



ST. THERESE
“THE LITTLE FLOWER” PRESCHOOL
3 ST. THERESE CT. PRESCHOOL BLDG
MUNHALL, PA 15120 412-462-8163

Growing together in a loving, caring,
and Christ-centered environment.

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Welcome to St. Therese “The Little Flower” Preschool. Thank you for choosing our program for your child’s preschool experience. We look forward to working with you and your child.

Sincerely,
The Preschool Staff

Our Teaching Staff:

Mrs. Geri Full	Mrs. Lisa Fetzko	Mrs. Beth Ragan
Teacher’s Aide	Teacher	Teacher’s Aide

Principal: Mrs. Jeanie Werner
jwerner@stthereseschoolmunhall.org
School Secretary: TBD

The best way to contact Mrs. Fetzko is by email at lfetzko@stthereseschoolmunhall.org.

Please call the school office at 412-462-8163 if you need immediate assistance.

St. Therese – The Little Flower Preschool

Our Mission and Goals

Mission Statement:

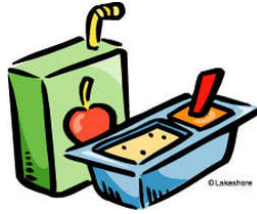
In the spirit of the “Little Way” of St. Therese, the school community has embraced the mission to:

- Celebrate God’s Love.
- Educate the whole child; mind, body and spirit.
- Enable students to integrate Catholic values into their daily lives.
- Empower students to achieve their full academic potential.
- Strive to create a significant difference in the family, school and church community.

Program Goals:

- To help each child learn that they are special.
- To help each child learn about God and the beauty of God’s world.
- To help each child develop socially acceptable behavior.
- To help each child develop confidence through positive experiences.
- To help each child learn to respect themselves as well as others.
- To foster a desire to learn.
- To provide opportunities for each child to develop academic readiness skills.
- To encourage creativity and exploration.
- To support emotional regulation and verbal communication.
- To help children develop large and small motor skills.





Water: Please send a child sized, reusable water bottle, filled with water only, for your child to drink from during the day. Should you forget, we do have extra water bottles at school. We are able to refill water bottles as needed.

Snack: You will be given a monthly calendar indicating when it is your family's turn to provide a simple snack for the class. Your child will have a turn every 4-6 weeks or so, depending on the number of children in the class, to be the "Snack Monster". We ask that you only send pre-packaged, individually wrapped, NUT FREE snacks such as fruit snacks, goldfish, pretzels, fruit cups, etc... Please **DO NOT** send sheet cakes, ice cream cakes, cupcakes or anything from a bakery (not even a grocery store bakery) or donut shop. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter. If you send extra snacks (such as when there are 24 students and you send in a box containing 30 snacks) we will happily save the extra snacks for a day when the "Snack Monster" may be absent. No need to bring the snack to school if your child is absent. If your child is absent or there is a school closure on your child's snack day, they will be put on the next month's calendar.

You may also send in small juice boxes or other individual drinks if you wish on your child's snack day. If no drink is sent, they will drink from their water bottles. Occasionally, Preschool will provide a special snack such as popsicles on a hot day.

Food Allergy/Food Sensitivity Consideration: If your child has a food allergy or sensitivity, please send in "SAFE SNACKS" to be kept at school. Place snacks in a baggie or container marked with your child's name. We will let you know when the snacks run low and more need to be sent.

If your child has an **epipen**, please send it in the original box with the pharmacy label and child's name. It will be kept in a safe, easy for adults to access, place within the Preschool.



Birthday Celebrations: We will celebrate birthdays during the school year. We celebrate “half birthdays” for children who have summer birthdays. We will only pass out party invitations at school if all of the classmates are invited. Again, please DO NOT send in sheet cakes, cupcakes, etc... for your child’s birthday. You must adhere to the same snack regulations stated above. Some parents choose to send in small treat bags to be sent home with classmates. If you would like to do that, please ensure that you have one for each classmate.



