

Noah's Little Ark

Christian Preschool & Early Education Programs



Student & Family Handbook

2026-2027

**Noah's Little Ark is a ministry of the
Palmyra First United Methodist Church
520 E. Birch St.
Palmyra, PA 17078
noahslittlearkpa.org**

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Noah's Little Ark shall not discriminate against families based on national or ethnic origin, race or skin color, religion or creed, sex or sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, age, individuals with a disability, genetic information, or any protected classes under the law.



History of NLA

Noah's Little Ark was started as a Christian Preschool in 1998 by members of First United Methodist Church of Palmyra to provide a safe, affordable, quality environment for pre-kindergarten children of families who live in Palmyra, PA.

Noah's Little Ark's mission has expanded, and NLA is now a ministry of First United Methodist Church of Palmyra providing community-oriented, family-centered, affordable Christian education programs with safe, quality environments and events for children ages two through Kindergarten of families who live, work, or travel in Palmyra, PA. NLA offers morning programs for children ages two through PreK ages, and afternoon programs for children ages three through Kindergarten ages.

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Mission & Purpose

Noah's Little Ark, as a ministry of First United Methodist Church of Palmyra, shall provide community-oriented, family-centered, affordable Christian education programs with safe, quality environments and events for children ages two through kindergarten of families who live, work, or travel in Palmyra, PA.

As a ministry to the community, Noah's Little Ark (NLA) shall be a Christian Preschool and Kindergarten Supplement Program where each child can develop socially, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and intellectually, while fostering Christian faith and discipleship in a loving and accepting atmosphere.

Organization

Daily operations are managed and coordinated by the NLA School Director and implemented by a team of co-operative staff. The director works collaboratively with the NLA Board of Directors.

NLA School Director

The Noah's Little Ark School Director is responsible for supervising all staff and volunteers, student class placements, collaborating and communicating with families, and promoting the mission of the school. All NLA staff report to the NLA Director. The director reports to the NLA Board of Directors.

NLA Board of Directors

Noah's Little Ark has a governing Board of Directors made up of both church member volunteers and parent volunteers who work cooperatively together to facilitate the needs of NLA by providing visionary oversight and leadership. The Board of Directors meets a minimum of six times per year. The Board of Directors is responsible for setting, updating, and enforcing the policies, financial charges,

business guidelines, handbooks, procedures, and more. The board members support various events with NLA, brainstorm ideas for fundraisers, and personally volunteer in various capacities. They also provide valuable insight and connections to the community, support and encourage the NLA director and staff members.

NLA Staff

The Noah's Little Ark staff are hired by, and answer directly to, the NLA School Director. All staff applications are run through three background checks: the Pennsylvania State Police Criminal Record Check, the Child Abuse History Certification, and the FBI Fingerprint Record Check in accordance the Child Protective Services Law.

All NLA staff receive yearly trainings, participate in staff meetings, and are under ongoing instruction, direction, and guidance from the NLA Director. All staff are required to complete the Teacher Track of Professional Ethics and Educator Discipline Act training, which covers professional and appropriate relationships with students, recognition of the signs of sexual misconduct, and mandatory child abuse reporting requirements in Pennsylvania for school staff. NLA staff are trained in First Aid and CPR.

Scheduling, Calendar, School Hours

Morning Preschool Classes: 9:00-11:30am

Afternoon Kindergarten Enrichment: Bussed from PASD to NLA- dismiss from NLA at 3:00pm.

Calendar

The first day of school in September is always the Tuesday following Labor Day.

The last day of school in May is the Wednesday before Memorial Day. Pre-K graduation ceremonies are held on the next morning, the Thursday before Memorial Day. NLA is always closed between

December 21 and Jan 1.

NLA sets the yearly school calendar of other days to coincide as much as possible with the Palmyra Area School District calendar.

The school calendar is updated, and a link is available on our website.

Emergency Closings

Parents are responsible for checking the Brightwheel app, email, Facebook, and/or WGAL8 news for delays, cancellations, and early dismissal days. We will communicate emergencies through the Brightwheel, and phone calls as needed.

Delayed Opening: When a delay is called, morning classes run from 11:00am- 12:30pm and afternoon kindergarten class from 1:00 to 3:00.

Early Dismissal: When an early dismissal is announced, school closes at 11:30am. All afternoon/evening activities are cancelled.

