

Welcome to Preschool at St. Therese Catholic School

"Rooted in the sacramental life of the Church, St. Therese Catholic School fosters a culture of academic excellence where together we seek to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ through loving and serving others."



Dear Families of Preschool Students,

Welcome to St. Therese Catholic School! Your child is a part of a unique learning environment here at St Therese School. We believe that each child is a unique gift shared with us by God and their parents; each has special talents, needs, and feelings. It is our goal to nurture your child as an extension of your family; as members of God's family. We will strive to do our best to make each child and family comfortable and secure. We look forward to being a part of your child's education.

This handbook is specific for preschool and is in addition to the policies and procedures found in the Family Handbook for St. Therese Catholic School. The Family Handbook can be found on the school website and the Family Portal.

Mission Statement of St. Therese Catholic School

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St. Therese Catholic School Philosophy Statement

At St. Therese Catholic School we believe that each child has the right to a complete education: one that promotes spiritual, academic, social, and physical growth and development.

- We believe that each child is a unique individual worthy of being treated with dignity and being loved as a child of God. Every child has a right to feel safe and happy in his or her learning environment.
- We believe every child can learn when taught and directed as an individual. Each child has a right to an education that will enable him or her to gain knowledge and make sound decisions based on Christian principles and Catholic teachings.
- We believe in a curriculum that both challenges and fulfills each individual. We believe that parents are their children's primary educators.
- We believe it is our responsibility to support, assist and involve parents in this role by helping develop their children's academic skills and instilling in them a sense of responsibility.

NAEYC Twelve Principles of Child Development and Learning

NAEYC (The National Association for the Education of Young Children) has identified 12 child development and learning principles that inform and guide decisions about developmentally appropriate best teaching practices.

1. All areas of development are important.
2. Learning and development follow sequences.
3. Development and learning proceed at varying rates.
4. Development results from maturity and experience.
5. Early experiences have profound effects on development and learning.
6. Development is influenced by multiple social and cultural factors.
7. Children develop best with secure relationships.
8. Development is influenced by multiple social and cultural backgrounds.
9. Children learn in a variety of ways.
10. Play is important for developing self-regulation and promoting language, cognition, and social competence.
11. Development and learning advance when children are challenged.
12. Children's experiences shape their motivation and approaches to learning.

Application and Enrollment Information

Students wishing to apply for our preschool program must have reached their 3rd birthday and must be able to toilet independently prior to entering school.

If you would like us to hold a spot for your child who will turn 3 during the school year, you will want to enroll as soon as possible and will need to pay full tuition.

The following preschool schedule will be offered:

Parents may choose how many days they would like to send their child. 2, 3, 4, or 5 days a week are available to accommodate family schedules.

- ½ day program runs 8:30am -11:30am
- Afternoon Enrichment program runs 11:30am -3:30pm.

Criteria for Admission and Withdrawal

Children accepted in preschool must be 3 years of age and able to be fully independent for toileting. Our licensing requires that preschool personnel are not to physically assist with toileting or dispose of diapers; including pull-ups.

Fee Policy

Tuition for preschool is calculated based on how many days per week your child is enrolled and calculated for 10 months. Parents may sign up for automated payments through FACTS, which is accessible via your Family Portal or payments may be made at the school office.

Parents who request that a spot be held for a child who will be eligible for preschool after the beginning of the school year, will need to pay the full tuition year amount.

Enrichment is a separate program from preschool. There is a daily charge and enrichment is billed monthly via the FACTS payment system in your Family Portal. Our available openings are limited. If you request that a spot be held for your child, you will be billed for that spot, regardless of whether or not your child attends that day. (The principal reserves the right to make exceptions for illness or other serious family events.)

[Tuition Letter for 24-25 School Year](#) If the link is not functioning, the Tuition Letter can be found in either your Family Portal under Resource Documents or on the school website.

