



ST. THERESE CATHOLIC



PRESCHOOL Parent Informational Handbook

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www.sttheresepueblo.org





WELCOME

Welcome to St. Therese Preschool. This handbook has been developed to provide you with specific information about our preschool. We hope you will find it beneficial

in making you more familiar with our program and comfortable in our preschool. Preschool is the place where the journey begins, the place where young minds are filled with wonderment, the place where teacher and parents work together to produce a lasting love of learning. Parents are a very important part of a successful preschool program, and we are happy to have you and your child as a part of our preschool family. We are looking forward to sharing this special time with you and your child.

Please feel free to contact us anytime if you have any concerns or questions.

OUR MISSION AND PURPOSE

St. Therese Preschool exists as a ministry of the Catholic Church, in the city and county of Pueblo, to reach out to children, parents, and families with the unconditional love of Jesus Christ, enabling them to grow to their God-created potential as healthy, whole, loved people. We will provide a loving, safe, healthy, educationally stimulating Christian environment that allows children a variety of experiences – socially, emotionally, cognitively, and spiritually; adopting sound educational and developmental theory to provide a positive context for growth. St. Therese Preschool is a non-profit organization operated under the auspice of the Diocese of Pueblo. St. Therese Preschool admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the preschool. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin in the administration of its policies.

The St. Therese Pre-School program is situated in an accessible classroom. Parents are asked to utilize the rear entrance to the building to assure full mobility access. St. Therese staff works in cooperation with staff Pueblo City Schools and District 70 to identify students with special needs and to refer students for services. The school makes reasonable accommodations in scheduling to allow for special needs service providers from the public school districts. Questions regarding ADA and special needs issues should be referred to the principal.



OUR PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

St. Therese Catholic School Believes:

- The young child is a unique and special gift of God (Psalm 127:3) and we should encourage the development of his or her self-esteem and individuality.
- Growth is individual and children should be free to develop in their own special way and time.

This can be best accomplished by:

- Providing a warm, loving, Christ-centered environment, where children can develop to their fullest potential both spiritually and physically.
- Providing developmentally appropriate activities, which respect and facilitate a child's unique growth pattern.
- Seeking to teach and apply the love of God and the principles of God's word at the child's level.

We believe the experiences a child has in his or her early years are of lasting importance and will set the stage for future development.

Our goals for your child include developing and nurturing the following characteristics:

- Self-concept – knowing he or she is a valuable person because of being loved and valued by others and because of success at many things.
- Independence – becoming increasingly more able to care for his or her own needs.
- Communication – learning to get along with people through talking and listening.
- Developing a love of learning, creativity and exploring interests.



Our philosophy on discipline is based on *respect for the child at all times. No physical punishment or emotional abuse is used.* We reinforce positive behavior and state expectations in a positive manner. We redirect inappropriate behavior and encourage verbalization of feelings. In case of recurrent problems, “time out” is used – removing the child from the situation for a couple of minutes, but not isolated from the class.

After discussing the situation with the child, he or she can return to activity. If a problem is of a serious nature, a conference will be held with the parents. If the behavior jeopardizes the safety of other children, the child may be removed from our program.

THE PROGRAM

The program at St. Therese Catholic Preschool is a structured program stressing cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual development for the child three to six years old. We provide a secure, cheerful and stimulating environment in which children can grow and learn. Children socialize, explore, and create in a variety of experiences. The teacher’s role in these learning situations is to guide the child in the reinforcement of known skills and to develop new ones.

RELIGION

The preschool religious program focuses on self, communities of people, and the children’s gifts and relationship to others. Gradually, young children begin to experience belonging to God’s family through participating in Christian community. Faith Formation (Seeds) focuses on saints and bible stories.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

This program develops communication skills by providing opportunities for children to describe, compare, listen, follow directions, tell stories, and take part in musical and dramatic play. Reading readiness activities will be stressed as well as alphabet, numeral and shape recognition. Zoophonics incorporates music and body movement to letter sounds.

FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

Fine motor skills involve smaller muscle development and agility. Eye-hand coordination is important for later mastery of reading, writing and math skills. Activities such as buttoning, snapping, lacing, cutting, gluing, drawing, painting, working puzzles, and playing with small manipulative games, toys, and play dough all help to strengthen and coordinate fine motor skills. Through these activities children increase their ability to discriminate colors and shapes, recognize and compare various attributes of objects, develop a sense of sequential order, and discover patterns. Handwriting without Tears supports student writing.

