



2026-2027

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to St. Theresa's Transitional Kindergarten! We are excited to begin this new chapter in our preschool program and look forward to partnering with your family throughout the school year.

Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is designed to bridge the gap between preschool and kindergarten by providing children with an additional year to strengthen academic, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical development. Our program offers a nurturing Catholic environment where children learn through hands-on experiences, purposeful play, and instruction.

Throughout the year, students will develop foundational skills in literacy, mathematics, religion, science, social studies and social-emotional learning while growing in confidence, independence and responsibility. Our goal is to prepare each child for a successful transition into kindergarten while fostering a love of learning rooted in our Catholic faith.

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 to your email contacts. Otherwise, you might find our OptionC parent alerts inside your spam folder. We are grateful for the opportunity to work together as partners in your child's education and faith journey.

In Christ,

Miss Madison, Transitional Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Mary Morsbach, Director
Rev. John Anthony Hutta II, Pastor

ST. THERESA PRESCHOOL TK HANDBOOK

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrival: TK 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. 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, please 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 TK Students to their parents at the "car line doors" near the flagpole.

Full-day students are dismissed at 3:00 PM. The adults picking up will park along Wilson Ave. All TK 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 appreciated.

Absences

If your child will be absent for any reason, please communicate that with your teacher through Class Dojo.

REST & RESET

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 please plan on leaving it at school for the week and taking it home on Friday with the linens to be laundered and returned on Monday. Please label all rest time items with your child's name and send them to school in a throwaway bag on the first day. The school will provide a 10-gallon Ziploc Big Bag size XL to store rest time items in. The bag dimensions are 2 FT x 1FT 8 IN x 7 IN (60cm x 51cm x 18cm). Nap mats are also provided for each student and disinfected after each use.

TK Focus

- Early literacy development
- Beginning reading skills
- Writing readiness
- Mathematical thinking
- Science and social studies exploration
- Social-emotional growth
- Catholic faith formation
- Independence and responsibility

Language Arts

- Letter recognition and sounds
- Sight word development
- Nursery rhymes and phonological awareness
- Author studies
- Listening comprehension
- Story retelling
- Beginning writing

Mathematics

- Number recognition and formation
- Counting
- Shapes and patterns
- Sorting and classifying
- Comparing quantities
- Calendar and graphing activities

Religion

- Monthly virtues
- Monthly mass
- Bible verses
- Prayer
- Liturgical celebrations
- Catholic traditions and feast days

Specials

- Spanish
- Italian
- Art
- Gym
- Music

Social-Emotional Learning

- Responsibility
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Caring
- Inclusiveness
- Courage

Homework

Occasional family activities may be sent home to reinforce classroom learning. These activities are intended to be brief, enjoyable, and completed with adult support.

Kindergarten Readiness

Teachers will monitor student progress throughout the year and communicate regularly with families regarding readiness skills and growth.

Communication

The TK classroom will utilize ClassDojo to:

- Share classroom updates
- Communicate reminders
- Provide photos of learning experiences
- Maintain home-school communication

Independent Skills

Students are expected to:

- Use the restroom independently
- Manage personal belongings
- Open lunch containers when possible
- Follow classroom routines with minimal assistance

SNACKS/LUNCHESES

Half-day program: Please provide your child with one or two snacks and a spill-proof water bottle. All items coming into school need to be labeled, including the lunch box, ice pack if applicable, water bottle and any reusable food containers, with your child's name. Also, be sure to pack appropriate utensils if your child's snack requires.

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 the lunch box and all the reusable contents included.

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 occupation or hobby. Another volunteer opportunity that you can participate in from home is becoming a "Room Angel". Room Angels occasionally help the teachers prep crafts for the classroom. If you are interested in becoming a room angel, the teacher will send home all the supplies needed to complete the task.

SHOW-AND-TELL

This will be explained at “Meet the Teacher” night and a letter will be sent home with more details.

BIRTHDAYS

Children are welcome to celebrate their birthdays at school with a small snack or treat. Simple snacks like cookies, Munchkin donuts, 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 summer birthdays in September or May.

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. We will model the appropriate behavior, then provide your child with an immediate opportunity to practice and demonstrate the expected behavior. 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. A positive partnership between parents and the school is vital to a child's development. We encourage open communication and collaboration as we work together to support each child's academic, social, emotional, and spiritual growth.

There are two areas of challenging behavior that we feel need to be addressed quickly when they occur with our TK 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 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/on the rectory ramp area or at/around the shrine. 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 can occur. Through the St. Theresa Preschool OptionC Alerts, 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 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. Half-day students will dismiss at 12:30 PM, while full-day students will dismiss at the usual 3:00 PM. All students should bring a lunch and drink on two-hour 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 TK or Extended Care.

CLOTHING

Clothing Guidelines: Dresses and Skirts

To promote 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 all school activities.

Comfortable clothes are required for all children 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 crocs. 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 TK 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.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Mandatory school supplies:

- Large backpack (no mini backpacks, please) 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 bags
- Baby wipes

Please sign this TK 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 TK 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 for the week. 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.