St. Teresa of Calcutta
Education Center

2023-2024
New Family Guide of
Commonly Asked Questions

NOTE: This document is geared toward families who are new to Saint Teresa of Calcutta Education Center. It's not a replacement of the detailed School Handbook or the individual websites or documents handed out for various programs. It's intended as a quick go-to guide with behind the scenes tips. Information in this document is subject to change throughout the year.

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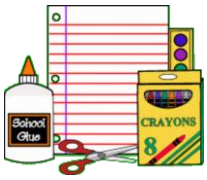
What should I know before school starts?

STC School Summer Office Hours

STC School Office is open from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm Monday - Thursday beginning the Monday after school ends in June until the Friday before school begins. The school office phone number is 610-287-2500 option 1.

School/Stationery Supplies



We use an online ordering website for ordering school supplies. Supplies will be delivered directly to the school. Clear contact paper is used to cover workbooks, and classroom folders. Any other supplies needed will be communicated by the teacher.

Bus information

Bus Schedules will be sent directly to you from the Public School District where you reside. Necessary busing forms for the Public School districts may be found on the STC School Website under Bus Transportation. If you have questions, contact your local Public School District's transportation department. Many bus companies have a day during the summer where your kindergartener can learn about the bus and have the opportunity to take a ride on it. If any of your busing information changes, for example: bus number, notify the office and your child's homeroom teacher with a written note.

First Day of School

This first day of school is a full day. The children need a snack and a lunch, if they are not purchasing lunch. Children in grades Kindergarten and 1st line up in the All- Purpose Room (APR). All car line students enter through the APR doors. Students in Grades 2 - 8 report directly to their homerooms upon arrival. Teachers and older students will help the new students find their appropriate lines in the morning and help them get on the correct bus at the end of the day.

CARES Program (Children Are Receiving Extended Service)

Our extended care program provides care for students after school, on half days, and on school holidays. Contact Tara Melville, Early Learning Center/Child Care Director or the Child Care website for more information. Child Care phone number is 610-287-2500 option 3. Rates vary per program.

Uniform Night

Typically, in July, STC will have a uniform night. Flynn & O'Hara and Flocco's will be present at STC and will have uniforms and shoes available for purchase. A used uniform recycling program (Uniform Exchange) also allows families to pick up additional uniforms at no cost. It typically runs from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

Tuition

FACTS Tuition is processed through FACTS Management. You will have the option of being billed monthly, semi-annually, or annually. You will receive an email from the Business Manager concerning setting up your FACTS account. If you have any questions, please email bmgr@stteresacalcutta.com or 610-287-2525 ext. 103.

What should my child be wearing?

The following is the schedule for **Fall/Winter/Spring** uniforms:

First Trimester: **Fall** Uniform
Second Trimester: **Winter** Uniform
Third Trimester: **Spring** Uniform

The formal **winter** uniform must be worn during the second trimester. **Winter** uniform items may be worn during the first and third trimester on a cold day. Please see the parent handbook for specific uniform items.

All formal daily uniform items can be purchased at Flynn & O'Hara. You may order them online, by phone or visiting the store.

The closest store:

Flynn & O'Hara
Festival Shopping Center
Route 30 @ Whitford Road
Exton, PA 19341
(610) 594-1970
www.flynnohara.com

Shoes are to be purchased from:

Flocco's
110-114 Fayette Street
Conshohocken, PA 19428
(610) 828-5544 / (800) 799-3313

Uniform Exchange

This is a great way to pass on uniforms to others and save some money. If you have uniforms you no longer need and are still in good shape, you can donate them to the uniform exchange. During certain times of the year, a uniform exchange table is available for anyone to take uniform items they need. You don't have to drop off uniforms to be eligible.

Dress Down Days

Dress Down Days are noted on the school website. Dress Down Days take place on classroom celebration days (fall, Christmas, and Valentine's Day) and when Student Council is raising money. The money will go towards a designated fundraiser. Tee shirts with inappropriate words or sayings may not be worn. Students should be mindful to dress conservatively, appropriately and modestly for school – no tank tops, bare midriffs, pajamas, spaghetti straps, open-toe, flip-flop shoes or "wheelies". No hair changes such as feathers, coloring, tiaras, etc.

