St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic School

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"St. Thomas the Apostle Preschool"

2026-2027

Preschool Handbook

Enrollment:

The preschool program accepts all children regardless of race, color, religion, ethnicity, or gender. All preschoolers MUST be 3 or 4 years of age. The preschool accepts 5 year olds that have missed the kindergarten cut-off date and/or 5 years olds whose parents choose to delay their start of Kindergarten.

Preschool is open to Catholics, as well as, Non-Catholics. Admission is based on the following:

1. Children of parishioners of St. Thomas the Apostle
2. Children of St. Thomas the Apostle School families
3. Catholic Children from parishes other than St. Thomas the Apostle
4. Non-Catholic children of the community of St. Thomas
5. Non-Catholic children from communities other than St. Thomas

**** Previous enrolled families are given first priority****

Requests for full-time enrollment for preschool are given priority over requests for part-time enrollment. The school reserves the right to request withdrawal or deny entrance for a child who we find is not ready for preschool or has special needs that the preschool cannot meet. The child may be accepted back into the program at a later date.

Payment Procedures:

Parents will receive a bill at the beginning of the month for the WHOLE month of scheduled days of attendance. *Payments are due by the 15th of each month.* If the payment is not received by the last day of the month, the student will not be allowed to attend school until all payments are made in full or special arrangements are made. If a child does not attend on a scheduled day for any reason, the parent will still be responsible to pay in full.

A $25.00 charge will be applied for checks returned due to insufficient funds.

Fees & Tuition:

Daily Rate	$25.00	Payment for the WHOLE month are due by the 15th of each month
Enrollment Fee	$35.00	Due at registration
Supply Fee	$15.00	Due at registration

**** Supply & Enrollment fees are assessed upon initial enrollment and then every August thereafter. The Supply & Enrollment fees are non-refundable. ****

<u>Please complete the Free & Reduced Lunch Information, if you think you may qualify. This Information is kept confidential!**</u>**

Attendance:

Please make every effort to have your child here on a consistent basis. Our curriculum is designed to build each day; therefore, consistent attendance is an important building block for success. In the event of an absence please contact the school office.

Hours of Operation:

The preschool will be open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 5:00pm. Doors will open at 6:30 am for the Early Morning Childcare Program. Our "school day" starts at 7:30 am. All children must be picked up by 5:00 pm. If your child is not picked up by 5:00 pm parents will be charged at the rate of $1.00 per minute payable that day to the teacher on duty.

Preschool Days off:

Preschool will follow the current St. Thomas the Apostle School calendar for all breaks and days off. There is no charge for these days that Preschool is not in session.

Preschool will remain open and have after care on early outs, except for the day prior to Christmas break and the last day of school unless informed otherwise.

Inclement Weather:

If it is necessary to close the preschool due to inclement weather, please listen for the announcement on the local television and radio stations: KOMU (channel 8), KRCG (channel 13), KMIZ (channel 17), KLIK (1240 AM), NASH (100.1 FM), KPLA (101.5 FM), KWOS (950 AM), KATI (94.3 FM), or KCLR (99.3 FM). Listen for "St. Thomas the Apostle" —it will not be listed as St. Thomas Preschool.

**** If preschool is cancelled all day due to weather, a credit equaling one day of tuition will be credited to your next month's payment. ****

Dress Code:

St. Thomas the Apostle School has a specifically outlined dress code. However, our preschool students are asked to wear comfortable, easily managed clothing. Students should come to preschool appropriately dressed for the Christian setting. No sleeveless/spaghetti straps are to be worn. Always wear tennis shoes or shoes with backs; backless shoes may not be worn. This is for safety reasons. All dresses and skirts MUST have shorts worn under them. **No shorts between November 1st and March 31st.**

Toileting:

Due to the bathrooms being located outside of our classroom, your child needs to be self-sufficient in the restrooms. Assistance will be given in the case of a bathroom accident or illness.

Communications:

Please place payments and notes in your child's take home folder. There will also be an optional online payment method.

Newsletters will be sent home on the first day of each month. They will include what we will be working on that month and any important dates and information.

Assessments & Progress Reports:

The assessment consists of a checklist of age-appropriate skills that highlight important learning tasks for preschool aged children, as well as, daily observations. Some of the skills that will be assessed are:

- Basic Shapes & Colors
- Alphabet & Numbers
- Sorting & Patterning
- Counting
- Basic Personal Information (Name, Birthday, Age, etc.)
- Social Skills (Taking turns, Following directions, etc.)
- Fine Motor Development (scissor skills, pencil grasp, etc.)
- Gross Motor Development (running, throwing, etc.)