Daily Schedule

<u>3 Year Old Preschool</u>	<u>4 Year Old Preschool</u>
8:15-8:30 Arrival/Morning Work	8:15 - 8:35 Arrival / Morning Work
8:30-8:50 Circle Time	8:35 - 9:05 Morning Meeting
8:50-9:00 Bathroom Break	9:05 - 9:15 Bathroom Break / Wash Hands

9:00-9:15 Fresh Air Learning 9:15-10:00 Wonders and Works 10:00-10:10 Bathroom Break and Wash Hands 9:55-10:05 Bathroom Break 10:10-10:20 Snack 10:20-10:30 Journals 10:30-10:45 Author's Chair 11:00-11:15 Music and Movement 11:15-11:30 Pick Up/ Dismiss for Lunch for Enrichment Children	9:15 - 9:30 Morning Snack 9:30 - 10:00 Amplify Lesson 10:00 - 10:30 Brain Break / Bathroom Break 10:30 - 11:00 Math / STEM / Art (days vary) 11:00 - 11:20 Music & Movement 11:20 - 11:30 Book of the Day 11:15 - 11:30 Pick Up/ Dismiss for Lunch for Enrichment Children
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Enrichment

Students have the option of ordering hot lunch provided through Wayland Union Schools or bringing a cold lunch. The lunch menu will be provided through the newsletter and on the school website. Hot lunches are billed through Wayland Union Schools.

A rest time will be scheduled each day, your child may bring a small pillow and blanket.

Afternoon Enrichment will be billed at the end of each month at a cost of \$20 per afternoon. Our available openings for enrichment are limited. If you request that a spot be held for your child, you will be billed for that spot, regardless of whether or not your child attends that day. (The principal reserves the right to make exceptions for illness or other serious family events.)

Enrichment Schedule for both 3 year olds and 4 year olds

11:30 - 11:35 Bathroom Break / Wash Hands

11:35 - 12:00 Lunch

12:00 - 12:05 Bathroom Break

12:05-1:00 Rest Time; Students are not required to sleep during rest time, however, all students are required by our licensing to lay down and rest quietly for at least 15 minutes. Students who do not sleep will have books, puzzles or other quiet activities provided.

1:00 - 1:15 Bathroom Break / Wash Hands

1:15 - 1:35 Afternoon Snack

1:35 - 2:00 Open Stations

2:00 - 2:30 Art or STEM (days vary)

2:30 - 2:55 Brain Break

2:55 - 3:00 Bathroom Break / Wash Hands

3:00 - 3:15 Music & Movement

3:15 - 3:30 Enrichment Dismissal

School Closings or Delays

School closings and delays will be announced on local TV and radio stations. The Instant Alert Notification System places phone calls to your chosen phone. If Wayland Union Schools are closed, most often, St. Therese School is also closed and there will be no preschool or enrichment. In the event of a 2-hour delay, preschool/enrichment will start at the same time as the rest of the school.

Arrival and Departure Procedures.

Morning Drop Off: Please park in the main parking lot and walk through the cones to the back door. The doors will be unlocked at 8:15 am. The school day starts at 8:30 am.

11:30 Pick Up: Please park in the main parking area and walk through the cones to the back door. At 11:15 am, the doors will be unlocked for parent pick for students who are only attending in the morning. The doors will be locked at 11:30 am.

After School Pick Up: Please park in the main parking lot and walk through the cones to the back door. The doors will be unlocked at 3:15. Please plan to pick up your child by 3:30 pm..

For the safety of all our students, you will need to sign your child in and out at the classroom each day. Children will not be allowed to leave the building or grounds with anyone that is not on the child's information card. Due to State regulations, preschool children are not permitted to ride public school buses.

Licensing

Preschool is licensed by the State of Michigan. Parents may view the licensing report which is available in the school office.

Preschool Discipline Plan

In addition to this discipline plan, please consult the school discipline policy in the Family Handbook. The discipline policy described in the Family Handbook applies to all students enrolled at St. Therese.

Discipline shall always be handled in a positive manner so as to encourage a positive self-esteem, control of self and cooperation with others. Behavior management in the classroom is based on redirecting behavior. The students will receive much verbal reinforcement for positively contributing to our classroom learning environment.