Lunch: (full day 4 year old program only): Please provide a packed lunch daily for your child. Lunches will not be refrigerated or heated at school. Please make sure that you have an insulated container and ice packs to keep your child’s lunch fresh. Thermoses work well to keep food warm such as chicken nuggets or noodles. You will have the opportunity to purchase white or chocolate milk from the school for 50 cents/day, or you may pack a drink for your child. Remember that your child will also have a water bottle available for lunch. You can send in milk money ahead of time and we will keep track until it runs out. We have extra napkins, cups, straws, spoons, forks, etc... so please don’t worry if you forget to add an item to your child’s lunchbox. If you forget to pack your child’s lunch, we will call you to see if you can bring their lunch to school. If you are unable to do that, we will call over to the cafeteria and order your child a sandwich and an available side such as yogurt, fruit or chips. This is a one time courtesy. If you forget to pack a lunch on subsequent days, we will still order one from the cafeteria, but you will be charged for the price of the lunch. Ordering lunch from the cafeteria is not an option that is available on a routine basis and is only used if there is no other option. As part of our program, we teach the children how to open their own items at lunch time and encourage independence. Of course, we will always help them if needed.



Rest/Quiet Time: (full day 4 year old program only): We ask that you purchase a cot for your child. (See supply list). You need to send in a small blanket - that will remain at school for your child to use at rest time. We will send it home periodically to be washed. Towels work well also. Please DO NOT send in large blankets, pillows, sleeping bags, stuffed animals or toys for rest time. Also, the mermaid and shark tail blankets are too hard for the children to get into and out of.

We are so fortunate to have a designated rest area for the children. The cots remain in place and your child's blanket remains on their cot. The rest area stays cool when it's hot outside and warm when it's cold outside.

During rest time, the lights are dimmed and music or a story recording is played. We love the Calm App! The children really do relax and rest at this time and most actually fall asleep. The children are not given books or toys to entertain them at rest time and are not given the option to do an alternative activity. Rest time is 45-60 minutes.



Boo Boos and Illnesses

Health considerations: To prevent the spread of illness, please do not send your child to school with any symptoms of an illness including fever, upset stomach, rash, sore throat, cough, etc... If your child has a communicable disease such as Covid, pink eye or impetigo, please notify the preschool and contact your pediatrician to see when it is safe for them to return to school. When ill, your child must be fever, vomit and symptom free for a full 24 hours before their return. We will follow current regulations regarding Covid quarantining and mask wearing.

As a rule of thumb, if your child requires medication such as cough medicine or fever reducing medicine to make it through the day, it's a good indication that they should stay home. The preschool staff is not allowed to administer any medication to your child outside of life saving medication such as albuterol or an epipen. Please do not send cough drops or hard candy for your child to suck on as it is a choking hazard and is not permitted. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

Absences: Please email Mrs. Fetzko before 7:45 if your child will not be attending school for any reason. Mrs. Fetzko's email: lfetzko@stthereseschoolmunhall.org. If two consecutive preschool days are missed by your child without communication from you, I am obligated to reach out to you and check on the welfare of your child.

Boo Boos: If your child has an injury that may affect his school day, please be sure to let us know so that we can be considerate of the injury.

Parental Attention Needed: If your child becomes ill or injured during the school day and we feel that they require your attention, you will be notified immediately by phone and you may be asked to pick your child up. Please make sure to have a plan in place should your child ever need to be sent home from school.

Contact Information: Please make sure that your emergency contact information

remains up to date. Again, do your best to ensure that you have a plan to have your child picked up from school if they become ill during the school day.

Covid: Please notify the school if your child tests positive for Covid. As we have learned by now, regulations are constantly changing. Since the beginning of the pandemic, we have strived to provide a safe environment where in-person learning can be held. Moving forward, we will continue to strongly follow all recommendations by the CDC, local authorities, diocese and school.



Home/School Communication

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Email is our primary means of communication. Please be sure that you are receiving emails through Option C. If you are not, please contact Mrs. Pastor. I will also send emails periodically. If you email me, I will check my email regularly and will respond to you as soon as possible. If there is an urgent matter, please call the school office at 412-462-8163.

Google Classrooms: I have created a Google Classroom for each preschool class. You will have 24/7 access to the Google Classroom. I update the site frequently with questions of the day, curriculum goals, lessons, resources, videos, pictures and more. Your child's Google Classroom is the best way for you to know what your child is learning and participating in at Preschool.