LARGE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

We have incorporated a “gross motor development” program into our preschool. The children will go to the outside playground or gym, where they are provided with “open space” and equipment needed for physical growth. Some of the activities include dance, hopping, crawling, running and use of a parachute, balls, musical instruments, beanbags, hoops, and other physical education equipment and materials.

SCIENCE AND MATH

Science and math skills are developed through “hands-on” activities. They explore through measuring, weighing, sequencing, stacking, matching, counting and various manipulatives and games. Finger plays and songs are used to reinforce these skills. Pre-K Saxon Math supports mathematics.

NUTRITION AND HEALTH

We encourage safe and healthy habits for the children through different units of learning. We encourage nutritional eating through daily snack and cooking activities. Hygiene is emphasized through clean and safe habits. We also invite community helpers into our school to reinforce good health habits and safety.

ADMISSION

A child must be 3 1/2 years-old before June 1st of the upcoming school year and are “potty trained” to be admitted into the Monday through Friday Preschool class. Older 4 year-olds and 5-year-olds ~~that are potty trained~~ are eligible for the Monday-Friday ~~afternoon class~~. A child must be at least 4-years-old and potty trained before June 1st of the upcoming school year to be admitted into the pre-kindergarten class on Monday-Friday afternoons.

ALL CHILDREN MUST HAVE A RECENT (WITHIN ONE YEAR) PHYSICAL AND AN UP-TO-DATE RECORD OF IMMUNIZATION BEFORE THEY CAN ATTEND PRESCHOOL.

NO STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND UNTIL MEDICAL AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS ARE ON FILE IN THE SCHOOL OFFICE.



TUITION AND FEES

\$50.00 registration fee for supplies and Seeds (weekly religious program) will be charged when you register. Tuition fees are:

\$220.00 per month for five days per week (Monday –Friday)

Tuition is due by the **10th** of the month. **No billing is sent. A late fee of \$5.00** will be assessed if tuition is paid after the 10th of each month. If any check is returned by a bank, unpaid, an additional \$30 service charge will be assessed. In the event that tuition payment is not received, child (or children) will be withdrawn from preschool, and the obligation for unpaid tuition remains. Re-admittance will not be considered until all debts have been cleared.



For the following year's enrollment to continue, all tuition and fees must be paid by May 10th, or the child's enrollment will be suspended until payment is made.

When sending money to school with your child, please enclose it in an envelope with your child's name and purpose indicated. Tuition is computed on a school-year basis. It may be paid in full at registration or in 9 equal installments (September-May). Because tuition is an annual fee, tuition is payable whether or not your child has been in attendance.

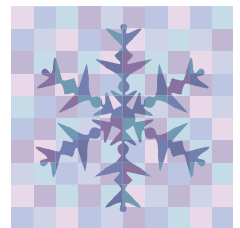
NO REFUNDS ARE GIVEN FOR ILLNESS OR VACATION.

WITHDRAWAL

If a child is withdrawn from preschool, two- (2) week's notice is required so that another child can fill the vacancy. Please notify the school immediately. Tuition will be charged for two weeks after the office is notified of withdrawal.

COMMUNICATION

We believe that good communication between home and school will benefit everyone, especially your child. We will keep you informed of preschool activities through monthly newsletters, notices, and informal conversation. In case of bad weather, please tune into local radio and T.V. stations for school closures. Our parent notification calling system uses information contained in Head Master. Please make sure that contact information is up to date.



Parent-teacher conferences will be held during the year. However, our doors are always open to you, and we would be happy to have a conference with you at any time. If you or your child is experiencing stress for any reason, please let us know. We are here to help you and your child, and knowing that something that significant has happened will alert us to extra ways in which we can help.

EMERGENCIES, EVACUATIONS AND CLOSURE

FIRE A fire evacuation plan is drawn and posted in the school. Emergency numbers and exact address are posted by the telephone. Quarterly fire drills are held. The fire alarms and fire extinguishers are checked yearly. In the event of fire, the building will be immediately evacuated and the fire department notified as quickly as possible. A staff member will check the area and make sure everyone has been evacuated. All other staff members will remain with the children and escort them safely to the designated emergency area.

TORNADO A written tornado plan is posted. Tornado drills are held periodically through the year. An operable, battery-powered radio is near at hand. In the event of a tornado warning, the children shall be evacuated to the inside wall of the gym and remain there until the threat has passed.

BLIZZARD In the event of a blizzard and parents are unable to pick-up children, the staff will house the children at the preschool until parents can pick them up. Food staples are on-hand should an emergency arise.

