekdays 8:30am–5pm Phone: (510) 267-3250
 - After hours Phone: (925) 422-7595 and ask for the public health duty officer on call
- Create an immediate plan of action, including suspension of services for a period of time to be determined in consultation with public health authorities
- Whole program or specific classroom may close for 3 days or up to two weeks
- Notify families and staff
- Arrange for deep cleaning and disinfection of the classroom



**Northstar School 2021-2022 PreK
Parent Handbook Agreement Form**

Student(s) Name(s) _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____

I have read and understood the 2021-2022 Parent Handbook for Northstar School and will abide by the guidelines therein.

Signed _____ Parent

Date _____