

St. Patrick Catholic Preschool
Parent Handbook

3285 Mills Rd.
Taylor Mill, KY 41015
859-344-7040
Fax 859-344-7042



2023-2024

Welcome

Welcome Parents! We are excited to be working with you this year! We hope that this handbook will help you to understand what to expect of us and what, in turn, we expect from you. Thank you!

Contact Information

Pamela Nunnelley, Principal/Teacher
3 Year old class Phone 859-344-7040
nunnelleyp@stpat.school

Whitney Baker, Teacher
3 & 4 Year Old Classes
bakerw@stpat.school

Diane Melendez, Assistant
3 Year Old & School Age Classes

Cindy Moore, Teacher
PreK & 4 Year Old Classes
moorec@stpat.school

Nicole Nunnelley, Assistant
4 Year Old & School Age Classes

Purpose and Mission Statement

Our purpose is to support parents in early childhood education in an affordable Catholic environment. We are committed to working closely with parents toward the spiritual growth and welfare of the whole family. We want your child's first learning experience, spiritual and academic, to be fun, exciting, and inspiring in order to set the stage for future educational success.

St. Patrick Catholic Preschool's mission is to build a faithful community where children can experience the love of God, learn and practice virtue, and to provide exceptional educational preparation for Kindergarten. We strive to promote a balance of spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth of children.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on the Kentucky Early Childhood Standards.

Three Year Old

The focus of the three year old program is on colors, shapes, and numbers to ten. These concepts are introduced to the children through a book each week. We also work with the children to try to do things for themselves, such as putting on their coats and gloves or mittens, pouring their own drinks, cleaning up after themselves and washing their hands properly. Each day our 3s will participate in Calendar Activities, Minds in Motion Exercises, Circle Time, Snack, Free Choice Centers, Outside playtime and Storytime with a combination of large and small group activities. The 3s will work on fine and gross motor skills, basic school concepts, such as walking in lines, writing their names, cutting with scissors, transitioning from one activity to another, and social skills. The children will be introduced to the Sign of the Cross, the Angel of God prayer, the Prayer before Meals, Bible stories, and exploring the Church.

Four Year Old

The four year old classes will review colors and shapes, and be introduced to nursery rhymes, letters and sounds. We will expand upon the number knowledge built in the 3 year old class to include number identification to twenty. Instruction will be given to both large and small groups. Each day our 4s will participate in Calendar Math, Circle Time, Music, Snack, Storytime, Free choice centers and Outside play. The 4s will begin basic addition and subtraction using manipulatives, work on grouping and sorting, measurement, graphing writing numbers, counting and patterning. We will use weekly magazines to learn about the gospel for the week and apply it to our everyday life. We will also learn basic Catholic prayers and spend time exploring in church. We will use a variety of daily exercises (Minds in Motion) to build their large motor skills and develop balance and hand-eye coordination. We will have weekly Science experiments and art activities.

Pre-K

Pre-K will build upon and sharpen the skills learned in 4 year old preschool. The Pre-K day will be somewhat intertwined with the 3 and 4 year old classes, and will also allow for a significant period of time spent with just the Pre-K group honing skills and going above and beyond the 4 year old curriculum. All letters and letter sounds should be mastered by the end of the Pre-K year. Students will also learn basic phonetic blends, sight words and other pre-reading skills. In math students will continue to build upon addition, subtraction and counting skills. Students will enjoy weekly science experiments and social studies lessons. Religion will be based upon daily Bible stories, weekly gospel-based magazines, prayer and time spent in Church.

Religion

We do not require children to be Catholic to attend our school. However, we expect all children to participate in a short daily prayer service with the entire school as well as other religious services and daily prayers.

Enrollment

We welcome enrollment to all children regardless of race, religious affiliation, national origin or sex.

Registration and Tuition

There is a \$100 registration fee due per family at the time of enrollment. We also need a copy of your child's birth certificate, social security card and current immunization record prior to the first day of class or your child will not be able to attend until it is received. As your child receives new immunizations, please give us an updated copy.

Tuition for the 2023-2024 school year is as follows:

3year olds-\$145/mo., 4 year olds-\$185/mo., Pre-K-\$200/mo.

Tuition will be due the first week of each month. Tuition can be paid by check or cash or online at www.stpat.school by clicking on the button that says "Pay Tuition Online." Checks should be made out to St. Patrick Catholic Preschool. Please put your child's name on the memo line. If your family is having difficulty with tuition payments, please contact Mrs. Nunnelley so that we can make other arrangements that are more comfortable for your financial situation. We want all children to have access to a Catholic education.

Communication

Parents and teachers need to communicate! Please feel free to talk to your child's teacher at school or drop a note to the teachers or director. The preschool will schedule parent-teacher conferences in January (additional conferences may be scheduled as needed). Newsletters will be provided weekly by email unless a paper copy is requested.