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled twice during the school year for all preschool students. Dates/Times to be announced. The fall conference is intended to let you know how your child is adjusting to Preschool and to provide a baseline assessment (4 year olds only) of where your child is academically so that we can track progress throughout the year. **PRESCHOOL IS ABOUT PROGRESS NOT PERFECTION.** The spring conference is intended to share your child's progress and determine their readiness for the following year. If there is a concern about your child's progress, you will be notified earlier in the spring.

If you are concerned about your child's progress, don't hesitate to reach out. I may be able to offer some insight, reassurance or additional resources to help.



Drop Off and Pick Up

Parking: For drop off and pick up, Parents/Caregivers may park in the spots in front of the preschool, the little side road next to the preschool porch or in the lot behind the preschool on the SV side.

It is one way in from Main Street between the church and the rectory. It is one way in from Main Street between the Preschool and the SV fence. It is one way out to Main Street between the Preschool and the church.

NOTE: If you park in front of the preschool building for 2:00 dismissal, you will be blocked in by buses.

The 3 year old Preschool program is held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 - 11:30. The Preschool Porch door will open at 8:50 and be closed promptly at 9:00.

The 4 year old Preschool program is held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays starting at 8:00 a.m. The Preschool Porch door will open at 7:30 and will close promptly at 8:00. The half day students are dismissed at 11:15 a.m. The full day students are dismissed at 2:00 p.m. Please be attentive to these times. Siblings in K-8 will be dismissed at a specific time (after preschool dismissal) and will be escorted to the Preschool building to meet you. Most preschool parents who are also picking up K-8 siblings wait on the benches by the Mary statue weather permitting.

Drop off: Upon arrival at school, bring your child to the “Preschool Porch Door”. The preschool staff will be there to greet you and welcome your child into the school.

Dismissal: Please return to the same door. The children will be ready for dismissal and will be sitting in the Share Room. Parents/Caregivers will be admitted to the building to walk through the Share Room, collect their child and continue following the “loop” through the kitchen, cubby room and back out to the porch. If you are running late to pick up your child, email me or call the school office ASAP

so that we can reassure your child that you are on the way. After School Care is NOT available to Preschoolers regardless of sibling enrollment.

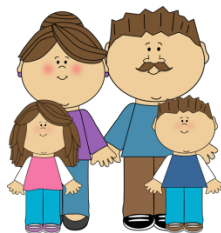
The Preschool Porch door will only remain open during the specific drop off and pick up times. If you are late dropping your child off, you will find the door locked. You must take your child to the main Preschool door (facing the church) and ring the doorbell. One of the Preschool staff members will look through the peephole to identify you and your child and open the door. (There is no peephole in the porch door and there is no doorbell so we do not use that door outside of drop off and pick up.)

If you need to pick your child up early from school (unplanned), please call the school office and they will let us know so that we can have your child ready. Come to the main Preschool door - facing the side of the church, and ring the doorbell when you arrive. If you need to pick up your child early from 4 year old preschool (planned), it is easiest to do so at half day dismissal so as not to disrupt lunch or rest time.

Safety and Security



The Preschool doors remain locked during school hours. Only the preschool staff, student support staff, such as a speech therapist for example, the school administration, parish staff, and the maintenance staff have access to the Preschool building. If someone other than those listed above requires access to the building (a repairman, safety inspector, etc...) they will be screened through the main office and escorted to the Preschool as needed.



Opportunities for Parent Involvement Diocesan Safe Environment Policy

Diocesan Safe Environment Policy: In order to be permitted to enter the preschool during school hours, all adults must follow the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy. Your clearances **MUST** be current and documented. **NO EXCEPTIONS!** There are a few steps to take to ensure that you are in compliance. Information about the Safe Environment Policy is available on the school website at <https://stthereseschoolmunhall.org/safe-environment-policy>. You can find this link under the [Parents] tab on the website. Note: I do not have any access to the database. I am unable to check clearances. Prior authorization is always required for Preschool visits. Only the pre-approved visitor will be permitted to enter.