Snow Make-Up Days: After two weather cancelations, snow days will be “madeup” according to the school calendar and the Palmyra Area School District. Excessive closures may result in an alteration to the end of the school year, which will be communicated at that time. All snow days, delayed openings, and early dismissals are nonrefundable.

Student Application and Enrollment

All student applications are accepted digitally. The application form is available on our webpage at noahslittlearkpa.org. The application is considered complete and is marked as accepted ***only*** when the non-refundable registration fee is received.

Enrollment space in classrooms is determined according to physical space and appropriate staff-to-student ratios. Class space is filled on

a first come, first-served basis. When age-appropriate class space is not available, a waiting list will be started according to the date of the accepted application.

Changes to your child's program may be requested at any time but can only be changed if there is space and availability for that change.

Confidentiality

All information concerning your family and your child is kept private and secure in the NLA Office. All NLA staff are required to maintain confidentiality and conduct themselves in a professional manner both in and out of school.

Environments

Noah's Little Ark is carefully organized with a co-operative team of staff who are trained to provide and maintain quality school and classroom environments that fulfill the mission of NLA's ministry.

School Environment

Our curriculum and school space provide a nurturing Christian environment in which children can gain fundamental social skills that help them to build a life-long love and enjoyment of learning.

School Curriculum: NLA has crafted a curriculum that incorporates the learning standards provided by the State of PA into monthly and weekly learning themes to promote Kindergarten readiness. Children learn colors, shapes, sizes, numbers, and letters. They also begin developing critical thinking skills by exploring, creating, and participating in STEM activities and art experiences. Our classrooms are full of educational materials that encourage matching, sorting, assembling, measuring, manipulating, and play.

Christian Faith: An environment that nurtures Christian faith includes staff who model the kinds of attitudes and behaviors we

want our children to learn, including care for ourselves and our families, helpful involvement in the community, encouraging words to others, a positive outlook on life's opportunities and challenges, and above all showing love for all people who may be different in appearance, behavior, status, or belief. There are also many opportunities in our classrooms with faith songs, stories from the Bible, and prayers in the name of Jesus. A designated Bible Teacher provides weekly stories, lessons and activities and leads a monthly school-wide chapel service. In addition, in cooperation with Palmyra First Church, the school calendar will include several opportunities for student participation during the 10:30 Sunday service. All families are encouraged to participate.

Social Skills: Social skills are a top priority for early education, as emotional and physical safety are the foundation for an individual student's willingness to listen, try new things, express themselves, and interact with others, peers and authority figures. Many social skills are needed in a school environment that are not used at home, such as standing/walking in a line, waiting for a turn to do an activity, raising a hand to indicate a desire to speak in the group setting, etc. These skills take time and practice, and once learned will lift a child to new levels of observation and self-awareness that build self-esteem and confidence and enhance learning experiences.

Enjoyment: Fun and enjoyment are also critical components of early learning. Willing participation in puzzles, games, and imagination are evidence of higher-level mental abilities, opening the way for compassion, empathy, abstract thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Classroom Environment

At Noah's Little Ark, we believe each child is a unique person with individual preferences, strengths, and weaknesses, who grow and thrive in both individual and group interactions, such as the whole class instruction segment that we call "circle time." Unique to our program is the quality of music and art that our staff can offer in an integrated classroom experience.

Play-Based Learning: Play-based learning is recommended by the State of PA and early childhood institutions because it promotes deep learning skills and is developmentally appropriate for children in preschool. Teachers carefully craft learning centers and activities that help children discover their world and develop their academic skills through games and play.

An important part of the learning aspect as opposed to just play is to have adults interact with children verbally, observing their behaviors and speaking about the connections the child is making, asking the child to observe what happened, suggesting a next step, and asking the child if they are pleased with the results of their For example, a child puts three red blocks in a truck, and the adult says, “You put red blocks in the that red truck. How many did you put in there?... Where is the truck going to take these blocks?... The blocks fell out, are you ok with that? Would you like to try again, or a different way?”

Small Group & Individualized Instruction: Teachers and staff create both small group and individualized learning experiences that meet each child where they are and help them toward their next level of achievement. Each teacher/staff meets with the whole class, with small groups, and with individual students daily to be sure they are getting the challenges and supports they need to grow.

Large Group Circle Time: Children gather daily for a meeting as a class. During this time, staff introduce new concepts, read stories, and focus the group on the learning goals for the day. Many classes also have a closing meeting, where children reflect on what they have learned and share their achievements.