School Spirit Items

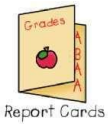
Various clothing items and accessories are available for purchase at www.ragtee.com.

What about the school day?

School Hours

School doors open at 7:30 am each morning. The school day is 7:50 am to 2:45 pm. If you need to pick up your child during the school day, send a note to their teacher preferably a full day ahead of time (call the office if it is a last minute emergency). When picking up, go to the office to sign out, and the office will call up to the classroom for your child. Should you arrive after 7:50 am, please park and walk your child to the front office to obtain a late slip to attend class.

Grading System – Option C



In Grades 1 - 3, students receive letter grades: O (outstanding), VG (very good), G (good), S (satisfactory), I (improvement needed), U (unsatisfactory). In grades 4 -8, students receive a numeric grade. Passing grade is any grade above 70. Kindergarten students use a 1-4 numbered grading scale for many skills they are learning. We use Option C as our online grading system. Each parent will receive a unique user ID and password. Information will be sent home with your child.

School Year Breakdown

The school year is broken down into three trimesters. Report cards are sent home in a specially marked envelope. Sign and return the envelope to your child's teacher, and you may keep the report card. Parent / Teacher Conferences are scheduled during the first trimester of the school year for grades K - 8.

Specials

Students have each of the following specials once a week: Art (Grades 2 - 8), Art is integrated into the curriculum for students in grades K and 1. Technology (All), Gym (All), Library (K-3), Music (All), and World Language-Spanish (Grades 3 - 8).

Clubs

Students in grades 5 - 8 have the opportunity to participate in clubs on Friday afternoons. Examples of some of the clubs are: STEM, Math, Fitness, Gardening, Hospitality, and Genius Hour.

Science Fair

Students in grades 6-8 participate in the St. Teresa of Calcutta Science Fair. This event is judged by individuals outside of the school. Three winners from each grade are chosen to move on to the Montgomery County Science Fair.

Safety Drills

Throughout the year, the school will hold announced and unannounced fire drills, and emergency drills. Buses also hold occasional lockdowns and drills.

Is there a certain traffic flow I should follow?

Car Rider Arrival Procedures

When you are dropping off your child in the morning, drive through the car rider line, which is open 7:30 am to 7:45 am. This is the one-way lane in front of the school. Pull up in front of the Education Center. A teacher will be outside of the building to make sure your child gets into the gated area safely. Please be considerate and keep the line moving. When you have reached the front sidewalk your children should disembark the car when stopped. Also, for safety purposes, you may not park your car and walk your child to the gated area, all children being dropped off need to go in the car line. If you arrive after 7:45 am you must exit your car and escort the child to the front office.

Car Rider Dismissal Procedures

If you need to change the mode of transportation home on any given day, please write a note to your child's teacher. Additionally, please email the school office at frontdesk@school.stteresacalcutta.com. We ask that you give sufficient time considering all dismissal procedures occur between 2:40 pm and 3:00 pm. The students will exit the APR doors escorted by a teacher. Follow the same car line procedure as in the morning, pull into the car line, and your child will be waiting with the teacher on the sidewalk when you pull to the front of the line.

If you are planning to volunteer at school, or are picking your child up early or dropping your child off late, please park in the front parking lot's lower bays. This leaves room for church functions such as daily Mass or funerals.

What about snack and lunch time?

Snack:

Children are permitted to bring in a snack. Snacks are eaten in the classroom around mid-morning or depending on schedule in the afternoon. On Friday's a soft pretzel may be purchased for snack through our Home and School.

Lunch

Lunch is eaten in the APR. There are two paid lunch monitors and parent volunteers for supervision in the lunch room and for recess. There is a separate peanut-free table for students with allergies. Hot lunch is available for purchase daily from our food service provider Aramark.