Parents will be given the opportunity to sign up for visit days. Visits will be held in the mornings for about an hour. (Details will follow). On your visit day you will have the choice of doing an activity such as reading a book, or doing a craft and/or you are welcome to just hang out with your child! This seems to be the preferred activity for parents. You'll get to see what your child does during the morning rotation which may include Circle Time, Morning Lesson, Purple Room and Trike Room. We ask that you do not bring siblings with you so that all of your attention can be focused on your preschooler.

Preschool Tuition

Please keep current on your preschool tuition payments through FACTS. For information regarding your tuition, please contact the main school office. Preschool families are encouraged to participate in the various school fundraisers.

ALL tuition questions are to be directed to the school office. The Preschool teachers do not have access to your child's tuition account.



Dress Code

Dress to be Active: **Please send your child to school every day in play clothes and tennis shoes.** They will be physically active every day that they are in school. They need to be able to move comfortably and safely.



Dress for the Mess: We will be doing projects frequently involving paint, play-doh, glue, etc... They will be playing with the sand and water tables. They will be eating snacks and/or lunch daily. They will get messy!

Dress for the Weather: Also, make sure that your child is dressed for the weather since we may be going outside to play or we may be participating in a practice drill. Although we will typically follow a set schedule, we reserve the right to be spontaneous!

Dress for Bathroom Independence: Ideally, your child should be able to use the bathroom independently including pulling down/pulling up pants. Of course we will assist with an occasional snap or button. However, long dresses, overalls, one piece outfits, belts and tights are difficult for children to navigate.

Boots/Shoes: Your child must wear tennis shoes every day. This is for their comfort and safety. If you send your child to school in boots, you must send their tennis shoes so that they can change when they arrive. We will be sure to put their boots back on at the end of the day if necessary. Your child's activity may be restricted if they are not wearing tennis shoes ie; no trike room, no gym class.

Dress Up Days: We will be sure to notify you ahead of time if there is a special dress up day such as for school pictures or a holiday party. We also may enjoy a pajama day or two.

Change of Clothes: Please send in a complete change of clothes for your child to be kept at school. Put socks, underwear, shirt and pants in a gallon sized zip-lock bag with your child's name on it. They will be used in case of a major mess or bathroom accident. We will ask that you check occasionally to ensure that your child still has a complete change of clothes, that they fit, and that they are seasonally appropriate. We do have extra preschool clothes here in case of an emergency.



School Cancellations/Inclement Weather

In the case of school cancellation due to inclement weather, you may receive an email, automated phone message or text message from the Option C emergency notification system. You can also tune into local news stations for alerts. If St. Therese School is delayed/closed, St. Therese Little Flower Preschool is delayed/closed. **2 Hour Delay Schedule:** 4 Year Old Preschool - Doors will open at 9:30. Students should arrive by 10:00. Half-Day students are invited to stay for lunch and be dismissed at 12pm. 3 Year Old Preschool - Doors will open at 9:50 am, class will begin at 10am and students will be dismissed at noon.

Bathroom Matters

All Preschool children must be fully daytime potty trained. Children may not attend preschool in diapers or pull-ups. Accidents happen and are completely normal. However, if frequent bathroom accidents occur, we will need to reevaluate your child's readiness for Preschool. Of course we are prepared to assist your child in the bathroom if needed if your child has had an accident or has become ill. Please practice bathroom independence including hand washing with your child. **NOTE: We do not wipe bottoms when children use the bathroom.** The main floor bathroom has a potty seat and a stool available if your child wishes to use them. The downstairs bathrooms are fitted with toddler sized toilets.



Separation Anxiety

Emotional Support

Separation anxiety is common and normal for children (and adults!) to experience when coming to school. We will do our very best to provide a comfortable experience for all. There are a few things that we recommend that may help ease the transition.

If your child is upset at drop off, be firm but friendly about leaving. If your child cries, or clings to you, a prolonged goodbye will only be harder for you and your child. Generally, children will calm down within moments of your departure. The preschool staff is here to care for and comfort your child and to help them deal with the anxiety concerning their separation from you.

