SUPPLY LIST: Caring for Children with Excellence
At WNS we believe every component of the child’s day is an opportunity for learning and growth and connection. The care rituals representing educational opportunities and during the care encounter we come to know one another well and build the foundation of trust that will strengthen the child’s positive attitudes towards self and others.

Every child needs a back pack: It helps if children carry the same back pack/lunch box daily (the teachers and children learn which materials belong to each child, the familiarity is comforting to the children, and it helps with organization at arrival and departure and at lunch set up). Please label lunch and back pack.

Big Tote: It might also helpful to have a big tote that teachers and parents can hand back and forth and it can carry all the loose accessories that come and go with children such as soiled clothes or nap items. We have found in the past that all the weekly needs do not easily fit in a child’s back pack especially in the winter when we need snow suits and hats and mittens.

Extra change of clothes: You will be provided with a white mesh laundry bag which we will keep at school with your child’s extra clothes. Please label each item. (2 extra pair of socks, 2-4 extra pair underwear, pants/shorts, shirt/dress, diapers and wipes if needed.)

Appropriate shoes: Keep in mind, there may be days when your child needs an extra pair of shoes in their back pack as well if the playground is wet or muddy. Shoes need to fit well and provide adequate support. This is an important time of life when children are learning through movement. Closed toe sturdy shoes are necessary for campus walks, riding trikes, balancing, climbing and running on the playground daily. Clogs, crocs or flip flops are not appropriate for the playground and put the child at a disadvantage for robust physical play that is linked to developing critical thinking, problem solving and creativity.

Pack a lunch daily: Please pack lunch daily. (See lunch tips below)

Snacks: We will have snack breaks in the morning and the afternoon. Snacks are provided by the school and consists of whole food (fruits, vegetables, grain, etc)

Water bottle: Although we have water available for children throughout the day and also during daily snacks, we sometimes take water bottles outside with us on nature walks or on the playground. It is helpful if everyone has a water bottle that they are familiar with and can operate independently. Please label each part of the water bottle. Children will keep water bottles in their cubbies.

Allergies or food preferences: If your child has a special diet or allergies, your teacher will work with you to ensure inclusive accommodations are made.
Comfort item for rest: We have a bed roll for your child (this will be your child’s bed roll for the next year too and it will be sent home every couple of weeks for the laundry). The bed rolls really help us with organization at nap. The bed rolls have a cover built in – but your child may like to bring a comfort item – a special small blanket or stuffed animal. These special comfort items are kept in each child’s cubby and the children learn to retrieve them at nap time and help set up their beds. Transitional objects from home help the child feel secure and helps us support the important family attachment while children are in our care.

Play Clothes daily: We will engage in robust physical play daily. Please keep this in mind when dressing for school. Clothing should not inhibit a child from climbing and running.

Dress for mess daily: A focus of our curriculum is trusting the child’s natural desire to “do it by myself” during this important period of developing agency and autonomy. Children will engage in experiences that are messy such as painting, gardening, and cooking. We offer smocks, but they do not always adequately cover children and children often feel encumbered by them. We help children wash their hands and faces many times throughout the day within our caring routines, and we follow sanitation routines for our toys and furniture to keep our building healthy. The kind of mess we are talking about is not dirty or unsanitary – it is healthy child experimentation and full engagement.

Dress for Self-help and independence: Now that children are learning to dress and use the toilet, we want to ensure that they have clothes that support success. Being able to get their own clothes off and on when needed is very important. Undoing many buttons, belts, snaps and buckles will make the transition unnecessarily frustrating. Comfortable pull up elastic-waist type pants are great.

Dress for the weather: We plan to play outside every day in all weather. Sun hats and ayers are great. Boots, mittens, snowsuits are needed in the winter. Rain Gear: Children need rain boots and rain gear that fits over clothes and allows for free movement and play. Part of our nature play and environmental education program includes campus outings, rain walks, stomping in puddles, looking for worms and frogs. We have found that full body rain suits are best. Some brands that have worked well are Tuffo Muddy Buddy, Puddlegear, Oakiwear.

Care is Education: “Sometimes education is understood exclusively as teaching math, reading, and working with puzzles, while physical care such as feeding and dressing the child belongs to a welfare model. This concept could not be more wrong. At a young age, controlling bowel movements, learning to eat in a social context, and learning to dress are rituals that, when conducted with intentionality and consciousness are extremely educational. Children do not separate between educational and non-educational moments: any time of the day, of the week, or of the year, is education if it is organized by caring adults and educators.” – Alfredo Hoyules, The Ethics of Loris Malaguzzi’s Philosophy
Lunch Tips and ideas regarding approaches to meals with children

**Variety:** Children do well with small portions and several appealing choices.

**Fresh:** Include fresh fruit and vegetable at every meal.

**Left-overs:** Pasta, soup, rice or beans, can be heated up in the morning and packed in a thermos to stay warm. If you pack it in a glass container, the teachers can assist by warming it up in the microwave, but it is really helpful if lunches are ready to go as we sometimes enjoy picnics or lunch on the patio.

**Protein:** Boiled egg, cheese cubes, tofu, sausage, cubed or rolled up meats, hummus, nut-butter, sandwiches, quesadillas or nuts are a few healthy suggestions.

**Utensils:** Please include all the utensils your child will need to eat with. Any utensils or containers will be packed up and sent home daily for washing.

**Containers:** It is great if you can pack containers that we can teach the children to learn to open and close. We strive to create a comfortable family style social meal experience. We are always sitting with children and are here to help – and we will encourage independence throughout the year.

**Trusting Children:** Children are developing autonomy and agency around hunger, likes, dislikes and satiation. We present all components of the meal at once. We do not require children to eat food in a certain order. If lunch includes a “treat” such as a cookie or sweet item, keep it proportional. By serving all components of meal together, we avoid making “dessert” a big deal which can potentially send unhealthy messages about good food and bad food and viewing food as reward or punishment.
Meals represent relationship: For young children, food is love. Children feel very attached to their items from home – so when they open their lunches, it represents family. At school, it is our responsibility to create a pleasant climate with good conversation and an emotional atmosphere that is like a happy nourishing meal.

Young children are building their relationship with food and the attitudes surrounding food are just as important as the nutritional content. Praising, bribing or cohering children to eat can quickly turn into power struggles and can have deleterious effects on life-long attitudes about health and food.

During the preschool years children pass through picky eating stages. It is helpful to remember that they are at the beginning stage of their relationship with food, and experimenting with many different new flavors and textures. It is important to allow children to develop autonomy and self-awareness about hunger and satiation.

At nursery school, we practice social skills, conversation, listening and respect at meal time. Teachers model and teach manners in a natural comforting way. Teachers show respect for each child’s eating competency and food acceptance, viewing these things as skills that develop over these important early years.

RESOURCES for FAMILIES:

Ellyn Satter Institute of Nutrition

Kids Eat in Color

Feeding Littles