



2026-2027

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are happy you have chosen St. Theresa Preschool and look forward to meeting your family. This year will be an exciting time for learning, making friends, and having fun while achieving multiple new heights in all areas of development. An optional "Meet the Teacher" night is open to parents on Thursday, August 20th, to answer any questions. There will be an Open House for students on Friday, August 21st, from 10AM-12PM. The first full day of school will be Monday, August 24th, 2026, for all half and full-day PreK students.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the school office at 610-838- 8161 or secretary@stsprekhellertown.com. Please add noreply@optioncalerts.com and prek4@stsprekhellertown.com to your contacts. Otherwise, you might find our OptionC parent alerts inside your spam folder. Welcome to the St. Theresa PreK Program! Enjoy the rest of your summer and we look forward to seeing you soon.

In Christ,

Mrs. Mary Morsbach, Director, PreK Teacher
Mrs. Erin Griffith, PreK Teacher
Rev. John Anthony Hutta II, Pastor

ST. THERESA PRESCHOOL PREK 4 HANDBOOK

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: PreK utilizes a flexible arrival time between 8:00–8:45 AM. Parents enter the parking lot by the convent entrance along the west side of Wilson Avenue. In a single file line, cars will drive up alongside the cones and stop at the side entrance marked by the flagpole. A staff member will assist your child and walk them to their classroom. Please drive out of the east side of the parking lot by the St. Theresa Shrine entrance. Please do not drop off your child on Wilson Avenue or walk them through the line of cars. In the past, this has proven to be very dangerous. All aides report back to the classrooms at 8:45 AM. If you arrive after 8:45 AM, please park your car and walk your child into the main office "E" door to be signed in. If you think your child will have difficulty separating from you, arrive early to provide ample time to work through this before 8:45 AM.

Dismissal Policy: For your child's protection, we will release your child only to individuals listed on the authorized pick-up form. Any authorized individuals who are not known to school staff will be required to present a valid driver's license or other government-issued photo identification before a child is released to them.

Half-day students are dismissed at 11:30 AM. For the 11:30 dismissal, please park on Wilson Ave or in the upper lot between the main office and the church. A staff member will release all PreK Students to their parents at the classroom gray "A" door.

Full-day students are dismissed at 3:00 PM. The adults picking up will park along Wilson Ave. All PreK Students will be released to their parents by a teacher exiting from the gray classroom "B" door. If you need to pick up your child at a different time, please sign your child out at the main office door marked "E." Calling the school if they need to dismiss at a different time is helpful.

REST TIME

Full-day students will have a daily rest time. Please send a travel-sized pillow with a washable pillowcase, a blanket, or a sleeping bag. Sometimes, pillows are attached to the sleeping bags, which is fine. A lovie or stuffed animal can be helpful, but it may only occasionally travel from home to school. Students have had traumatic experiences when lovies are 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 10-gallon Ziploc Big Bag size XL. The bag dimensions are 2 FT x 1FT 8 IN x 7 IN (60cm x 51cm x 18cm). Teachers will

send bags home at the end of the week for laundering. Kindermats, provided for each student, are disinfected after each use.

SNACKS/LUNCHES

Half-day program: Please provide your child with one or two snacks and drinks for morning snacks. Please add your child's name to this lunch box.

Full-day program: Students will need one snack, a packed lunch, and two drinks (one for a morning snack and lunch). Please add your child's name to this lunch box.

VOLUNTEERS/VISITORS

St. Theresa Preschool needs volunteers for several preschool activities. We will post "volunteer" sign-up sheets at the "Meet the Teacher" night. We ask volunteers to help with special activities such as Secret Santa Sale, fundraisers, and birthdays. We also look forward to parents who like sharing information about their job position or hobby.

SHOW-AND-TELL

Show-and-Tell is a beautiful opportunity for your child to learn to express them self in front of others. More details about show-and-tell will be discussed at the "Meet-the-Teacher" night.

BIRTHDAYS

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthdays at school with a small snack or treat. Simple snacks like cookies, Munchkin doughnuts, Rice Krispy treats, or pretzels are appreciated. Each student may bring a favorite book to school or choose a classroom book to be read by a teacher or parent in honor of their birthday. Our classroom family will recognize June and July birthdays during May and early August birthdays in September.

ALLERGIES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR:

Once we are aware of allergies, information about them will go home. Please 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. 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 and have improved symptoms. 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.

DISCIPLINE CODE

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 you 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, we play in the grassy and blacktop areas during school time.

SNOW DAYS/EARLY CLOSINGS

In inclement weather, a school closing or delayed opening could occur. Through the St. Theresa Preschool Option C Alerts, a text message, a message, 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 start time changes 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 CLOSINGS

The OptionC Alert system will contact you in the event of an early closing. Therefore, there will be no afternoon PreK 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 for your child to feel free to move. Sneakers provide added stability for our various gross motor skills. Do not send students to school in flip-flops or crocks. We make every attempt to go outside daily, please dress your child accordingly. Please label all outer clothing like sweaters, coats, hats, gloves, and jackets. Your child must take care of their bathroom needs, so please ensure your child can handle the clothing worn to school. Each PreK student should have a regular-sized backpack with a change of clothing in a Ziploc bag labeled with their name (underpants, shirt, pants/shorts, and socks). The backpack must be large enough to hold a folder (11 by 14) and a lunchbox. Please do not send mini backpacks to school.

TOYS

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

CLASSROOM NEEDS/SUPPLIES

Your child will bring to school a backpack, a complete set of clothing in a Ziploc bag labeled with their name, a lunchbox, a snack, and possibly a lunch. A reusable children's water bottle with a spill-proof lid is required. The school provides all other supplies.

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 the name

Wish List

If you are interested in donating supplies to the classroom, our Wish List includes the following items:

- Tissues
- Paper Towels
- Lysol/Clorox Wipes
- Lysol Spray
- Plastic spoons and forks
- Paper Plates for food
- Paper Plates (non-coated white) for art activities
- Napkins
- Hand Soap
- Hand Sanitizer
- Gallon and sandwich size Ziploc baggies
- Baby wipes

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 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.