

**Saint Catherine of Siena Preschool  
Parent Handbook**

**317 Witmer Road**

**Horsham, PA 19044**

**(215) 674-1904 - Fax: (215-674-1466)**

**Director: Ms. Cheryl Gollmer**

**director@scsprek.org**

Welcome to Saint Catherine of Siena Preschool!

We pride ourselves with small classroom sizes and dedicated caring teachers that educate and consider each child as an amazing individual with a unique set of skills that are just waiting to be discovered. We offer programs for 3 and 4 year olds in the Horsham and surrounding area.

We provide a loving and safe environment that encourages socialization, creativity, and experimentation. A “hands-on” approach to learning is emphasized, with extreme focus on learning centers and small group instruction. We are unique in that we have alumni from our previous grade school and preschool that continue to come back year after year which keeps our legacy strong!

Our curriculum includes developing the skills needed for future learners including mathematical and scientific thinking, language and literacy through writing and drawing, religion and kindness curriculum, and weekly STEM lessons. Children enjoy weekly specials including Music, PE, and Art with a special instructor!

Our love of nature is shared with the children as we go on daily nature walks, explore our environment and the seasons, morph butterflies, watch plants grow, play on our beautiful new playground, and enjoy the acres of land we have at St. Catherines where we can watch the deer, see the birds and maybe catch a glimpse of our groundhog friends!

Our faith curriculum celebrates God’s love for each of us and is very inclusive of all. The prayers and lessons teach us to appreciate the gifts we have been given and to be kind to all! Admissions are made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency) or sex.

## **SCHEDULE**

We offer full and half day options for your child.

8:30-11:30 daily with 3 or 5 day option

8:30- 2:30 daily- with 3 or 5 day option

We also offer the “CARES” program for before and afterschool.

AM CARES 7:15-8:30 am

PM CARES 2:30-5:45 pm

Half-Day Class vs Full-Day Class

In the course of the school year, if your child is registered in the Half-Day class, you may find that you wish to have your child attend school in a Full Day program. Please discuss this with the School Director.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **DROP OFF/ PICK-UP**

**Doors open at 8:30 am.** If you arrive before 8:30 am you can sign your child into CARES (see below) or wait outside until the door opens for our regular school day.

Regular attendance and punctuality are encouraged for all students. Please sign in at the front desk when arriving and wait for your time to walk your child to the classroom door. You will then drop off and exit the side door to the left of the building.

For dismissal the students will be walked out to you in the parking lot and handed off to you!

All cars should be parked in the church parking lot, not adjacent to the school. Cones will be placed in front of the school for the safety of all students and personnel. Parking is not permitted directly in front of the school building by order of the Fire Marshall.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Important information including class information and newsletters will be sent home in your child’s backpack. Please be sure to check your child’s backpack each night. If you need to speak to the teacher, or if you have any questions, please feel free to message the teacher using the Classdojo app or you can always call the SCS Preschool at 215-674-1904.

If there is a change with who is to pick your child up from school – please have a written note explaining who the person picking up your child will be and have that person prepared to present a valid picture identification – a driver’s license is acceptable.

### **Classdojo App**

In the event we need to communicate to our school families, we will use this service to give advice about school closings, delayed openings and early dismissals due to inclement weather. We will also notify you of emergencies, cancellations, reminders, rescheduled activities, and other important school news. All announcements will be

made to your primary email address. Additional addresses may be added by the director.

WEB BASED Communications: All preschool families are encouraged to visit our website calendar to be fully informed of school holidays and special celebrations, Our web address is:

[www.saintcatherinespreschool.org](http://www.saintcatherinespreschool.org)

Please follow us on Facebook and instagram for fun photos and videos!

<https://www.facebook.com/saintcatherineofsienapreschoolhorsham>

### **CARES (before and after school program)**

Please fill out the required paperwork if you will be using either of our CARES programs throughout the year. There is a \$25.00 registration fee! Drop ins are welcome!