POWER FAILURE A flashlight in good working order and readily available, with backup batteries, is on hand.

EXCESSIVE HEAT The building is air-conditioned. The children will remain inside on excessively hot days, unless playing in a shady area outside. Fluids will be available to children at all times.

MISSING CHILD Should a child be missing, staff shall search the building and grounds completely. If the child is not found, the police and parent or guardian will be notified while staff continues to search for the child.

CLOSURE Staff will check bathrooms and preschool area to make sure all children have been picked-up before closing for the day.



REPORTING CHILD ABUSE In accordance with Colorado law, any staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect shall immediately make a report to the Pueblo County Department of Social Services at 719-583-6160. Parents may also report suspected child abuse or neglect at preschool by calling the above number.



PROBLEMS

If you have a problem with a policy or person at our preschool, we encourage you to speak with the Preschool Director. If the problem is not resolved, the principal of the school may be contacted. If you have a complaint concerning a suspected licensing violation, you may contact the Colorado Department of Human Services at 800-799-5876.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The preschool doors will be unlocked 10 minutes before school starts. We ask that you please NOT bring your child earlier than 10 minutes before class NOR pick up later than 10 minutes after class. If a parent does not arrive to pick up a child, we will call persons listed on the emergency form to pick up the child. Please notify us if you are running late or have an emergency. If we are unable to contact anyone to pick-up the child within a reasonable time, the Department of Social Services or Pueblo Police may be called.

Please be prompt when picking up your child. It is very traumatic for preschoolers when they are not picked up on time. For your child's safety, your child needs to be escorted into the preschool room. Please enter through the south doors facing the school. The sign-in book is located at the classroom door.

Each day, your child needs to be signed-in at arrival and signed-out at departure, using YOUR FULL NAME (no initials). Please inform other designated transport persons of these procedures.

Once delivered by a parent to a staff member, your child will be with a teacher at all times. No child will be released to anyone other than those listed on the Student Information form, or those authorized by a signed note from the parent or guardian. Colorado rules require these people need to be 18 years of age or older. Persons not known to the staff may be asked to show identification.

Session Times

- Preschool Monday – Friday (AM Class) 8:00 am to 11:00 am
- Pre-Kinder Monday – Friday (PM Class) 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Friday (PM Class) 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

ON THE FIRST DAY PARENTS, WHEN YOU BRING YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL THE FIRST DAY, PLEASE DO NOT LINGER. The first day can be a very difficult day, but it has been our

experience that a child will adjust more quickly if he or she knows you are not waiting nearby. We ask that teachers be alone with your children the first two weeks of school. Both teachers and children need this time to adjust to each other. Rest assured that your child will be given abundant amounts of tender loving care if there are tears (this applies to moms and dads with tears too), and we will contact you if we feel you are needed. Throughout the school year, we may ask for volunteers outside the classroom. If you will be working with children, you will need to complete CBI check before you can volunteer in the classroom.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Morning Session	Afternoon Session	Activity
8:00 – 8:15	12:00 – 12:15	Greeting: As children arrive, staff reviews the schedule for the day through the use of a message board.
8:15 – 8:25	12:15 – 12:25	Planning Time: The children plan where, what and how they will use their work time and what materials they will use.
8:25 – 9:05	12:25 – 1:05	Work Time: This is do time. It is the longest and single most important period of the day. Through their play children learn at their own pace using materials of their choice and interacting with other children. This enables social growth, language development, problem solving skills and decision-making skills.
9:05 – 9:15	1:05 – 1:15	Clean-Up Time: The children will pick up and help put toys away by cooperation with their peers and by following the directions of their teachers.
9:15 – 9:25	1:15 – 1:25	Recall Time/Job Chart: Review time is when children tell teachers and other children what they have done during work time. This makes them aware of the process and sequence of steps they followed to accomplish their plan... In this way they can see how they can expand and build upon their plan (or someone else's plan) in the future. Recall fosters thinking and language skills. Recalls also occurs continually during work time as children complete the plans.