- Proactively teaching courtesy and good manners will be a high priority.
- Teachers talk to students about the problem and positive ways to solve it.
- Teachers may redirect a student from an activity or area to a more appropriate task or play.
- If redirected, a student may return to the group/area when he/she is emotionally and physically ready to participate with the group again.
- Physical contact will only be used when reasonably necessary based on a child's development to prevent a child from harming him/herself, or prevent a child from harming other people.

Health

Parents are required to provide health information concerning their child, including an immunization report and physicians' health examination report. Please be certain the school is aware of any health concerns they may require special care or consideration. A physician's documentation may be requested.

Please contact the school if your child is exhibiting symptoms or has been diagnosed with a contagious illness. St. Therese Catholic School works collaboratively with the Allegan County Health Department. All reporting is confidential and notification of the spread of a contagious illness is done under the guidance of the Allegan County Health Department.

If at any time you feel your child is not well enough to participate in the entire day's activities, including time spent outside, please keep them home. If a child becomes ill at school, we will call the parents first and if we cannot reach parents, we will call alternate emergency contacts in your child's file. The same procedure will apply for accidents or injury while in school. Sick children will be removed from the group. They will be able to rest quietly in the school office until they are picked up to go home.

If your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep them home: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye, or signs of other communicable diseases such as a rash. Students shall be free of symptoms/symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school. This exclusion policy must be followed by all preschool staff and volunteers.

Medication

In accordance with state regulations:

- Children are not allowed to carry any medications, including over the counter medications such as aspirin or administer any medication on their own.
- All medications must be kept in the school office. It may be dispensed only by authorized school personnel. Inhalers may be self-administered with a doctor's note.
- Written authorizations from parents and administering physicians must be on file with medication. All medication distributed at school must be handled according to federal regulations. The school is not allowed to make exceptions.
- All medication, prescription and nonprescription, must come to school in its original container and indicate the child's name, dosage, time to be given, and duration of treatment.
- Parents are asked to pick up any medication left at school at the end of the school year. Any medication still at school as of June 15, will be discarded in accordance with safety guidelines.

First Aid

Minor first aid will be administered in school. If major or emergency care is needed, the school shall make every possible attempt to contact the parents or, if they are unavailable, the contact person on the student's emergency forms. If neither of these can be reached, the school administration will seek the care needed. Parents are responsible for any expenses incurred.

Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged to actively participate by volunteering in your child's class. Because the safety and security of our students is our first concern, St. Therese Catholic School follows all of the guidelines of the State of Michigan and the Diocese of Kalamazoo for ensuring the safety of adults within our school.

We encourage parents to be proactive in complying with the requirements for a Criminal Background Check, notification of written Neglect/Abuse Statement, and Michigan/National Sex Offender Registry and Safe Environment Training so that there are no last minute disappointments. Volunteers must check in at the school office before proceeding to the class. Volunteers should always make prior arrangements with the classroom teacher.

Expectations for Volunteers:

- Volunteers must have a current Criminal Background Check (iChat) on file and be Virtus trained. (Diocesan Policy) You may request a CBC from the office. She will need to see your driver's license when you complete the form.
- Supervised volunteers will be checked through the Michigan/National Sex Offender Registration. A copy of the results will be kept on file. This included parents of children in the program. Rule 125, Subrule 3 and 4
- Volunteers must sign and have on file a copy of the written Neglect/Abuse Statement. ([Form BCAL-4595](#)) Rule 125, Subrule 5 Only need to certify and sign top three statements.
- Volunteers must receive a copy of the Preschool Handbook including the Preschool Discipline Policy.
- Volunteers must sign in and out in the main office.
- Children who are not registered at St. Therese Catholic School should remain home during volunteer time.

Holiday and Birthdays

Your child's birthday will be acknowledged at school as close to their actual birth date as we can. For children with birthdays in July and August, we will celebrate at the beginning of the school year. For students with birthdays in June, we will celebrate at the end of the school year. Students may bring a birthday treat to share with the class. We recommend that treats be individually wrapped and store bought with the list of ingredients visible.