### **AM CARES**

The CARES doors open at 7:15 -8:15 am daily. If you would like to use our AM CARES program there is **\$10.00/ day**.

### **PM CARES**

Immediately following dismissal registered CARES students will get dropped off in the CARES room. If you are late picking up your child (past 2:30 dismissal) your child will be sent to the CARES room for pick up and charged the after school CARES rate which is **\$25.00/day**.

### **TUITION**

We ask your prompt cooperation in all tuition matters so that, in justice, we are able to meet our financial obligations. If there is a financial hardship, we ask that you contact the Parish Office as soon as possible and request an appointment. All tuition money is processed through automatic bank payments or FACTS. If there is any problem with your payment set-up or monthly/CARES deductions, please contact Mrs. Kathleen Werner, the Business Manager, in the Parish Office.

***There is no reduction in tuition due to any personal vacation or other voluntary absences that result in any child/children not attending school during the school year.***

Kathleen Werner can be reached at 215-672-2881.(rectory number)

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Each child, including those with summer birthdays, will have the opportunity to celebrate a birthday at school. We do announce each child's birthday over the loudspeaker!!! When sending in birthday treats, please keep it simple. Small brownies, muffins, munchkins, rice crispy treats, mini soft pretzels, and cookies are good choices. We will inform you of any peanut or any other food allergies.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

If you would like to be a parent volunteer for the school year please obtain your clearances through Marybeth at the rectory. 215-674-2881

## **DRESS CODE**

Children are asked to wear the official school uniform to school each day. We do offer gently used uniforms for purchase in our butterfly room. Ask the director for details! You can find the link on our website to purchase the official gray shirts or sweatshirts. <https://flynnohara.com/shop/st-catherine-of-siena-preschool-pa098/>

A comfortable pair of sneakers is also recommended. The children will be having gym class and daily opportunities to have outside recess and gross motor experiences. Please have all clothing labeled with your child's name on the inside label, especially the sweatshirts that are often removed during the morning. The children will wear either blue shorts or sweatpants depending upon the weather conditions. Please feel free to shop at any Walmart, Target, Old Navy, or any store to make shorts or sweatpants purchases. Please dress appropriately for the weather as we will be going outside everyday!

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

St. Catherine of Siena Preschool has established a safety plan which will be implemented in response to any situation that threatens the safety of those in the school building. We will be having monthly emergency drills to practice how and where to go in the event of an emergency and they are listed on the website calendar. The children will exit the building and move to the farmhouse directly across from the school. If we need to evacuate the building for an extended period of time the students will proceed into the farmhouse as a shelter in place. If there is a weather emergency we will relocate to the hall (downstairs basement) and give parents instructions on where to pick up your child after there is no threat of a weather emergency.

We will be having specific lessons about personal safety and privacy of our bodies, if you do not wish for your child to participate in these lessons please let the director know and we will make other arrangements for your child during that time.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Protecting the health and safety of the children is very important. There are times when even the healthiest of children are too sick to be around other children. Generally, as a rule of thumb, if your child is too sick to play outside, he/she is too sick to come to school.

For the protection of your child and others, please do not send your child to school with the following symptoms:

- 1) An upset stomach
- 2) Yellow runny nose not from allergies
- 3) Sore throat
- 4) Fever
- 5) unexplained rash
- 6) Swollen glands
- 7) Diarrhea
- 8) Earache
- 9) Persistent cough
- 10) Other communicable illnesses

If your child is injured or becomes ill at school, you will be notified to pick up your child. If the parents are not available, then the person designated to be called in an emergency will be contacted. If there is an extreme medical emergency we will call 911 first.

If your child gets a “boo boo” at school you will get a “boo boo report” in your child's folder. If there is a head injury, even if not severe, the director will give you a call to inform you.

*Be sure to keep the school notified of any changes in telephone and cell phone numbers, addresses, places of employment, and emergency contacts every 6 months. Please keep us informed of any health problems or allergies. All information is held confidential. Please be sure to call the school to discuss any health problems or attendance concerns.*

If your child needs to take **medication at school**, an antibiotic or needs to have an inhaler or nebulizer, you must have a signed doctor's note with the specific instructions and dosage. All medication needs to be in the **original container with a signed doctor's note**. Forms are available at the school office. Thank you for your cooperation.

