



2026-2027

Dear Parents/Guardians:

We are happy you have chosen St. Theresa Preschool and look forward to meeting you and your family. Our primary goal is to form a partnership with you and your child in which together we help your child learn, grow and discover what a classroom environment might look and feel like, so learning can take place in this environment. We want this relationship to be one in which there is regular two way communication, as there should be in any partnership. We will do our best to share regularly with you your child's success and challenges and we hope you will keep us posted on how your child is feeling about their PreK experience and your observations of how they are growing physically, emotionally, socially, and academically. This year will be a time for learning, making friends, and having fun while achieving multiple new heights in all areas of development. As we communicate and work together we will be able to implement learning strategies that help your child be better prepared for their next educational steps.

While Meet the Teacher Night is optional, we hope you will join us on Thursday, August 20th, for an opportunity to meet our teachers, learn more about the upcoming school year, and have any questions answered. If possible, we kindly ask that children stay home so parents can fully focus during the presentation. We are also excited to welcome our students for an Open House on Friday, August 21st. Students should attend with one adult during the following times:

- Boys: 8:30AM–10:00 AM
- Girls: 10:30 AM–12:00 PM

This special visit gives your child a chance to see their classroom, meet their teacher, and become familiar with their new environment before the school year begins. Our first full day of school for all half-day and full-day students will be Monday, August 24th.

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, so students make an easy transition.

Here is a list of some of the books you might want to consider reading with your child:

PreK First Day of School Books List

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst

Lola Goes to School by Anna McQuinn

Rosalie Goes to Preschool by Karen Katz

The Night Before Preschool by Natasha Wing

Llama Llama Misses Mama by Anna Dewdney

Its Time for Preschool by Esme Raji Codell

When I Miss You by Cornelia Maude Spelman

Preschool Day Hooray by Linda Leopold

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 secretary@stsprekhellertown.com. Please add our emails along with noreply@optioncalerts.com to your contacts. Welcome to St. Theresa PreK Daisy Program! We look forward to seeing you soon.

In Christ,

Mrs. Colleen Fitzgerald, PreK Teacher

Mrs. Mary Morsbach, Director of Preschool

Rev. John Anthony Hutta II, Pastor

ST. THERESA PRESCHOOL PREK 3 HANDBOOK

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: All parents will enter the parking lot by the west side 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 to provide ample time to work through this before 8:45 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 at the classroom "C" door. 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 in a spill-proof cup.

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. Please do not send glass containers to school. We do not want anyone to get hurt. They have dropped and shattered in the past.

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.

If your child is unable to settle, we will work together to come up with a plan. If they begin to disturb the other students continuously, their day may need to be shortened.

VOLUNTEERS/VISITORS

Visitors need to sign in at the office before going to the classroom and upon leaving the school building when their volunteering is completed for the day.

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. Parents may celebrate with us and join us for the party and are welcome to be the Guest Reader that day.

ALLERGIES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR

Once we are aware of allergies, information will go home. 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

After an illness, students may not return to school unless they are fever free, diarrhea free, and no vomiting for 24 hours without medication. Students with a fever, vomiting or diarrhea during school hours will be sent home. If a student has a regular bowel movement accident while at school, a parent will be called to clean and change their clothes. If accidents become habitual, parents will be contacted for a behavioral plan.

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 IN OUR PREK ENVIRONMENT

We recognize that challenging behaviors are a part of the normal development of all children during all stages of development. We will be observing your child in our program very carefully during the first 60 days of school in order to better understand your child's strengths and needs regarding self-regulation, so we can formulate appropriate plans for helping your child's growth in this area. We want you to be an integral part of that process, so any observations you share from your experiences at home will be very helpful to our teachers and support staff. We will definitely keep you informed of significant incidents, but we may call you to come in and meet with staff or assist with your child if there is an ongoing situation that needs attention.

Challenging behaviors emerge as part of a child's initial experiences in any new program or new class. We want children to begin to learn self-regulation of their behavior, but while they are learning we will be offering appropriate structured responses to these behavioral challenges. These responses will include a verbal explanation of why that behavior may be unsafe or inappropriate for a school environment, and we will do our best to model what the appropriate behavior would look like and give your child time immediately following the modeling to demonstrate and practice what we have modeled. Your child will be given an opportunity to respond to what they have heard and seen so we know whether they understood why we are taking the time to address this. If needed we will provide a quiet and safe place for your child to become calm and focused before we have provided the structured approach to helping them learn how to manage this behavior if it comes up again. Since not all children possess the same sensory introceptive or proprioceptive awareness or response times, we will use our best judgment in how long it may take for the child to be able to respond appropriately to the correction. Here is where your help is invaluable. Since you will be managing the child's behavior at home, any specific procedures, words you use, or other methods you employ when dealing with your child's behavior would be helpful for us to know so we can be consistent with the methods you have found helpful. We will document all behavioral issues and provide you a copy of the documentation and how we dealt with the matter.

There are two areas of challenging behavior that we feel need to be addressed quickly when they occur, with our PreK students:

- 1. Deliberately injuring another student or staff member***
- 2. Deliberately damaging items belonging to another student or to the school***

1. If your child deliberately injures another student or staff member you will be notified right away. Your child will be removed from the classroom environment and moved to an area where they can safely deescalate with the classroom aide present. When the child is more calm and focused we will go over the incident with the child and the injured party and will present and model specific corrective actions to prevent this from occurring in the future. You will be notified of the incident and the corrective actions taken as well as your child's response.
2. If this happens again, the same initial procedure mentioned above will be taken, but depending on the seriousness of the injury we may request that you pick up your child for the remainder of the day to allow for further deescalation.
3. If this happens a third time your will be contacted immediately and your child will need to be picked up and remain out of school for the remainder of that day and the next day while we work with you on a more specific plan of correction. When that plan is implemented it will be monitored closely and if there is a continuous serious behavioral problem or lack of self-regulating skills this may result in the child's dismissal from the St. Theresa Prekindergarten Program and/or a suspension with a recommendation for further evaluation of your child's needs in regard to self-regulation and effective classroom participation.

If there is an incident involving the deliberate destruction of another person's or school property, this will be addressed by providing appropriate compensation for the damage and/or replacement of the item(s). This applies only to serious and deliberate situations.

We are well aware that accidents happen to all of us and we will not need to be taking such actions for accidents. We will, however, be documenting accidents involving injury or damage.

SAFETY

Outside of school instruction time, it is unsafe for children to play at or on the rectory ramp area 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 text message and 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

Clothing Guidelines: Dresses and Skirts

To promote comfort, safety and modesty during active play, girls who come to school wearing dresses or skirts are required to wear shorts or bloomers underneath. Preschool children spend time sitting on the floor, climbing, running, and participating in playground activities throughout the day and appropriate coverage helps them move comfortably and confidently during school activities.

Comfortable clothes are required so your child can feel free to move. Sneakers are preferred because of added stability. 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 on their own. Please do not dress students in rompers. 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 in their backpack

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, non coated)
- Plastic spoons and forks

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

Handbook Acknowledgment Signatures

I have read the PreK Daisy 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.