Students will have a choice of many daily options. A separate sheet explaining Aramark's lunch program will be given to you at the beginning of the school year. Parent information on loading an Aramark account with money to pay for lunch will require a login and password. This will be provided by the school * *Please note prices may change.*

Monthly Lunch Menu

The lunch menu will be posted on the website under the "Parent" tab and then "What's on the Menu"

Pretzels

Mini size soft pretzels are available for snack on Fridays. Pretzels must be preordered and prepaid. Pretzels are provided by the Philly Pretzel Factory, Collegeville. Parent volunteers bag the pretzels in the morning for each classroom.

What are important things to know once school starts?

Back to School Night

Back to School Night will be held two evenings in September. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet your child's teach and visit their classroom. All parents will meet in the APR from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm. To accommodate families with multiple children there will be two information sessions held in each homeroom. This meeting is for parents only please do not bring children.

Communication for Inclement Weather/Emergency Information

Option C is the school's way to contact you in the case of an emergency closing or other important information. This alert will be delivered through phone (home and cell) and text message. You will be asked for your contact information in the beginning of the school year.

Sick Child Procedures

If your child is sick and needs to stay home, please call the school office at 610-287-2500 that morning. You may leave a message if it is before school opens. A doctor's note is required for more than 3 consecutive days of absence. If a child becomes sick at school, the school nurse will call you to come and pick up your child. If your child leaves school during the day because he/she is ill (fever, vomiting, etc.) your child is required to stay and rest at home for one full school day (they may not return until 24 hours have passed from the time they were signed out) before returning back to school.

Weekly Principal's notes

Check the Website www.stcschool.com for up to date information on happenings at STC. This important news is directly from the Principal and contains items happening during the upcoming week or dates to mark on your calendar for the future. The principal sends a weekly calendar of events and reminders called Parent Notes. It is sent via email through Option C.

Vaccinations / Physical and Dental Exams

The school nurse will give out a flyer with the required vaccinations and physical and Dental Exams needed in order for your child to attend STC School. These forms can be found on the school website under Registration Information. *Please note: We do not accept immunization exemptions unless it is a medical exemption.

Pictures

Student pictures are taken in the Fall. Students wear their uniform for pictures, and the picture will be used for the year book. An order form will be sent home with the students to be filled out and returned to the photographer on picture day. Pictures may also be ordered online. Dates for Picture Day will be posted on the home page of the school website.

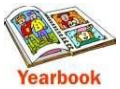
Snow Days

You will be notified if school is delayed or closed due to inclement weather by the Option C system. The notification will come in a text message and phone call.

Field Trips

Grades 1 - 8 have a field trip in the Spring during the school day. Permission slips are sent home with details and associated costs. Volunteers may be needed to help chaperone. These field trips are a mandatory school day for students. No student should miss out on a field trip because of cost; sponsorship is available. Kindergarten usually has a fall field trip and then an end of year celebration.

Yearbook



The yearbook will cover K – 8 activities and events. They are optional to purchase. Look for the order form coming home around March/April. Yearbooks are distributed the last week of school.

What CYO sports are offered?

CYO (Catholic Youth Organization)

Sport teams are available for STC School students and students in the STC PREP program. Registration information will be posted on the main Parish website. There are fees charged to sign up (vary based on sport). Please check the CYO website for contact information.

Fall:
Football (Boys) ……..…… 5th - 8th (Ches-mont Football)
Volleyball (Girls)..……..…… 5th - 8th
Soccer (Coed)……..……. 5th - 8th
Cross Country (Coed) …….. K - 8th

Winter:
Basketball (Individual Boys & Girls)…… 5th - 8th

Spring:
Softball (Girls)…….……... 5th - 8th
Track & Field (Coed)……. K - 8th
Golf (Coed)……..……... 6th - 8th

Are music classes offered?

Instrumental Lessons

Instrumental lessons are available for an additional fee through Northeastern Music Company. Information will be sent home with your child in September. The band instruction assigned to STC conducts beginners as well as advanced band. An annual winter and spring concert take place after school during the school year.