Music: Each class participates in a weekly music class that includes dancing, singing, instruments, and games. The Music Teacher is a musician with skills and training in early education and preschool music. Children learn fun but simple basics of singing, clapping, dancing, and playing instruments. Classes prepare and present at least one musical program to parents each year.

Art: We use two types of art experiences at NLA: Process Art and Product Art.

Process Art: These are experiences designed to allow the children to be in control of their work. The emphasis is on the process and discovery. Children might mix all types of media such as cotton balls, yarn, buttons, markers, paint, tape, cardboard, etc. They may experiment with results using trains or blocks instead of paint brushes. They may paint with objects found in nature and discover various textures. Help your child continue learning from these creations by saying, “Tell me about it,” or “How did you make this?” as opposed to “What is it?”

Product Art: This is work that has a predicted outcome or product. With these projects, children are working on following directions and taking pride in their work when comparing it to a sample. They practice important skills of observation, control, listening, and cooperation. Help your child continue learning from these creations by asking, “What steps did you follow?” and “What was the hardest part of this project?”

All art materials are non-toxic. Almost all materials are washable.

Some art projects are sent home right away, some are displayed in the classrooms and hallways, and some are saved for later display at the NLA Art Show.

Attendance

Students are expected to be present each day they are registered to attend. Absences should be communicated through Brightwheel to ensure classroom teachers and the office receive

the message. Messages may also be sent to administration only if you prefer. Please report all absences by 8:50.

Tardiness, or late arrivals, will **not** be accepted after 9:20am for morning students without a valid written medical excuse. While students are escorted to their classrooms by office staff, please be aware that the student has missed out on check-in, valuable transition time, group activities, and instruction time.

Acceptable reasons for late arrival or early dismissal include medical appointments that cannot be re-scheduled, personal illness, or emergency situations communicated to the director.

Supervision

From the moment a student is dropped off until the moment they are signed out for the day, they are consistently under the direct supervision of assigned NLA Staff. Anyone may drop off a student to NLA. There are specific, strict policies concerning adults authorized to pick up an NLA student. All approved pick-up persons must be entered into Brightwheel. Once we release a child into the care of an authorized adult, families are free to talk and visit on the grounds outside the church building.

Note to Walkers

Families living close to NLA often choose to walk to school. As always, please be careful and aware of traffic and vehicles. Wait outside, close to the drop-off/pick-up door, and the NLA Staff will walk your child in/out the same as all the other children.

Emergency Contacts and Student Information Sheet

Brightwheel is always consulted as the primary documentation for your child, including in an emergency. Therefore, you are responsible for updating the entered information and to notify the NLA office **immediately** of all changes to home address, emergency contact persons and phone numbers, and persons authorized to pick-up your child.

Arrival

***All children attending NLA must, by law, be in a child safety seat!! Please do not put our staff in the awkward position of reminding you of the law! Buckle them in EVERYTIME!**

Drop-off from the Parking Lot and Main School Entrance on Franklin Street will begin 5 minutes before the posted arrival time; approximately 8:55 for morning drop-off.

Please follow the given instructions regarding traffic patterns and be courteous, cautious, and considerate of other preschool family members and NLA neighbors. Do not block driveways, corners or intersections. Please drive slowly and with the flow of traffic. This system works great when we cooperate!

Please encourage your child to gather and carry their own belongings. This is one of the keys to building the independence they will need throughout their school careers.

Adults are asked to say a quick, cheerful goodbye, and allow your child to transition into the care of the NLA Staff, who will walk them to their classroom. Every NLA staff member is trained in helping children to transition smoothly, and are kind, gentle, and patient when children have difficult days.

Dismissal

***All children attending NLA must, by law, be in a child safety seat!! Please do not put our staff in the awkward position of reminding you of this law! Buckle them in EVERYTIME!**

Please allow your child to attend the full class session unless there is an emergency. Early pick-ups can be challenging and disrupting for your child as well as other students in the classroom. Pick-up verification with the provided Brightwheel code will begin approximately 5 minutes prior to the posted dismissal time.

Adults Authorized to Pick-up: Every adult picking up students will be asked to provide a Brightwheel code before the student is given into their care. **Only adults listed on the student's information will be allowed to sign-out your child.** If staff do not recognize the adult authorized to pick up that student, picture identification (such as a driver's license) will be required to match with a name and code that was given by the legal parent/guardians as a person authorized to pick up. We will ask for ID from anyone we do not know (including a parent we may not recognize or remember), so please **ask all authorized pick-up to bring IDs with them.** This helps us to be sure each child returns home safely.

