

2025-2026

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We're delighted you chose St. Theresa PreK 3 as your child's first school experience. We are looking forward to meeting you and your child. This year will be a particular time for learning, making friends, and having fun while achieving new heights in all areas of development. An optional "Meet the Teacher" night for parents and children is scheduled for Thursday, August 21st, 2025. We hope to answer any questions while your child becomes familiar with the staff and the classroom. Please read this handbook before our "Meet the Teacher" night. This event will primarily be a meet and greet. All pertinent information for the school year is included here in this handbook. We will, however, be giving out our daily schedule, and we will briefly discuss our discipline policy. Monday, August 25th, 2025, will be the first day of school for all half and full-day PreK 3 students.

To help make the school adjustment period go smoothly, please consider introducing a song like Hap Palmer's *My Mommy Comes Back*. Families can find the music video on "YouTube." Please begin to read one listening story every day. Direct your child to listen only and to save any comments or questions until after the story is read. The goal is to achieve 5 to 10 minutes of listening time daily. Try reading a couple of books about the first day of Preschool and discussing fun-filled preschool activities like play-dough, painting, and building with blocks. We will use a picture schedule in school to help half-day and full-day students understand when it is time to go home. If we work together, students will make an easy transition.

If at any time you have a question, please do not hesitate to contact the school office at 610-838-8161, email us at prek3@stsprekhellertown.com or prekdirector@stsprekhellertown.com or secretary@stsprekhellertown.com. Please add our emails along with noreply@optioncalerts.com to your contacts. Welcome to St. Theresa PreK 3 Program! We look forward to seeing you soon.

In Christ,

Mrs. Mary Morsbach, Director of Preschool

Mrs. Colleen Fitzgerald, PreK 3 Teacher

ST. THERESA PRESCHOOL PREK 3 HANDBOOK

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: All parents will enter the parking lot by the westside convent entrance along Wilson Avenue. Cars will drive up alongside the cones in single file and stop at the side entrance marked by the flagpole. You will be met by a staff member at the doorway who will assist the student. A teacher's assistant will then walk your child to the classroom. Please drive out of the parking lot by the outdoor St. Theresa Shrine entrance back onto Wilson Ave.

PreK 4 and PreK 3 arrival will begin at 8:00 AM. Arrival ends for both classes at 8:45 AM. If you arrive after 8:45 AM, please park your car in the upper parking lot behind the church and walk your child into the main office (Door "E") to be signed in. If you think your child will have difficulty separating from you, please arrive early at 8:00 AM. Then, we will have ample time to work through this with your child before the program begins at 9:00 AM. Please do not leave your car and walk across the car line with your child, as this has proven dangerous.

Dismissal Policy: For your child's protection, we will only release your child to the people whose names are listed on our release form. A "Pick-Up List" will be completed by you if another adult is expected to take your child home at any time during this school year. Unrecognized adults will provide us with identification and their phone number. After school, students may not play with sticks on school property. They are welcome to play on the grass but must stay off the shrines. The brick wall and concrete by the shrines are not a playground. It is a place of prayer. Students are welcome to play in the parking lot and in the grassy areas.

Half-day students are dismissed at 11:30 AM by the flagpole gray doors. For the 11:30 dismissal, please park in the upper lot between the main office and the church or on Wilson Avenue. Please do not park or congregate along Wilson Avenue during AM dismissal, as this can cause tears in the eyes of our full-day students.

Full-day students are dismissed at 3:00 PM from the gray exterior door "C." The adults picking up can park along Wilson Avenue, enter the parking lot, and stand along the fence line. If you need to pick up your child at a different time, please sign your child out at the main office. If you call us beforehand, they will be ready to be dismissed early.

SNACKS/LUNCH

Half-day students will need one snack and one drink.

Full-day students will need two snacks, one lunch, and one drink. Drinks must be brought in a reusable water bottle with a spill-proof lid that can be refilled with water as needed.

Please do not send in juice boxes. We have found that juice boxes cause frequent spills even if we pop the wings. The juice spills if the container is squeezed too hard, and the juice frequently siphons out the straw. We do allow juice boxes on a party day. Please ensure your child eats breakfast every morning because snack time is not until after circle time at 10–10:15 AM. Please put names on water bottles, lunch boxes, and all plastic storage containers so they stay visible.

REST TIME

Full-day students will have a daily Rest Time. Please send in a travel-sized pillow with a washable pillowcase, a blanket, or a sleeping bag. Sometimes pillows are attached to the sleeping bags, and that is fine. A "lovie" may be brought, but it may not travel from home to school daily. Students have had traumatic experiences when lovies were left at school, so it is best only to take them home to wash them on Friday. Please label all rest time items with their name and send them to school in a throwaway bag on the first day. We will store rest time items in a Ziploc Big Bag size XL, which is a 10-gallon size. The school will provide this bag. Please be sure the rest time items will fit into a bag with dimensions 2 FT x 1FT 8 IN x 7 IN (60cm x 51cm x 18cm). These bags go home at the end of the week so that the items may be washed. Kindermats will be provided for each student, labeled with the student's name, and disinfected.

VOLUNTEERS/VISITORS

At this time, we are allowing volunteers and visitors into the Preschool. Visitors need to sign in at the office.