Covid policy- If your child tested positive for Covid, for the safety of all students and staff please adhere to the following guidelines regardless of vaccination status. -Check current CDC guidelines!

or

- Your child should isolate for at least **5 full days**. After 5 days, you should wait to end your isolation until you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved.
- Wear a high-quality mask around other people for 10 full days and until 24 hours after your fever ends.

**Accidents happen...** If your child is not fully ready to use the bathroom and it becomes a daily issue you may be asked to take some time and completely potty train your child before returning to school. If your child has a BM accident which occasionally will happen at this age you will be called to pick up your child. Thank you for your cooperation!

## **DISCIPLINE**

Our goal is to maintain a safe and orderly environment in which your child can learn. Therefore, we place great emphasis on encouraging appropriate behavior of children to help them develop self-control, self-confidence, and self-discipline. An effort is made to help children understand why some behaviors are not acceptable, and suggestions for more desirable behaviors are always offered. The expectations are posted in the classroom and reviewed daily with the children in each classroom.

To ensure the safety of all participants and staff, we will implement a positive discipline program.

**The following guidelines are used only when disciplinary action becomes necessary due to repeated unacceptable behavior.** Severe behavior will be addressed by the Preschool Director/Principal.

1. Positive redirection and reteach of expectations.
2. Verbal warning for specific unacceptable behavior.
3. Separation from the group for the safety of all the children.
4. Separation from the group with an incident report and/or message/email to parents explaining the behaviors exhibited in school to keep them informed and work on behavior.
5. Separation from the group with a call to the parent to immediately pick up the child for the remainder of the day.
6. Parent/Guardian conference to discuss corrective action and consequences for future incidents and implement a plan for future success with the director.

*St. Catherine's Preschool reserves the right to withdraw a participant from the program if all discipline options have been exhausted and/or demonstration of extreme behavior that may put participants and staff in danger.*

## **Children with disabilities**

Reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities will be made to ensure equal access our programs and services, including modifications to policies, practices, and the physical environment, without fundamentally altering the program's nature. We work with the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit to provide additional services and develop and implement IEP's based on the students needs.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER/ SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

If we have a late opening, all half day classes will be canceled. We will utilize the App "Classdojo" to send a message to you if the school is closed due to inclement weather. It is important to provide the office with any phone or email changes so it will be the most up to date information to communicate with you.

### **LUNCH/SNACK**

We ask that you please pack a healthy LUNCH AND SNACK for your child for the morning and for the afternoon (if your child attends the CARES program). Please be sure to pack napkins for your child's snack and lunch. You will be notified if we have a peanut or any other food allergy in the class. Please enclose ice packs in your child's lunch box to help keep the food items fresh and to avoid foods from spoiling. We are not able to heat/warm food items. In an effort to be sure that all of our students are safe and to prevent any injury or accident, we are asking that you do not send any food items to school that could be a potential choking hazard.

Allergy policy- For the safety of your child with a nut allergy only your child's assigned classroom will be assigned as "peanut or nut free" and all of the parents will be informed at the start of school to refrain from sending in foods with nuts.

### **CLASSROOM ACTIVITY FEE**

A **\$35.00 ACTIVITY FEE** will be collected to assist with STEM activities, special art projects and special events/celebrations that we will be doing throughout the year in class including Holiday parties.

Please send this CASH fee in an envelope to school marked with your child's name and labeled "activity fee".

### **SCHOOL SUPPLIES**

The children will need a backpack when they come to school each day. Please have your child's backpack labeled with his/her name. They will also need a lunch box, which should also be labeled, and it should contain a healthy snack, lunch, (full-day students) and a drink. Reusable water bottles are great and we have a filtered water system in our Staff Room for refills! A current supply list will be sent out on Class Dojo at the start of each new year!