The holidays of Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day will be celebrated with the elementary school. Parents will be notified of specific plans before the big day. All students may attend on party days, even if that is not their regularly scheduled day, and are invited to stay the full day.

Special Events such as Field Day and Seasonal Celebrations

From time to time, we have special all school events which may occur outside of your child's normal preschool day. Your child is always welcome to join us! Please read the

general guidelines below and ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about specific events. Some of the possible special events are Halloween Carnival, Christmas Stations, and Field Day.

Unfortunately, our licensing guidelines do not allow us to have all of our preschoolers present at the same time without additional supervision. Preschool student to preschool staff ratios are set by the state.

1. If your child normally attends **both preschool and enrichment** on the day of the special event, it is a normal day for your child. You may drop them off at 8:15 like normal and pick up between 3:15 and 3:30 pm. If you have anyone joining your child for the special event, please let your child's teacher know.
2. If your child normally attends **only preschool** on the day of the special event, then their dismissal time is still 11:30 am. Your child is welcome to stay for the afternoon, but we will need someone to stay with them. You may drop them off at 8:15 like normal and pick up between 11:15-11:30 am. If you would like your child to stay for the afternoon, please make arrangements with your child's teacher.
3. If your child **does not normally attend** on the day of the special event, your child is still more than welcome to join us! Please reach out to your child's teacher to make arrangements.

Show and Tell/ Toys from Home

Please do not send toys with your child unless arrangements have been made with the teacher (show and tell, birthday gift, etc) The school cannot be responsible for broken or lost items. We kindly ask that you do not allow your child to bring toy guns, whistles or other nuisance items or items which may be used as a weapon.

Mass Schedule

An important part of who we are as a Catholic School is worshiping together and our youngest friends are such an important part of our family! We attend Mass as a school family on Wednesdays at 9:30 am. Recognizing the need to learn and practice the behaviors for active participation in the Mass, our preschool friends will begin attending Mass in October. From October through December, preschool will attend Mass every other week and for special Holy Days. Starting in January, preschool classes will attend Mass weekly.

Because our licensing considers attendance at Church as a walking field trip, parents will need to complete a permission slip found in the Web Form section of your Family Portal.
Rule 149 , Subrule 1

Daily Morning Snack

Providing a nutritious snack each day is a partnership between the school and parents. Your child's teacher will provide a list of snack items to be stored in the classroom snack cupboard. Parents are asked to please provide items to be used for the entire class.

If your child has a food allergy please inform the teacher.

Clothing

It will be helpful if you send your child to school in clean comfortable play clothes. Mark all clothing items including goods and book bags with your family name. Make sure your child is dressed to be outside, weather permitting, every day. **For safe play, please avoid flip-flops, open-toe shoes, and croc style clogs.**

Keep a change of clothes, including socks, inside your child's backpack, remember that preschool can be messy and toileting accidents can happen.

Communication

Each student will receive a notebook with his/her name printed on the cover, the teacher will use the notebook to communicate with you what is happening in the preschool classroom. Please feel free to use this notebook to send messages to school, ask questions, or request information. Teachers will be able to respond and to inform you of updates specific to your child.

In addition, each Preschool Teacher will share a weekly newsletter with updates on classroom happenings. Newsletters will be emailed and posted on the teacher page of the website as well as posted on the board outside of their classrooms.

Report Cards and Conferences

The teacher will hold Fall and Spring Conferences to plan with parents for their child's strengths and weaknesses. Formal report cards will be sent home at the end of the semester. At the end of the first and third quarters, you will receive an update from the teacher. Please feel free to contact the teacher/school at any time if you have questions or concerns. We are in this together!

Language Screening

An important part of planning for each individual child is the use of a standardized language screening tool. We use the QUILS, Quick Interactive Language Screener. This screener may be given every 6 months, so we administer it once in the fall and then again in the spring. The QUILS helps us identify possible later difficulties by looking at their receptive language strengths. This helps us to intervene earlier rather than waiting for a learning difficulty later on.