Unauthorized Pick-ups: If someone asks to pick up a child, but we do not have permission updated in Brightwheel or communicated directly to the office by a parent, we will contact a parent to obtain verified, verbal permission before we release the child. For your child's safety, the school will need to contact you **using the phone numbers you have provided.** We will not be able to talk with you via someone else's cellphone.

Custody Agreements: Children must legally be released to either biological parent with the presentation of a birth certificate, unless we have a copy of a legal custody agreement indicating otherwise. If there is a discrepancy or disagreement between parents at pick-up time, the child will remain with NLA School Staff, and the local authorities will be contacted to mediate the dispute.

Late Pick-up Fees

Please be prompt every day. If you will be unavoidably delayed, please call the school office or send a message via Brightwheel to let us know the situation. We do understand that this can happen from time to time. After a 5-minute grace period, you will be charged \$2/minute per minute until your child is signed out.

Example: Student's program ends at 11:30, and on Monday you enter the parking lot at 11:32 and are fine, but on Wednesday you arrive at

11:37, so you are late and will incur charges.

Children who are not picked up by the end of the grace period (that is, the pick-up person is not yet in the parking lot) are walked to the office, where they will always be with an NLA Staff Member. The pick-up person will need to park in the lot and ring the office doorbell.

Payment for late pick-ups will be invoiced through Brightwheel and are due upon receipt to avoid a late fee. A \$10 fee will automatically be added every 7 days until the charges are paid in full.

After School

Please feel free to spend time with school friends following your child's program time. Unless otherwise stated, the church playground, pavilion, and grassy area behind the parking lot are all great places to picnic, make friends, and enjoy some fun time together before heading home.

Please do not allow any children to play in or close to the parking lot and driveways, or in the grassy area beside sidewalks, or the road. Thanks for helping us keep everyone safe!

Communications

We believe active communication between home and school is one of the keys to a child's early learning success. Adults who live in the house with your child are your child's first teachers, and so your feedback is important to us. We ask that families communicate with us regularly, so we can work together to provide a wonderful early childhood experience for all the children.

School-wide communication will be primarily through Brightwheel or email.

Teacher/Class Communications

If you have specific questions for your child's classroom team, you are welcome to contact the teacher anytime using Brightwheel messaging. It can be tempting to ask the classroom staff questions face-to-face about your child's progress during dismissal, but we ask that you refrain from doing so as the staff are unable to privately discuss children in a public setting, nor are they always available during this busy pick-up time. If you need additional support after you have talked via email with the teacher please contact the School Director.

Communications to the Director

All communications to the director can be emailed at any time to **noahslittlearkpa@gmail.com** or by calling the NLA office phone: **717-832-2275**. The School Director will be happy to schedule an in-person meeting if needed and may include the teacher or classroom staff if appropriate.

Office Email: The director will answer your questions or forward your message to the appropriate party (if it concerns finances, or pastoral resources, or something in your child's classroom, etc.)

Office Phone Calls: Our primary focus during the school day is working with the children, so please leave a message if no one answers. We check messages throughout the day. If you do not leave a message, we cannot call you back.

Feedback: Please kindly and calmly share feedback, concerns, and ideas with the NLA School Director. If you would like to provide comments to the NLA Board of Directors, please do so with a written letter provided to the School Director. A copy of your letter will be shared with the Board of Directors.

Staff Phone Numbers

The Board of Directors and NLA Director are committed to

maintaining both families' and staff's privacy and time outside of school program hours; therefore, NLA has strict policies for the staff concerning professional and appropriate communication with families and one another. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Texts and Phone Calls: Please do not text or call any NLA Staff on their personal devices concerning NLA events or situations, either during school hours or outside of school hours. If you have questions or concerns, contact the NLA School Director.

Assessments

Quality assessment tools are used at NLA to evaluate the level at which each child is currently functioning.

Evaluations

The evaluations represent a student's ability only as observed at preschool. It is merely a "snapshot" measurement. Growth can be observed by comparison with previous evaluations. Remember, children develop at their own individual rates!

Conferences

Evaluations of students are done twice per school year, once in the fall and once in early spring. Following the spring evaluation, parents will be invited to sign up for a time slot to come and conference with the class teacher in person.