SHOW-N-TELL

Show-n-Tell will be every Friday unless otherwise noted on the calendar. Students will be divided into two groups for Show-n-Tell. This activity is when your child will learn to express themselves in front of others and speak in complete sentences using descriptive language. Please take some time Thursday night to help your child explain their Show-n-Tell to you. The theme will be noted on our monthly calendar. We discuss

color, shape, texture, beginning sound, and other descriptive qualities and uses. Please send Show-n-Tell to school inside the provided Show-n-Tell bag.

BIRTHDAYS

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthday at school with a small snack or treat. Simple snacks like cookies, Munchkins, or Rice Krispy treats are popular. June and July birthdays will be celebrated in May. August birthdays may be celebrated in September. Please contact Mrs. Fitzgerald to decide on the celebration date together.

ALLERGIES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

Once we are aware of allergies, information will go home about them. Please be sure to list your child's allergies on the back of the emergency form. If your child needs an Epi-pen or medication, please get in touch with the school office for the appropriate doctor's form. Please call the school office at 610-838-8161 with any questions or concerns.

HEALTH

Students with flu, COVID, RSV, or any other respiratory illness must stay home until they are fever-free for 24 hours without medication. Mask-wearing is suggested for a few days after the illness.

FOUR SIMPLE CLASSROOM RULES

1. Be nice.
2. Be safe.
3. Be clean.
4. Listen.

BATHROOM HABITS

All students are required to be potty-trained before entering the preschool program. If there is a potty training concern, you will be asked to come in to help us develop an individualized plan.

DISCIPLINE CODE

The following steps will be taken if a discipline problem should arise: 1st reminder- Your child will be given a verbal warning about inappropriate behavior. 2nd reminder- Your child will be given a 1-2 minute time out. 3rd reminder- Your child will be given a 3-minute time out. 4th reminder- Your child will be redirected to another center activity

with a different group. 5th reminder- Parent and child will talk to the teacher together to find a solution.

Continuous serious behavioral problems or lack of self-regulating skills may result in the child's dismissal from the St. Theresa Prekindergarten Program.

SAFETY

Outside of school instruction time, it is unsafe for children to play at or on the rectory ramp area (with caution tape) or at or around the shrine, where there are dangerous concrete flowerpots and statues. Traditionally, during school time, we play in the grassy areas.

SNOW DAYS/EARLY CLOSINGS

In inclement weather, a school closing or delayed opening could occur. Through the St. Theresa Preschool Option C Alert System, you will receive a recorded message on your phone, a text, or an email. Please report any changes to your phone numbers or email addresses to the primary school office. You can also look for these school closings or 2-hour delays on WFMZ-TV Channel 69, or you can sign up on www.wfmz.com to receive a text message on your cell phone.

TWO HOUR DELAY

In the event of a two-hour delay, arrival time is 10:00AM. The class will begin at 10:00 AM. Half-day students will dismiss at 12:30 PM, while full-day students will dismiss at the usual 3:00 PM. Each student should bring a lunch and drink on delay days.

EARLY SCHOOL CLOSING

In the event of an early closing, the Option C Alert System will contact you, notifying you that all students will be dismissed. There will be no afternoon classes or Extended Care.

CLOTHING

Comfortable clothes are required so your child can feel free to move. Sneakers are preferred because of added stability. Sneakers, however, and appropriate attire are required for movement activities. Please do not send students to school in flip-flops, crocs, or high-tops. Please label all outer clothing like sweaters, coats, hats, mittens, and jackets. We ask that students bring mittens rather than gloves to school. Mittens are easier for them to manage. Your child must take care of their bathroom needs, so please

ensure your child can handle the clothing worn to school. Please do not dress students in rompers. They are challenging to manage on their own. Each PreK student must have a regular-sized backpack daily with a change of clothing (underpants, shirt, pants/shorts, and socks) in a bag labeled with their name. The backpack must be large enough to hold a folder, lunch box, and change of clothes. Please do not send mini backpacks to school.

TOYS

No toys should be brought from home to school other than the rest time "lovie" that stays in school and a Show-n-Tell item on Fridays.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Mandatory school supplies:

- Large backpack (please, no mini backpacks) labeled with the name
- Lunch Box labeled with the name
- Reusable children's water bottle with a spill-proof lid labeled with the name
- Complete set change of clothes in a Ziploc bag labeled with name

Wish List: (any help with our wish list is greatly appreciated)

- Clorox Wipes
- Boxes of Tissues
- Paper Towels
- Fine Black Dry Erase Markers
- Colored Markers
- Small and large paper plates (white, noncoated)
- Plastic spoons and forks

Please sign the Handbook Acknowledgement Form on the next page and return it to school. These signatures are required to be on file. Thank You.

Handbook Acknowledgement Signatures

I have read the PreK 3 Handbook and understand all policies and procedures. I know that no toys may be brought from home except for Show-n-Tell and a lovie. I understand that if my child brings a lovie, it must remain at school. Lovies may only travel back and forth between home and school to be washed on Friday and returned on Monday.

Parent #1 signature: _____

Parent #2 signature: _____

Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____

These signatures must be on file before the first day of school.