Please be on time to pick up your child. If your child is experiencing separation anxiety, being the last one left for several minutes after everyone else has been picked up will not help. Once the routine is established of drop off and pick up, your child will find it easier to be away from you during school.

Please don't give in to your child's anxiety and keep them home. Separation anxiety manifests itself in many different ways. Some children may have sleep troubles, "feel sick" or have a meltdown in the morning. If you are confident that these behaviors are the result of separation anxiety, it is best to not give in to your child and let them stay home.

Please don't tell them that I will call you to pick them up if they are sad or that you "will be back in just a few minutes" to get them. This creates unrealistic expectations and will cause your child to be even more upset.

Be careful not to agree with your child by saying things like, "I know how much you will miss me all day". It is important not to tell your child that you will be sad or upset while they are gone. Stay positive and happy. It's better to say something like, "I know you are sad but I know that you are going to have so much fun today."

Comfort items are strongly discouraged. Unfortunately, they tend to have the opposite effect and serve to remind the child to be sad or anxious. Along these same lines, please do not bargain with your child by telling them that they can bring a favorite toy to school if they cooperate. That leaves me in the position of telling them that they can't have it and again, will cause them to be further upset.

The Preschool staff has many tried and true strategies for dealing with separation anxiety. We will work through each step with your child and we will be sure to communicate with you so that you will know how your child is doing in your absence. Together, we will support your child in a consistent way and bridge the gap between home and school.

Please notify us of any situation that may have a physical or emotional effect on your child so that we may work with you in the best interest of your child. We want to be ready to offer support and understanding if your child appears distressed during the school day.

Sometimes separation anxiety doesn't set in until the second or third week of school. Prolonged absences due to illness, vacation, holiday break or snow days can sometimes prompt separation anxiety in a child who has not previously displayed anxiety. Knowing that there is a new baby, a new pet or a special visitor is at home can also cause a child to not want to come to school. This is all common and normal. Again, it is our goal to help your child through these feelings and help them to have a positive experience at Preschool.



Family Vacations

We know how important family time is and we understand that family vacations may be taken during the school year. There is no issue with your child missing Preschool due to a family vacation. Please understand that we will not provide your child with work to do while they are on vacation. Please enjoy making memories!

You will still have access to the Google Classroom if you'd like to have them log on and review lessons.



Curriculum Goals and Opportunities for Learning

Each school day, every child will have the opportunity to participate in:

- Daily Prayer
- Arrival activity (play-doh, puzzles, coloring sheets, etc...)
- Morning Lesson
 - Calendar Time
 - Circle Time (Songs, music and movement, skill review, holiday fun)
 - Academic Time (Introductory as well as review and practice)
- Small and Large motor skill development
- Story Time
- Play Time - This is a very important part of Preschool!
- Snack Time (The perfect time to practice manners, conversation and independence)

Additionally, children will have the opportunity to participate in occasional:

- Art/craft lessons
- STREAM activities (Science Technology Religion Engineering Art and Math)
- Holiday activities/parties
- Outdoor activities such as walks around campus, picnic snacks or lunches, sidewalk chalk, outdoor play, bubbles, etc...
- Mini “field trips” to the church, school library, gym, or cafeteria.
- Special visits and/or lessons from Fr. Nick and Deacon Ron
- Technology time with tablets/apps
- “TV Time” we do watch PBS Kids or other children's programming occasionally
- Show & Tell
- Special guests or programs such as a Firefighter visit during Fire Safety month.
- Sensory activities such as sand/water table
- A variety of frequently changed centers, toys, activities and MORE!

Again, the Google Classroom is the best way for you to keep up with what your child is doing on a day to day basis.

Remote Learning Opportunities

In the case that we would need to transition to remote learning due to a school closure, there will be live instructional opportunities via Google Meet so that your child's learning will not be interrupted. With these resources in place, we will be able to seamlessly move between in-person and remote learning should the need arise.

NOTE: Remote learning is not mandatory for Preschool students.



Remote Preschool Google Meet Times:

10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on your child's normal preschool days.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or the school office if you have any questions or concerns or if you need any clarification on any of the information presented in this packet.

We are looking forward to having your children as part of our Preschool Program!

Mrs. Lisa Fetzko