DAILY SCHEDULE *(continued)*

Morning Session	Afternoon Session	Activity
9:25 – 9:45	1:25 – 1:45	Bathroom/Snack Time: The children will go to the restroom and wash hands. Designated child will pass out his or her snacks. Children interact socially, and learn nutrition, and manners. Children clean their own area when finished.
9:45 – 10:00	1:45 – 2:00	Large Group Time: A large group activity with story time, songs, finger plays, music and movement.
10:00 – 10:20	2:00 – 2:20	Small Group Time: A small group of children work together on activities initiated by the teacher.
10:20 -10:35	2:20 – 2:35	Outside Time: Preschoolers need to run and jump, climb and skip, in order to stimulate brain growth and gross motor control. The preschool staff will often have guided outdoors activities for the children as well as *free playtime.
10:35 -10:50	2:35 – 2:50	Second Small Group Time: Pre-K Saxon Math/Literacy.
10:50 – 11:00	2:50 – 3:00	Final Large Group: Sign Language/ Big Book Story.
11:00	3:00	Dismiss



SHOW AND TELL

Show and Tell will be announced after we get into our routine. This will be rotated by last names. This is one of the ways children learn to express themselves. We will be using this opportunity to reinforce the letter & sound recognition as well as numbers, colors and shapes we are working on. PLEASE PUT YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON ALL SHOW AND TELL ITEMS. We will not allow your child to bring toy guns or weapons to school.

FIELD TRIPS

We will be having 4 field trips throughout the school year. Parents are responsible for transportation, supervision and safety of their own child (or children). We may also take walks in the neighborhood around the preschool. Here are examples of a few of our field trips:

- Pumpkin Patch
- Rawlings Public Library
- Buell Children's Museum
- Zoo/City Park Rids
- Petsmart

VIDEO POLICY

We believe children benefit most from hands on activity and active play. Therefore, we will not be watching videos.

SUNSCREEN POLICY

We normally do not go outside if it is very hot and sunny. On those days, however, please send you child to school with sunscreen on as we may go out for a few minutes.

WHAT TO WEAR TO SCHOOL

The preschoolers will not wear uniforms nor have a dress code. Children should be comfortably dressed in clothing that is easy to manage when going to the bathroom. Clothing should be suitable for tumbling, climbing, and crawling on the floor, as well as for

messy play with paint, markers, play dough, glue and water. Please keep in mind that clothing may be stained; do not send your child to school in "special" outfits. All outdoor clothing, especially boots, mittens and hats, should be marked or labeled with your child's name. We will go outside as often as possible, so please dress your child appropriately.

Please do not send children in flip flops or sandals. This will help minimize accidents and help with the pea gravel getting into their sandals.



SNACKS AND PAPER FEE

Our snack time is a very important part of our day. We practice good manners and social skills as well as emphasizing good nutrition at this time. There is a \$10.00 paper fee that is charged twice a year. Products that will be purchased with the paper fee will include items such as: Kleenex tissue, paper towels, napkins and 8 oz. cups to name a few. We will have a snack chart that will rotate by last names. **IF YOUR CHILD IS ALLERGIC TO ANY FOODS PLEASE MAKE SURE THE PRESCHOOL TEACHERS ARE AWARE OF IT.**

BIRTHDAYS

Each child's birthday is recognized at school by a song, birthday card, pencil and child's special treat. We usually try to schedule your snack day to coincide with your child's birthday. You may send birthday treats. Here are some suggestions: Jell-O pudding cups, cookies, popcorn, or doughnuts. If you are planning a birthday party away from school *and if you are not inviting everyone in your child's class*, please mail the invitations or give them directly to parents. No cake, cupcakes, ice cream or milk.



MEDICATION

The administration of medication at school is discouraged. Parents are asked to administer medication before or after school. If medication is to be administered during school hours, it is preferable that parents visit the school to administer the medication. On those occasions when medication must be administered by the school, it will be done in compliance with the Nurse Practice Act and other applicable regulations. All relevant paperwork must be on file prior to any such administering of medication.

IN CASE OF ABSENCE & ILLNESS

Please call the school whenever your child will be absent even if it is for just one day. If your child is ill and has an ailment that has been diagnosed as communicable, please inform us immediately. In case of fever, watery eyes, rash or any other condition that represents contagion, please keep your child at home. It would be wise to confer with your doctor before allowing the child to return to school. If there is any question as to whether or not your child is ill, he or she should probably not be in school. By following your intuition, you will help ensure a happy, healthy school year for everyone involved.



Should a child become ill or injured at school, the parent or designated guardian will be immediately notified to pick up the child and seek appropriate care. Staff will administer appropriate assistance until the arrival of parent/guardian. If the injury is serious and warrants immediate emergency room care, the staff will seek appropriate care in accordance with the medical release form signed by the parent prior to admittance into the program. Staff members will complete an Accident/Injury report on any occurrence. Copies of such reports shall be kept in the school office.