Student Council

Students in 7th and 8th grade can become candidates for positions on the Student Council Board. Representatives per homeroom from Grades 5 - 8 are selected for student council. These representatives will cover Student Council information for all classrooms. Elections are held in May for the Board positions and September for the Representatives.

Altar Servers

Students in grades 5th - 8th are eligible for the Ministry as Altar Servers. An information sheet will go home in the fall. Contact Shawn Marie Brown, Director of Parish Services at 610-287-2525 ext. 100 or dps@stteresacalcutta.com for more information.

Are any special services offered?

Montgomery County Intermediate Unit

Additional services, although not daily, exist, such as counseling, speech, and remedial services in reading and mathematics. The school or parent may request a consult for services.

Teacher Tutors

Some teachers are available to tutor students after school and throughout the summer. Please contact the school for teacher and subject availability.

Can you give me information on the fundraisers?

SCRIP

This is a major fundraiser for STC Parish. Use pre-purchased gift cards/certificates for the stores you shop (including grocery stores) and a portion of the cost can be credited towards your school tuition. For more details on the Scrip program, please contact Tammy Brock, the Business Manager at 610-287-2525 or bmgr@stteresacalcutta.com.

Jump Rope for Heart

This fundraiser during gym class is usually in February/March. It raises money for the American Heart Association. Students acquire sponsors for the amount of time they jump.

Scholastic Book Fair

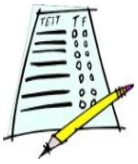
A book fair is held at the school during Catholic Schools Week. Books are available for purchase. There is a theme each year for this annual event.

Home and School Association

The Home and School Association sponsors many fundraisers. See additional info on Home and School under the "Parent" tab and then Home and School.

Assessments?

Terra Nova Tests



These are the school's standardized achievement tests taken in the springtime for all students in grades 2 - 7. These tests do not affect your child's grade on their report card. Their teacher may review for these during school but there are no study guides for home studying. The results will be sent home to you in late May/early June.

End of Year Performance Assessments

A student completes a project for a specific curriculum area for their End of Year Performance Assessment. In addition to assessments, final exams maybe necessary in June.

When does my child receive their sacraments?

Penance

Instruction is during the 2nd grade year. Students will receive their First Penance in the Lenten season.

First Holy Communion

Instruction is during the 3rd grade year. Students will receive their First Holy Communion on a Saturday in the spring (around April/May).

Confirmation

Instruction will begin in their 6th grade year with the Sacrament of Confirmation being received in their 7th grade year. In 7th Grade, students will participate in Decision Point. In Decision Point, key life issues are introduced and young people are taught through the process of gathering, believing and responding to help them reflect on God's presence in their lives. They are called to recognize, live, explore and share their faith. Various specific issues dealing with morality may be discussed. Parents and child(ren) must successfully complete preparation material for the sacrament and the child must have a satisfactory attendance record before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

What are some events on the calendar?

Grandparents Day

This day is usually held in March. Grandparents are invited to attend Mass, and spend some time in the classroom with their grandchildren. Seniors of the parish will be invited as well to enjoy time the children.

Children's Secret Santa Workshop

The Secret Santa Work Shop will be available for the students to purchase low cost gifts for their family. A shopping list will go home beforehand. Parent volunteers are needed. This is a two day event.

Christmas Nativity

Students in Grades K – 6 participate in the reenactment of the First Nativity and sing religious and Christmas songs for family and friends. This joyful celebration will be on a weeknight in the Church before Christmas.

Family Bingo

This is another popular event where families are invited for bingo. Admission is usually a bingo prize. Tickets are purchased before the day of the event.

Spring Show

All children in Grades K – 8 will participate in this program. Each grade will perform a song which goes with the theme of the show. This is an evening performance which is held at Pope John Paul II High School, and requires an evening dress rehearsal the night before.