Discipline

Discipline comes from the word disciple, which means, "one who is a learner". Therefore, discipline is a positive part of school, and not a punitive action. Discipline is the responsibility of the teacher and/or staff or the adult responsible for the safety of the children at that time.

Behavior Management

At Noah's Little Ark Preschool, we are committed to helping every child grow, learn, and succeed. We understand that young children are still developing important social, emotional, and self-regulation skills, and that challenging behaviors are often a way of communicating unmet needs. Our goal is to partner with families to support each child's development while maintaining a safe, nurturing, and positive learning environment for all children.

If a child demonstrates ongoing behaviors that significantly impact their own safety, the safety of others, or the learning environment, we will work closely with the family through the following support process.

Examples of behaviors that may require additional support include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated physical aggression toward peers or staff
- Repeated attempts to leave supervised areas
- Intentional destruction of property
- Frequent behaviors that significantly disrupt classroom activities
- Self-injurious behaviors requiring a level of supervision beyond the program's capabilities

Behavior Support Process

1. Observation and Family Communication

Teachers and administrators will observe and document behavioral incidents, identify possible triggers, and implement age-appropriate support strategies. Families will be informed through Brightwheel, phone calls, in-person conversations, or a combination of these methods so that we can work together to support the child.

2. Family Conference

A meeting will be scheduled with the family to discuss concerns, share observations, and develop a consistent support plan between home and school. Our goal is to create

a collaborative approach that helps the child be successful in both environments.

3. Community Resources and Additional Support

With family consent, we may assist in connecting families with community resources for developmental or behavioral evaluations. We will carefully review any recommendations provided by qualified professionals and consider reasonable accommodations that can be safely implemented within our program's staffing and operational capabilities.

4. Ongoing Communication and Progress Review

Families will receive updates regarding the child's progress and the effectiveness of support strategies. A follow-up conference may be scheduled to review progress, discuss next steps, and make any necessary adjustments to the support plan.

Enrollment Review

We believe that the best outcomes occur when families and the school, work together as partners. Families are expected to participate in scheduled conferences and collaborate in implementing agreed-upon support strategies.

While our goal is always to help children succeed within our program, there may be situations where, despite reasonable efforts and support, we determine that we are unable to safely or effectively meet a child's needs within the scope of our program. If this occurs, enrollment will be reviewed and, when necessary, discontinued. Written notice will be provided to the family.

Immediate Disenrollment

In situations involving an immediate and serious safety concern, Noah's Little Ark Preschool reserves the right to discontinue care without completing the steps outlined above. This may occur if a child's behavior presents an immediate and unmanageable risk of harm to themselves or others, or if a parent or guardian engages in threatening, aggressive, or abusive behavior toward staff, children, or other families.

Student Accommodations

Any student with physical, mental, or emotional ability challenges will

receive basic accommodations to enhance their learning and chances of success. We have accommodated students with walkers, students with mobility challenges, students with verbal or language struggles, students with various dietary restrictions, and students receiving outside services. To do so, we require that during the registration and enrollment process, NLA must be provided with written documentation of the student's disabilities and requests for relevant accommodations.

Although our goal is to provide opportunities to everyone who seeks an early learning experience, Noah's Little Ark reserves the right to deny a registration request if the facility cannot be reasonably altered to accommodate the need, if the school does not have an appropriate class available, or if the NLA Staff is not able to provide adequate care.

Health and Illness

Our goal is to maintain a safe, healthy school environment for all students and all NLA Staff. When in doubt, keep your child home to prevent the spread of illness to students and staff. Always use your very best judgment.

Child Health Report

Every year, each enrolled child must have a Health Report completed and signed by a physician, CRNP, or Physician's Assistant. Each child attending NLA must be up to date on their vaccination schedule as recommended by the CDC Department of Health Immunization schedule recommendations for children. The only exception is in the case of a medical exemption signed by a physician.

Illness at School

Illnesses at school include but are not limited to fever 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, vomiting, diarrhea, bleeding injuries requiring more than a bandage, excessive congestion/coughing, or inability to stay

awake.

Should a child become sick at school, we will contact the parents first, then the emergency contacts. We expect that someone will pick up your child within 20 minutes. Students will be removed from the classroom and given a quiet place to rest while they wait.

Illness at Home

To return to school, children must be symptom-free for 48 hours. This includes being fever-free ***without the aid of fever-reducers*** and free of vomiting and diarrhea for the last 48 hours. Children who are taking antibiotics may return after 24 full hours on the medication. If your child was taken to a doctor, please include a note from the physician. Some illnesses will require a doctor's note prior to returning.