Progress Reports will be sent home twice throughout the school year (Fall & Spring). Parents will be asked to review the Progress Reports, sign & date the attached Progress Report Acknowledgment Form and return to school as soon as possible. **ALL reports are handled confidentially and kept in the child's file.**

Parent Teacher Conferences will be conducted on an as needed basis. Parents may schedule a conference with the teacher at any time necessary

Religion:

In our preschool room we focus on the basic Catholic practices. This includes:

Mass Attendance: Fridays & Holy Days
Mass Expectations: Standing, kneeling, sitting quietly, and making the Sign of the Cross
Bible Stories: includes craft activity

Basic Prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, and the
Before & After Meal Prayers
Mission Statement: St. Thomas the Apostle School Students, with
God's help, will learn and grow with a Catholic Spirit.

Curriculum:

St. Thomas Preschool uses the "Happily Ever After" Reading Curriculum that is designed by the same company as the Super Kids Program currently used in our Kindergarten through 2nd grade classrooms.

This curriculum includes the following concepts:

Vocabulary
Shapes & Colors
Letter Recognition
Visual Development
Fine Motor Skills
Comprehension
And More

During our morning meeting, we come together as a class to talk about our day, the calendar (Days of the Week, Months of the Year, and Special Events), weather and the seasons, counting, class jobs, etc.

The first step in the handwriting process is letter recognition especially the child's name. Once this is mastered, we start working on correct letter formation (top to bottom and left to right).

**** Reinforcement of all these skills at home is beneficial and strongly encouraged. ****

We work closely with Mrs. Tallent regarding Kindergarten Readiness Skills!

Schedule:

School Begins: 7:30am	**School Dismissal:** 3:10pm

Extended Care Programs:
Early Morning Drop off: 6:30am
After Care: 3:30pm – 5:00pm

Additional Special Activities: Arts & Crafts, Music & Movement, Nature Walks, Library, Show & Share, Spirit Days, and P.E.

Nap/Rest Time: After lunch, all children are expected to rest. The children are not required to sleep but must remain in their designated area quietly as not to disturb other nappers. **Bedding must be taken and laundered bi-weekly.**

Hot Breakfast/Hot Lunch: Breakfast and Lunch cost is covered in the daily fee; however, if you qualify for free and reduced lunch, we ask that you fill out the proper paperwork.

Snack: Snack is served in the classroom.

**** All meal calendars are handed out monthly. Please let us know immediately if your child has any food allergies! ****

Classroom Parties:

Holiday Parties: In our classroom, we celebrate Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. We ask parents to volunteer and/or sign up for different responsibilities during our Halloween and Valentine's Party. However, we do a small gift exchange and classroom party for Christmas on our own.

Birthday Parties: We love to celebrate birthdays!! On the day of your child's birthday you are more than welcome to bring in treats. Here are a few suggested ideas: Popsicles, Cookies, Fruit Snacks, Brownies, Rice Krispy Treats, Fruits, and Donut Holes. Please, let us know what you plan to send, as we do have children with food allergies.

Please note: If your child's birthday is during the summer months, we do celebrate ½ birthdays.

Other Important Information:

Please do not bring toys from home; we often have difficulty sharing these items and do not want items to be lost or broken. They will have opportunities to bring items occasionally for "Show & Share". However, naptime Cuddles are permitted.

Rules & Discipline:

In order to make our environment a fun and peaceful place to be, the school will discipline the children in the following way: The teacher will talk to the child and allow him/her to apologize or send them to time out (no longer than a minute per years of age). If the problem persists, the parent or guardian will be notified. The Diocesan Policy forbids corporal punishment.

Our classroom rules are very simple.
Listening Ears
Looking Eyes
Quietly Working
Helping/Still Hands
Walking Feet

We use the Stop Light Behavior Management System. The children start each day on the "green light". A warning will be issued if the child is not following one or more rules, and they will be moved to the "yellow light". If they continue to not follow the rules, they will move to the "red light" and take a time out. Upon getting up from time out, we will talk about why they were there and what they need to do differently. Apologies will also be said if needed.

We also use a point system in our classroom for positive reinforcement. Each day students may earn points by doing the "right things" such as listening, sitting on the carpet quietly, paying attention, participating, and following directions. However, they can also lose points by not listening, being disruptive, and not following directions. If they earn 5 points by the end of the day, they will be rewarded with a sticker, small piece of candy, or sometimes treasure box.