Living Stations

Before Easter, the 7th and 8th grades perform Living Stations of the Cross. The performance is held on a school day in the afternoon in the church. There is also an evening performance. Families are encouraged to attend this very powerful and moving presentation of Our Lord's sacrifice.

May Procession

This Procession is held on a school day in May. An 8th grader is chosen to crown the statue of Mary during the Mass. First Communicants wear their Communion attire and 8th graders wear their graduation gown. Parents are welcome to attend.

Field Day

This is a fun day for the students in grades K – 8. Student participate in different games and challenges. Many volunteers are needed to help. This event is held in May.

Tastykakes with Teachers

This is a popular event with the children. Children and Teachers get to enjoy an afternoon together sharing Tastykakes. This special day is held in June. The Home and School Association provides the Tastykakes. The children gather in the APR for some teacher trivia and then enjoy Tastykakes in their classrooms.

School Liturgies and Prayer Services

All students attend Mass the first Friday of each month at 9:00 am, and then certain classes are designated to attend Wednesday morning Mass at 8:00 am and Thursday morning Mass at 8:00 am. The schedule will appear on the weekly Parent Notes. Prayer services usually take place for Thanksgiving, Lent, and the end of the school year.

End of the Year Awards

There is a day set aside to distribute third trimester awards, end of year awards, and various certificates. The dates will be on the school calendar.

Catholic Schools Week

Catholic Schools Week is the last week of January. All families are invited to our Open House on Sunday to visit classrooms, the student Wax Museum and the Scholastic Book Fair. Special activities are then carried out each day of the week honoring our students, staff, volunteers and community as we celebrate our catholic education.

Universal High School Visitation Day

This is a special day for all Archdiocesan 7th grade students. It gives the children an opportunity to visit local Archdiocesan high schools. This day is usually held in March.

Canned Good Collections

These are noted on the website and information will be sent home with your child. Canned good collections are scheduled at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one."

STC Basket Raffle

A Basket Raffle is held in the spring/summer. This event is highly successful with over 260 baskets and 400 people in attendance. Each of the school classes is asked to donate a basket to be raffled off at the Basket Raffle. The homeroom parent usually helps the class pick a theme, and organizes the donations and creates the class basket.

STC Parish Community Festival

The annual St. Teresa Community Festival is held at the end of August on our parish campus. The Festival features amusement rides, children's games, adult games of chance, live music and entertainment, our popular Designer Bag Bingo and Gift Card Bingo, a Business Expo, and delicious, homemade Polish, Italian and American foods – plus Capt'n Chucky's famous seafood every night.

Volunteer Clearances

There are many opportunities to volunteer. The Home & School has many fundraisers and events that need volunteers. Your child's teacher or homeroom parent will also ask for volunteers to help out in the classroom, assist with classroom parties, or chaperone a field trip. The School Lunch Room is always in need of volunteers. Our school community complies with all of the Safe Environment requirements set forth through the Office of Child and Youth Protection. We make every effort to create a network of protection for the children. Please review the requirements and begin to work on obtaining clearances as soon as possible. There are times throughout the year that we may have to decline entrance into the school for a function if you are without clearances. Thank you very much for your understanding and support in the matter.

To volunteer at STC School you must complete the following:

- FBI Fingerprint (except if you have been a PA resident in PA for 10 consecutive years. If you have been a resident for 10 consecutive years then you will only need to sign the Disclosure Application.
- Criminal History Record Check (renew every 5 years – forms available on the school website)
- Child Abuse Clearance (renew every 5 years – forms are available on the school website)
- Safe Environment Class I – Protecting God's Children Workshop (required once – go to www.virtus.org for class information)
- Safe Environment Class II – Mandated Reporter On-Line Course (required once – go to www.virtus.org for class information)
- Mandated Report Acknowledgment Form (if training is taken before 12/31/14)

There is no charge for the Safe Environment classes. We have offered this class at STC in the past and will publish the dates when we offer it again.

For questions regarding clearances, please contact Shawn Marie Brown, Director of Parish Services at 610-287-2525 ext. 100 or dps@stteresacalcutta.com.