Medication

Noah's Little Ark does not dispense medication. If you have a special circumstance that requires medication to be provided at school such as an EPI-Pen, please contact the School Director for the required paperwork and permissions. Please be aware that a signed note from your doctor is required and all medication must be in the original packaging clearly labeled with the child's name.

Head Lice

This is a common occurrence and certainly not a pleasant experience. NLA, a private educational center, reserves the right to check students who excessively scratch their head and hair line or show any indication of a possible case of lice. If live lice or nits are found, your child will be sent home for removal of lice and nits and for treatment. Your child may return to school the following day. An additional head check will take place prior to reporting to class. No nits or live lice are the criteria for returning to class. If lice or nits are found on your child at home, please communicate with the office. This information is treated professionally and with the utmost privacy. We will run a courtesy check in classrooms that have a reported case, and this will

be shared with the parents along with facts for your help in making sure it does not spread throughout the facility.

Tuition Policy

Tuition is calculated on an annual basis with the option to pay in full or in nine monthly installments. Monthly payments remain the same each month regardless of the actual number of school days or your attendance in any given month.

Example: December has fewer school days than March, but the monthly tuition payment is the same.

Discounts: NLA offers a 3% discount if the school year is paid in full by August 1. There is an automatic 5% discount for younger siblings of active students.

Billing: Noah's Little Ark utilizes Brightwheel for its billing. If you are new to Brightwheel an invitation will be sent to your email for you to receive your invoices through your child's account. Acceptance of this invitation is mandatory for at least one parent/guardian of each child enrolled. This allows you to see your account status at any given time during your child's enrollment at NLA and provide payment in a timely fashion.

Annual billing will occur within 5 business days of receipt of a signed Tuition Agreement provided by the Finance Officer.

Monthly billing will begin July 31 for September tuition. The following months billing will be sent 10 days prior to the first of the month for

the next month's tuition. For example, October's tuition will be billed on September 21 with a due date of October 1. You will receive a notification in your child's Brightwheel account that an invoice is available to pay.

Payments and Reminders: Payments can be made via credit card, debit card or by check. Autopay is an option. If you choose Autopay, your payment will be charged to your selected form of payment on the due date. CASH PAYMENTS FOR TUITION WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please note, you can pay in advance.

Autopay: It is your responsibility to make sure the payment method you select is active and up to date. If your credit/debit card information changes or your card expires, payment will bounce, and you may be subject to late fees (see below).

Check Payments: DO NOT PUT TUITION PAYMENTS IN YOUR CHILD'S BAG. Tuition payments may be placed in the NLA Secure drop box or given directly to the School Director or other NLA Office Staff during pickup/drop-off.

Late Payments

September tuition payment not received by Aug 10 will start to incur late fees and NLA will ~~call~~ **contact** the family regarding plans to attend school. Failure to communicate with us will result in the loss of the child's reserved class placement on September 1, and the spot will be given to another student on the waiting list.

All monthly tuition payments October through May are due on the first day of the month, regardless of weekends or holidays; payments are considered late on the 2nd of the month – no exceptions.

Late payment fee is \$15.00. Avoid late fees by signing up for automatic payments.

Additional Fees

Family accounts more than 2 months in arrears will be cause for suspension of the child(ren) from all programs. All monies owed must be paid in full before being permitted to return to class.

Late Pick-Up Fee: After a 5-minute grace period at pick-up, you will be charged \$2/minute for each minute until your child is signed out. Payment for late pick-ups is due the following day.

Leave of Absence: If a student needs to take a leave of absence (trips, medical, etc.) which exceeds 30 days, a \$100/month fee must be paid to hold the student's spot.

Returned Check Fee: If a check payment is given to NLA but does not clear, the family is responsible to pay a \$50 bounced-check fee to NLA and must submit immediate payment for the tuition still due.

Withdrawals: You may withdraw from NLA programs at any time by written notice to the director. No part of tuition paid will be refunded, except in extenuating circumstance as decided by the NLA Board of Directors. **All charges, fees, and tuition that remains as an outstanding balance on your account are still due.** You have two weeks to close the account in good standing with full payment, or NLA may submit the account to a third-party collection agency. Failure to pay an outstanding balance will disqualify the family from attending NLA paid programs in the future, unless the situation is resolved, and all parties agree.