Parental Involvement

We encourage parental/guardian involvement whenever possible. If you would like to volunteer in the classroom or send things home to do that would help us prepare activities for your child, let us know.

VIRTUS®

In compliance with the policies of the Diocese of Covington, the VIRTUS® training directives will be strictly enforced at St. Patrick TM School. ANYONE volunteering in the classroom must be fully trained and in compliance. Consult the diocesan website www.covdio.org for all necessary information. You can also contact Christy Cool parishoffice@stpat.church for guidance.

To become compliant, go to the diocesan website and Click on **Safe Environment-Virtus:**

1. Click on **How Do I Start?** on the right. There is a link to the Policies and Procedure Manual that you can download and read.
2. **An Acceptance Form for the Policies and Procedures Manual and a Volunteer Form** must be obtained from the school, completed and submitted before volunteering.
3. Leave a copy of your valid driver's license or state issued ID with the school
4. Go to www.virtus.org and click on First Time Registrant to set up an account with Covington, KY (Diocese)
5. Register for a training class at www.virtus.org under **Current Training.**
6. A **Background Check** must be submitted through www.virtus.org and returned before volunteering.

After completing the above items, you are required to read a monthly bulletin online and answer a question about what you read in order to stay compliant.

Ratio

At St. Patrick Catholic Preschool, we feel that individual attention is very important for your child's development. We strive to maintain a 7:1 ratio between students and teachers.

Arrival and Departure

Our day for AM class begins at 8:30 A.M. and will end at 11:30 A.M. The upstairs doors will be unlocked at 8:15 A.M. We ask you to escort your child to the door and sign in on the podium. A teacher will meet him/her at the bottom of the stairs to assist with hand washing and restroom use, if needed, and escort your child to the classroom.

Our day for PM classes begins at 12:00 P.M. and will end at 3:00 P.M. The door will not be unlocked until 12:00 P.M. to give teachers a chance to eat some lunch and use the restroom between classes. We ask you to escort your child to the door and sign in on the podium. A teacher

will meet him/her at the bottom of the stairs to assist with hand washing and restroom use, if needed, and escort your child to the classroom.

For pick up, we will use our pick up loop as in the past. The students will be gathered by the glass doors at dismissal time and the teachers will help get students to their cars. We ask that you enter the property using the entrance closest to the Rectory (lower entrance). We will walk students to their cars after you pull up to the pavement in front of the glass doors a few cars at a time. We will then hand them to you to buckle them in. A teacher will bring the sign out sheet to your car with your child. If the routine for your child's pick up is changed, we will need a signed note from the parent and will need to see an ID from the driver.

Please try to have your child to school on time each day (by 8:30 for AM classes or by 12:00 for PM classes), so they may take full advantage of the entire preschool program. The doors will be locked ten minutes after school begins. If you need to obtain access to the school and the doors are locked, please use the Ring doorbell or call the school phone line (859-344-7040) or come around to the back of the building nearest the rectory and someone will let you in. We all know that with children, it can be difficult to always arrive on time! If you are running late, please call and let us know.

The teachers' time is important as well. The teachers need time in the mornings to prepare and they have families to get home to in the afternoons. Please make sure you are not picking your child up later than 10 minutes after school ends on a regular basis. If this becomes a problem, St. Patrick Catholic Preschool will charge those families for the extra time their child is in our care.

Late Start/Early Dismissal

In case of severe weather, we may need to start our days late, dismiss early, or close. We will go with Kenton County's decision when the weather is bad. For AM classes, if Kenton County is on an hour delay, school will begin at 9:30 A.M. and end at our regular time. In the case of an hour delay, PM class times will not change. If Kenton County is on a 2 hour delay, AM class will be cancelled but PM class will be in session at regular time. If Kenton County is closed, we will also be closed.

Emergency Procedures

We have regular fire and disaster drills at school. The children are taught to listen to the teachers' directions.

In the event of a true emergency, we will assemble and count everyone and give aid and comfort as needed. Parents will be notified by phone. We will stay with your child until you or someone of your choice is

present to take them home. All of our staff are trained in first aid and CPR.

Child Safety Issues

Staff members are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect. All staff members and volunteers fulfill all the requirements of the Diocese of Covington regarding the safety and protection of children. This includes remaining in compliance with the Virtus program and a background check.

Snacks

St. Patrick Catholic Preschool will provide a nutritious snack for the children midway through the school day. Please be sure that your child eats a healthy breakfast or lunch so that he/she will not be hungry before snack time. We do have children with food allergies so all snacks sent in must be store bought with the ingredients listed. **Please avoid snacks containing nuts.**

Possessions from Home

Toys from home are your child's link between home and school. Children may want and need the security of something of their own to help the transition from home to school. We will allow your child to have that item during arrival time, but once we begin our morning, we will encourage the child to place the item in their backpack for safe keeping. Please limit items from home to one small cuddly item.

