



**SAINT THERESE**  
*Nursery School*

# Health & Safety



## Security Protocols

The doors of the parish center are unlocked five minutes before arrival and dismissal. The director or a staff member monitors the arrival and dismissal for each class in front of the school. The doors are locked ten minutes after arrival. The door to the nursery school wings are locked until the arrival and remains locked throughout the day. If you need to gain entry during a time when the doors are locked, please ring the buzzer to the right of the front doors and the office will respond.

All exits to the parish center are locked from the exterior and alarmed. If someone attempts to open a door, an alarm sounds. Doors are unlocked on the inside to allow for egress in the event of an emergency.

## Open Door Policy

Families are welcome to visit the nursery school at any time during the hours of operation of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For security reasons, the front doors will be locked ten minutes after arrival and departure for each session. The director or a staff member will remain in the foyer during the arrival and dismissal times. To gain entrance during the hours that the front doors are locked, please ring the buzzer to the right of the front doors.

## **Discipline Policy for St. Therese Nursery School**

**Purpose:** In order to establish socially acceptable behaviors, the administrators, teachers, parents, and students will be held accountable for adhering to the discipline policy and the implementation of appropriate consequences.

- 1. When a child exhibits a behavior that is disruptive to the class, the teacher will address the behavior and redirect the child. The child will be addressed individually with reference to the classroom rules that have been established. These posted rules will have been established at the beginning of the year with student input.**
  
- 2. If the behavior warrants a time out, the child will be brought to another table where he or she will be asked to remain and contemplate the previous discussion. The time out will reflect the age of the child. For example, a four-year-old will remain for four minutes and three years old will remain for three minutes. A staff member will supervise the time out at a table within the classroom. Therefore, staff/child ratios will be maintained at all times. After the time out, the child will review a discipline worksheet with a discussion of what the child did, why they did it, and what they will do next time. The child may draw their responses, or the staff member may script the responses. The discussion will focus on the reason this behavior is an inappropriate and what the child will do to prevent this behavior from occurring again. Parents will be notified by the teacher if a discipline worksheet is filled out. In the case of repeated display of inappropriate behaviors, the Director will call a conference w with the parents and the teacher.**
  - a. If a child continues to exhibit inappropriate behaviors that are physically and verbally aggressive and is unable to be redirected, the child will be removed to the Director's office. The Director will then supervise the child and telephone his or her parents to remove the child from the nursery school for the remainder of t day within one hour.**
  - b. Prior to the child returning to the nursery school, the parents, student, teacher, and Director will convene at a conference. This conference will include the planning and implementation of a behavior modification plan to prevent the reoccurrence of inappropriate behaviors.**
  
- 3. In the scenario that another child is injured due to physical aggression, parents of both children will be notified of the incident and consequences. If the situation warrants, a conference will be set up with the parents.**
  
- 4. Appropriate behaviors will also be integrated into the curriculum. Situations will be role-played, and children's books will be utilized to establish appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. Activities and discussion will focus on the reason for a behavior being inappropriate.**
  
- 5. Prohibited discipline methods:**

- a. No child shall be physically harmed or verbally abused by an adult in the nursery school for disciplinary measures or otherwise. In the case that this occurs, said adult will be removed from the care of the children and social services will be contacted immediately. Our social service consultant is Catholic Family Services at (203) 234-2507. We will then follow the procedures and protocol of child abuse as defined by Section 46-b-120.
- b. St. Therese Nursery School will prohibit discipline which is abusive, neglectful, corporal, humiliating, or frightening punishment. Physical restraint will be limited to a situation where restraint is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or other people.
- c. St. Therese Nursery School will prohibit staff from withholding nor threatening to withhold food as a form of discipline.

#### 6. MANDATED REPORTING POLICY FOR CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

St. Therese Nursery School has a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of children enrolled in our program. The following guidelines will be followed to ensure the above-mentioned occurs.

Parents are given a copy of these policies with the Operations and Policies of St. Therese Nursery School handed out at information meetings and upon registration in the parent handbook.

Definitions of Abuse and Neglect (according to CT DCF):

**Abuse:** Non-accidental physical injury or injuries at variance with the history given or is in a condition which is the result of maltreatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities or emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment. Corporal punishment (i.e., spanking that are not cruel or excessive and which do not leave physical marks) are not considered physical abuse. However, the constant threat of violence, even when no physical violence has occurred, may be considered emotional abuse.

**Neglect:** A child under age 18 is considered neglected if he/she has been abandoned; or is being denied proper care and attention, physically, emotionally or morally; or is being permitted to live under conditions circumstances or associations injurious to his/her well being; or has been abused.

All members of the St. Therese Nursery School staff understand that, by law, they are mandated reporters for child abuse and neglect. Department of Children and Families Hotline telephone number to call for reporting abuse or neglect is (1-800-842-2288).

Connecticut Public Act 97-319 ss 9 provides:

Any mandated reporter, as defined in section 17a-101, who in his professional capacity has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child under the age of eighteen years has been abused as defined in ss 46b-120, as amended by ss18 of this act, or has had non-accidental physical injury, or injury which is at variance with the child's health, welfare or care by a person given access to such child by such responsible person, or has been neglected ,as defined in section 46b-120 shall report or cause a report to be made in accordance with the provisions of sections 17a-1010b to 17a-101d, inclusive. Any person required to report under the provisions of this section who fails to make such a report shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars.