Refunds: Tuition and fees are non-refundable. If you need to petition the NLA Board for a special circumstance, submit a request letter to the School Director.

Invoices for any fees will be invoiced via Brightwheel.

If you have a financial questions or concerns, please contact our finance officer at **nla.finance.office@gmail.com** or call the office during school hours.

Scholarships: A limited number of scholarships are available to families whose circumstances require assistance. An application may be requested at the time of registration or picked up in the NLA office. Completed applications will be presented to the NLA Board for consideration at the next meeting following receipt of the form.

School Supplies and Attire

Tote Bags

Please bring the provided tote bag to school each day. Additional backpacks and bags are prohibited, except for Kindergarten student backpacks and lunch bags for Lunch Bunch. Tote bags are sent home each day with items for the family, such as art projects, pictures, or soiled clothes in a plastic bag (to be replaced by a full set of clean clothes).

Items from Home

Personal items can be dangerous for children with allergies or weak immune systems, as cross-contamination is a serious threat. Please leave all personal toys, blankets, stuffed animals, and electronics at home. Occasionally, teachers invite the children to bring something in for a special occasion. This will always be communicated directly to guardians and adults. If you have questions, contact your child's teacher or the NLA Office.

Please note that pacifiers and security blankets are not allowed at school.

Lost and Found: There is a Lost-and-Found box in the NLA school office. We do our best to minimize mix-ups, but the school, NLA Staff, and other students will not be held responsible for personal items that are damaged, lost, or missing.

Supply Donations

NLA will provide all the supplies the children need for learning. However, we always welcome donations of paper towels, tissues,

cleaning wipes, 5-ounce snack cups, and more. If you ~~would~~ like to donate something, talk with your child's teacher and/or the School Director. Thanks!

Attire

School is fun and active, and our learning experiences often mean we will get dirty! Please send your child to school wearing weather-appropriate clothes for play. Outdoor time is essential for child development, and we will be outside whenever weather permits.

Dresses and skirts are welcomed but must be worn with shorts or leggings.

Shoes that can be well-fastened, and are closed toe, are required. Flip-flops and sandals are not a safe choice for school, as they are dangerous during gross motor activities. Students wearing unsafe footwear will not be allowed to climb on or through the playground equipment for safety reasons and will also be discouraged from running in the gym, in the grass, or on the mulch.

Help to set your child up for success in using the bathroom by dressing them in clothing they can use independently. Pants that pull up and down easily are ideal.

Each child must bring a complete change of clothes, including socks and underwear, in a **resealable bag clearly labeled with the child's name**. The bags should be sent in with the student on the first day of school. Soiled clothing will always be sent home in a tied plastic bag, and an explanation given verbally at pick-up about what happened (snack spilled, paint, accident etc.)

Children Not Yet Toilet Trained in the Busy Bees Classroom

If your child is a Bee and not toilet trained, you must supply 5-10 diapers or pull ups and one container of wipes on the first day of school. You are welcome to bring creams or ointments as well, if they

are not prescription strength. Please label each bag, container, and bottle with your child's name. When supplies run low, the NLA Staff will let you know it is time to send in more supplies.

The NLA staff of the Bee's classroom work very diligently to support and reinforce toilet training during the two and half hours of school. With such a short time and a whole class of students, toilet training and diaper changes can take up a very large chunk of class time. This is time carefully used to interact with each child, encouraging their progress and helping them to learn and practice good hygiene and self-care. Please take the time to communicate with the classroom teacher any helpful information about your child's progress or struggles not only at the beginning of school, but also throughout the year.

FOOD: Snacks, Lunch, and Special Treats

Allergy Note: Noah's Little Ark is an allergy-conscious school. All allergies should be communicated so we can be diligent.

Nut-Free Classrooms: In addition to keeping all peanuts, peanut butter, and other nuts out of our classrooms and hallways, please do not ever send anything that has been made in a facility that processes nuts. For the same reason, please **do not send in anything that is homemade**. Accidental contamination can create a life-threatening situation for someone with an allergy.

Snacks

Families will be invited to provide snack for the class several times throughout the school year. This is a great opportunity for you and your child to work together to pick a nutritious snack for classmates to enjoy. It allows you to bring the learning experience home as you discuss all-the-time (healthy) foods and special treats. If this creates a financial burden for your family, please contact the director, and we can make appropriate arrangements.

Snack Suggestions: A few options are listed here, but there are many other ideas your child may have. Check with the classroom teacher if you are unsure. Always double check to be sure the ingredient list does not include nuts and was not prepared in a facility that also processes nuts.