Discipline and Guidance

As parents, most of us strive to raise a child that is a spiritual, creative, independent, responsible, self-disciplined and socially mature human being. However, those are learned skills which require much guidance. Often the younger the child, the more guidance is needed. Guidance is a positive term that implies that we work with the child to develop internal control for his/her behavior. Guidance, therefore, takes several forms in our preschool.

1. The environment is a place designed for children. The furniture is child-sized and all toys and manipulatives are age-appropriate for lots of hands-on-experience.
2. We apply logical rules such as keeping our hands to ourselves and taking care of our learning environment.

3. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate, based on the child's interests and level of readiness, yet also challenges the child to grow.
4. Redirection is used. By encouraging a child to choose another activity, we can often eliminate conflict.
5. We use positive reinforcement and praise children for following the rules. We tell the child what we would like him/her to do or how we would like him/her to behave instead of using “no” or “don’t”.

However, all children will make mistakes and will misbehave from time to time. When this occurs we will:

- Redirect the child to a different activity.
- Role play a situation so that the child can practice the language of social behavior and learn to express their needs, wants, feelings, etc.
- Move the child closer to a teacher so the teacher can help the child make good choices.

If more drastic behavior occurs, such as and not limited to: biting, hitting, kicking, spitting, swearing, or hurting others, a child will be removed from that activity. If a child has repeated drastic behaviors a conference will be scheduled with the parents/guardians to work out a plan that benefits the child and all the preschool children.

Discharge Policy

St. Patrick Catholic Preschool reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments.
- Not observing the rules of the preschool.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse to our staff or other students by parent or child.

Clothing

Children should dress comfortably, simply, and suitably for the weather. **Students should wear shoes with backs every day they come to school for safety reasons.** We do engage in a number of “messy” activities that can get clothes dirty. We do not want to inhibit the

children unnecessarily, so we ask you to send them in something that you are comfortable having them play in and possibly get “dirty” in. Please remember that we will be playing outside, weather permitting. Please dress your child or send clothing to accommodate these weather changes. Since we are in the basement, it is often cold. If you can send in a light jacket or sweater that your child can put on or take off, your child may stay more comfortable. Please do your best to label any clothing your child may remove at school (coats, sweaters, etc.)

A change of clothing (including underwear and socks) should always be in your child’s backpack in case of a spill or accident. This clothing should be placed in a large plastic bag marked with your child’s name and the soiled clothing will be placed back in a plastic bag in their backpack. We will send home a notice, so you are aware of the soiled clothing. Thank you for your cooperation!

School Supplies

A school supply list will be distributed to each family. Please make sure to send all supplies with your child by the end of September.

Medications

Medications can be given when parents/guardians have given written consent. Medications must be in original containers marked with the child’s name, dosage and directions. Since the children are at school for a limited amount of time, it is preferred that you schedule medications to be taken under your supervision.

Illness

Each family is required to do a health assessment including temperature check before bringing your child to school. You are the best judge of your child’s health and we trust you will not bring a sick child to school. However, if in the opinion of the teaching staff your child is sick, we will call you to come and pick-up your child. The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Communicable disease
- Unknown rash
- Persistent pain or discomfort

If your child has been sent home due to illness or is ill, he/she cannot return to preschool until he/she has been symptom free for 24 hours. This is to allow ample time to recover and stop the spread of illness to the other children.

It is your responsibility to notify us if your child has a communicable disease, such as: measles, mumps, chicken pox, head lice, strep throat, pink eye, etc. or has been exposed to someone who tested positive for Covid-19. All parents will be notified when a communicable disease is going around.

Please do call or email and let us know if your child will be absent. We worry!

Birthdays

Birthday treats are optional and do not need to follow the healthy food guidelines. We will try to work our snack schedule around birthdays, so please let us know if you will be sending in a special treat for your child's birthday. Please make sure these treats are individually wrapped and will create a minimal mess **(no cakes that need to be cut here at school and no cupcakes, please.)** All treats must be store bought with ingredients listed. Please check labels to eliminate items containing nuts. **We have children with sever allergies to nuts this year.**

The class will sing Happy Birthday to your child unless you ask us not to celebrate your child's birthday. If your child has a summer birthday we will strive to celebrate his/her half birthday. If you are planning a party away from school, we will gladly place the invitations in the folders.

Classroom Parties

Families and siblings are invited to our classroom parties. We encourage you to send someone to enjoy the party with your child: a parent, grandparent or babysitter. We plan crafts, activities and snacks that often need adult assistance. If someone is unable to come to celebrate with your child, a teacher will do the activities with him/her.