Please check which light your child is on each day. There will be a behavior calendar located in your child's folder that will be marked each day with the color they

were on. If your child stays on green light all week long, they will earn a prize out of the treasure box on Friday!

Aggression/Grievance/Dismissal & Expulsion:

Aggression: The school cannot allow any child to hurt other children, staff or himself/herself. When aggressive behavior occurs, normally the parent will be notified and a mandatory conference will be scheduled. The parent will be expected to begin immediate cooperative efforts with the staff to help the child learn appropriate behavior. Parental cooperation and support is an essential element in helping the child learn. Lack of timely action will result in dismissal from the preschool program. In the event of a serious aggressive incident toward others or equipment/materials, the parent will be called and required to pick the child up early, and a parent/teacher/principal conference will be set. Consistent and constant disruptive or inappropriate behavior is detrimental to the quality of instruction given. Therefore, teachers will schedule a conference concerning behaviors. The teachers, parents, and principal will openly discuss the problems, the causes, and possible solutions. Again, home and school cooperation is necessary for the child's success.

Grievance: Parents are to take advantage of the school's open door policy by expressing concerns, ideas or suggestions. The school wants parents to be involved with their child's progress and development. The school urges parents to participate with their children in or outside of school as much as possible. The chain of command is: 1st Parent - Teacher, 2nd Parent - Teacher - Principal, and then 3rd Parent - Teacher - Principal – Pastor.

Dismissal/Expulsion: Preschool will proceed with dismissing a child for the following reasons:

1. Nonpayment of fees
2. Three serious aggressions toward teachers and/or children and/or property

These policies and schedules are subject to change as deemed necessary to meet the program and children's needs. Notification will be provided as applicable. We strive to provide a safe and fun learning environment for each student. The diocesan policies and procedures will be followed in cases of dismissal or expulsion.

Health Information:

Sick or Illness: If your child shows any of the symptoms listed below, the staff will immediately report to the parents or the emergency contact so that the child may be picked up as soon as possible.

- Vomiting OR Diarrhea
- Blood in the stool, urine or vomit
- Injury or inflammation of the eye
- Non-identified rash
- Difficulty breathing
- Drainage out of the ears
- Complaints of pain or constant crying

If your child has a chronic allergy or a serious health condition such as asthma that may require special care, the student needs a letter from the physician stating that he/she are able to attend a preschool facility and any special care that is needed.

Sick children also include, but not limited to, a child that may show signs of fever over 100.0 degrees, persistent crying, mouth sores, rash, pink-eye, infestation, tuberculosis, impetigo, streptococcal, pharyngitis, chicken pox, shingles, pertussis, mumps, Hepatitis A, measles, rubella or any other contagious disease. Parents will be notified if any contagious diseases are noted in the preschool.

Please make sure your child has been temperature or symptom free, or has been taking antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the preschool. Please call the school if your child will be absent due to illness. The school appreciates a note or notification if a child will be absent for appointments. This helps us in planning our fun activities.

The school cannot administer medication of any form to your child without a written permission statement signed by a parent or legal guardian. All medications must be in the original sealed container, even over the counter medication.

COVID: If your child tests positive for Covid-19, he/she must remain out of school for 5 days from when the symptoms began.

Lice: St. Thomas the Apostle School and Preschool has a “no nit” policy. This means that if a child is found to have head lice or their eggs (nits), the child may not attend school until all lice and eggs are removed.

Immunization: The state requires all students enrolled in any preschool in the State of Missouri to have their immunizations up to date. The School is not exempt from this law. A child's immunization record must be on file in the office before your child may attend classes.

Supplies:

To help the school year run smoothly we ask each child to bring in a small list of required classroom items.

Here is the list of **required classroom items**.

- Nap mat
- Blanket (pillow is optional)
- Extra Change of clothes (pants, shirt, underwear, and socks)
- Book bag (needs to be able to fit pocket folder inside)
- Pocket Folder
- Lysol Wipes
- 1 roll of Paper Towels
- 1 package Baby Wipes
- Water bottle with name on it to be brought in daily

Donations are always welcome! Below is a list of items we use often in our classroom. Any items from the list you wish to donate are greatly appreciated! Thanks in advance

- Washable Markers (we go through lots!)
- Glue Sticks (we go through lots & lots!)
- Ziploc bags (all sizes)
- Paper plates (large and small)
- Miscellaneous craft supplies (googly eyes, small stickers, jewels, etc.)
- Dry Erase Markers
- Treasure Box items (Small toys/items)

Please Sign & Return

I/we have read the St. Thomas the Apostle Preschool Handbook!

Parent(s) signature: _____ Date: _____