Special sweets can be cookies, donuts, or cupcakes from a nut-free facility, ice cream sandwiches, or a tub of ice cream to scoop.

You are always welcome to wash and prepare fresh fruits or vegetables such as: broccoli florets, carrot sticks, tiny tomatoes, apples, grapes, and berries. You can also include store-bought dips to go with them if you like.

Mix-and-match or pair these with something from above: pretzels, cheese crackers, animal crackers, whole-grain crackers, cheese cubes, string cheese, ice pops, chocolate milk, yogurt sticks.

Lunch Bunch

This option is available to our full day students and is a great time for socializing, learning independent self-care skills and good nutrition. Students who attend full days may pack peanut and tree nut products. Full day students with allergies will sit together so as not to be exposed to these products just as they will do in the elementary school level. **Please communicate all allergies clearly to the office so we can provide a safe environment.**

Tips for packing lunch:

- Prepare food in smaller slices or chunks easily managed
- No glass containers are permitted
- Include all utensils and water
- Thermoses to keep food warm or cold

Lunch Ideas:

- Sandwiches
- Homemade cracker sandwiches
- Lettuce wraps
- Mini pizzas
- Washed & prepped fruits: *grapes, strawberries, apple slices, dried fruit, bananas, berries*
- cheese cubes
- string cheese
- hardboiled egg
- cold meat cubes
- cold pasta salad
- yogurt
 - Washed & prepped veggies: *carrot sticks, cucumber slices, cut green beans, broccoli, hummus dip, cherry tomatoes*

Birthdays

Birthdays are huge events in the life of a child, and we love celebrating with them! Each child will have a day to celebrate their birthday at school. When the birthday falls on a school day, if possible, we'll celebrate then. If not, we will pick a Pretend Birthday.

Birthday Invitations

Want to have a birthday party outside of school wish to distribute birthday invitations at school? You absolutely can, but please do invite every student in your child's class. Do not write names on the invitation so that we may easily place them in tote bags to send home.

Treats

Children will be invited to bring a special treat to share with their class for their birthday celebration day at school. This may be a non-food treat, a classroom snack, or a send-home individually wrapped treat.

Non-food Treats: Many non-food treats can be used to celebrate birthdays. You may wish to give each classmate a page of stickers, a pencil, or a special homemade card/picture. You may donate a new book to the class

library, a bucket of sidewalk chalk, an age- appropriate table game for the classroom, or even supplies for c l a s s projects. Please coordinate with the class teacher.

Food treats and snacks: If you elect to bring in food to share, purchase a treat that is professionally made and packaged in a professionally certified kitchen or factory, to prevent cross contamination. Remember to be sure to read the label first and verify it was not processed in a facility that also processes nuts.

Safety and Security

Building Access

School entrances are locked during the day. If you need to access the building during school hours, please go to the Franklin Street entrance and ring the bell.

Note that our primary focus during the school day is on the children, so, it may take us a few moments to answer the door.

Volunteers

Noah's Little Ark follows legal requirements and UMC Safe Sanctuary guidelines for volunteering with children. If you are interested in volunteering at NLA, contact the School Director. You will need to obtain a free Volunteer Clearance and provide a copy to the office. If you are unsure about this process or have questions, the office will be happy to assist you.

Emergency Situations

NLA has a comprehensive plan in place for evacuations, weather emergencies, breaches of security, etc. We review and revise the plan regularly both internally and with professionals to promote top quality care for your child. Fire Drills take place several times during the school year, according to state guidelines.

Pastoral Care & Church Events

The First United Methodist Church of Palmyra pastor is available for pastoral concerns or just to sit and chat over a cup of coffee. He can be reached via email: pastorjim@palmyrafirst.org

First United Methodist Church of Palmyra welcomes all families into the church on Sundays and to all our church events during the week. Check out our [website](#) for details.

Every Sunday morning, band-led music worship starts at 9:00am and organ/piano hymn music worship begins at 10:30am.

Appendix

The following forms are required for attendance at Noah's Little Ark Preschool and are completed via the Brightwheel app. You may refer to these forms at any time through your child's profile.

1. Medical Release and Permissions including Photo Release
2. Waiver and Release of Liability
3. Emergency Contact Consent Form
4. Parent Code of Conduct
5. Health Forms including up to date vaccine records
6. Tuition Agreement