Staff is protected by law (Connecticut General Statutes, Section 17a-101e) from discrimination or retaliation for reporting abuse or neglect.

Objective Criteria for Identifying Possible Abuse or Neglect of Children

1. St. Therese Nursery School will provide annual staff education and training on early detection and identification of possible abuse or neglect of children. New staff members will receive an orientation upon the start of their employment. St. Therese Nursery School will use all measures within their control to prevent abuse and neglect of children enrolled in the program.
2. Criteria that may indicate possible abuse will focus on objective observable evidence (not allegations alone). The following criteria should be used as guidelines for identifying and assessing possible abuse or neglect. The presence of a single factor may or may not, in and of itself, be indicative of abuse or neglect and a comprehensive physical assessment may be required. The following criteria originate from Connecticut General Statutes, Section 46b-120.

**OBJECTIVE CRITERIA:**

1. Physical Abuse
  - \* Shrinks from adult's touch;
  - \* Unexplained bruises, fractures, lacerations, burns, or any other unexplained injury:
  - \* Handprints, bites or strange marks on body:
  - \* Injuries to areas usually hidden by clothing:
  - \* Child avoidance or bizarre interaction with particular individuals:
  - \* Child reports abuse or other person reports abuse of a child;
  - \* Withdrawn or aggressive;
  - \* Afraid to go home.
2. Sexual Abuse
  - Sexual precocity in children;
  - Foreign body in urethra, vagina, or rectum;
  - Bizarre behavior or avoidance with particular individuals;
  - Child reports assault or other person reports abuse of child;
  - Child avoidance or bizarre interaction with particular individuals;

- Frequent urinary or genital infection.
3. **General Abuse or Neglect**
    - a. Poor hygiene;
    - b. Malnutrition
    - c. Lack of proper immunization on admission;
    - d. Fear of particular individuals;
    - e. Multiple abrasions, ecchymosis and/or scars particularly over fleshy areas (e.g. buttocks, thighs, abdomen, back) or in patterns suggestive of a blow by an object (e.g. belt marks, cord marks, hand prints);
    - f. Burns particularly in patterns consistent with abuse (e.g. glove or sock burn on hands or feet, immersion scalds, cigarette/cigar burns);
    - g. Human bites;
    - h. Unsuspected/unreported/old/new fractures;
    - i. Delay in seeking care.

#### Process for Reporting Possible Abuse or Neglect of Children

1. St. Therese Nursery School staff will make an oral report to DCF or a law enforcement agency within 12 hours of suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected. The Department of Children and Families Hotline telephone number for reporting abuse or neglect is 1-800-842-2288.
2. Within 48 hours of making an oral report, staff will submit a written report (DCF-136) form to DCF.

#### If a child is in need of medical attention as a result of abuse or neglect:

Medical attention will be sought following the medical emergency plan as outlined below:

1. In the event that a student requires immediate medical attention, one staff member with Child CPR and first aid will remain with the student and assess the injury. If first aid can be applied, the staff member will do so.
2. If the situation warrants further medical treatment that first aid or a visit to the child's pediatrician, The Director or staff member will telephone 911 for emergency treatment. The Director or staff member will then telephone the parents of the child to inform them of the situation if this will not interfere with the investigation of abuse. The Director will pull the emergency medical file on said child. The Director will also telephone a substitute staff member to come in to maintain the ratios.
3. The staff member remaining with the child will continue to apply first aid or CPR until the emergency technicians arrive.
4. Upon arrival of the emergency technicians, if the child is evaluated and requires immediate medical attention, The Director or the staff member who has remained with the child will transport with the child to the hospital. The medical emergency authorization form will be given to the emergency technicians and transferred to the hospital with the child for their reference.
5. If the child requires immediate attention of a doctor or dentist and does not necessitate the emergency room, the Director will telephone the parent at home or work until they are contacted. If the parents are unable to be contacted, The Director will telephone the two emergency numbers until someone is

reached. The child will remain in the Director's office where the Director will continue to apply first as needed.

When making a report, a mandated reporter is required to provide the following information if known:

- Names and addresses of the child and his parents or responsible caregiver.
- Child's age and gender.
- Nature and extent of injury(ies), maltreatment, or neglect.
- Approximate date and time of injury(ies), maltreatment or neglect occurred.
- Information about previous injury(ies) maltreatment or neglect of the child or siblings.
- Circumstances in which the injury(ies), maltreatment, or neglect came to be known by the reporter.
- Name of the person suspected to have caused the injury(ies), maltreatment, or neglect.
- Any other information the reporter believes would be helpful.
- Any action taken to treat or help the child.

Mandated reporters who, outside of their professional capacity, have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 is in danger of being abused or has been abused or neglected, can and should make a report to the DCF Hotline (1-800-842-2288).

Informing the family

\*Mandated reporters are under no legal obligation to inform parents that they have made a report to DCF about their child. However, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary and/or beneficial to do so.

\* When a child is suspected of being abused or neglected by a member of the staff of a private or public school or an institution that cares for the child, the person in charge of the school or facility *must* immediately notify the child's parent or other person responsible for the child's care and a report has been made.

- Health care professionals may need to talk with the parents to assess the cause of a child's injuries. Mental health professionals or member of the clergy may want to talk with the parents in order to offer support and guidance.

However, in cases of serious physical abuse or sexual abuse, it may *not be wise to talk* with parents before reporting the case to DCF. This may put the child at greater risk and interfere with a possible criminal investigation.