



**Saint Theresa**  
**Little Flower Early Childhood**  
**Center**

**PRESCHOOL, TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN &  
PRE-KINDERGARTEN  
CDC #14970**

**Parent Handbook  
2024/2025**

# **Saint Theresa** **Little Flower Early Childhood Center**

**PRESCHOOL, TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN &  
PRE-KINDERGARTEN**

**5001 EAST THOMAS ROAD  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85018**

**SCHOOL TELEPHONE: 602.840.0010 ext 200**

**SCHOOL FAX: 602.840.8323**

**WEBSITE: [www.stcs.us](http://www.stcs.us)**

School Hours from 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday  
and 8 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. on Fridays and Early Release Days.

Extended Care is contracted through Innovation Learning:  
After School - 3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

**PRINCIPAL: Mrs. Mary Pivonka**

[Mpivonka@stcs.us](mailto:Mpivonka@stcs.us)

**ECC DIRECTOR: Mrs. Erin Fitzgerald**

[Efitzgerald@stcs.us](mailto:Efitzgerald@stcs.us)

**REGISTRAR, TUITION AND SCHOLARSHIP COORDINATOR: Mrs. Kathleen Peterson**

[Kpeterson@stcs.us](mailto:Kpeterson@stcs.us)

**ADMISSIONS COORDINATOR: Mrs. Adrienne Reese**

[Areese@stcs.us](mailto:Areese@stcs.us)

**HEALTH & WELLNESS COORDINATOR: Mrs. Beth Rons**

[Brons@stcs.us](mailto:Brons@stcs.us)

Saint Theresa Little Flower Early Childhood Center is licensed by the State of Arizona  
Department of Health Services, Bureau of Child Care Licensing.

All inquiries may be made at the following address or telephone numbers:

Arizona Department of Health Services

Division of Licensing Services

Bureau of Child Care Licensing

150 N. 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 400

Phoenix AZ 85007-3244

602.364-2539, FAX: 602.364-4768

WEB SITE: [www.azdhs.gov](http://www.azdhs.gov)

Please refer to CDC # 14970 (Saint Theresa Little Flower Early Childcare Center, Phoenix)

## MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Theresa Catholic Parish and School exists to form missionary disciples through the three pillars of **FAMILY, FAITH, and FORMATION**.

- **FAMILY:** We desire to have a school that is an extension of the child's home. A sense of community is valued on campus, not just in individual classes, but through our interactions with one another. We offer opportunities for parents to be on campus throughout the year at school events, volunteer opportunities, and parent lectures series.
- **FAITH:** God is the center of our lives as Catholics. Not only is our faith a common thread throughout our curriculum, but we also offer opportunities to be an active Catholic, attending Mass once a week, weekly Adoration, Opening and Closing Prayer, as well as opportunities to celebrate the liturgical year, pray the Rosary, and celebrate Saint Feast Days.
- **FORMATION:** As a Catholic community, we seek to form students spiritually, academically, and socially. We aim to guide students to be self-aware, self-disciplined, and responsible. We want to impart to them a Catholic worldview through a love of learning. All our formation is done through God on behalf of parents.

## PHILOSOPHY

To provide quality Catholic education in a faith-filled environment, serving the community as one family in the Body of Christ. We view early childhood education as being the development of the whole child, and we are committed to offering opportunities for balanced growth in all areas: social, emotional, cognitive, physical, creative, and spiritual. Based on our understanding that children learn through play, daily routines encourage active involvement, meaningful experimentation, and positive reinforcement.

Recognizing that the central purpose of St. Theresa Preschool is to become ever more deeply a Eucharistic Community, the preschool will assist young children, their families, and the entire parish community in exploring the meaning of the Eucharist, and to serve others with the love of Christ.

## GRACE

As a Catholic we are called to help form our students and model a strong relationship with Christ. These simple yet meaningful habits help to strengthen our faith as Catholics and our relationship with God. We invite our families to participate in these activities together:

- G-** Go to Mass: Attend Mass each Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation.
- R-** Receive Mercy: Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) every other month.
- A** – Ask your Mother: Pray the Rosary weekly or a decade daily.
- C-** Capture the ends of the day: Pray morning and evening, offering prayers daily.
- E-** Expect Great Things!

## **PROGRAM**

The Saint Theresa Little Flower Early Childhood Center offers a variety of options for our little learners. *Students must be 2.5 years of age before the start of school and potty trained for Preschool (and 4 years of age before the start of school for Transitional Kindergarten and Pre-kindergarten).*

- Preschool students (2.5 - 3 years olds) may opt to attend ½ day or full day 3 days or 5 days a week.
- PreK (4 year olds) and TK (4 -5 year olds) attend full day M-F. Both Pre-K and TK feed into Kindergarten, unless an additional year is needed after Pre-K. Admission to Kindergarten is based on the Kindergarten developmental screening and teacher recommendation.

## **ADMISSION**

All new students applying to Saint Theresa Catholic School are asked to complete and submit the following prior to the admittance process:

1. Application Form and Fee
2. Copy of Birth Certificate
3. Original Baptismal Certificate (if baptized)
4. Current Immunization Record and Health Form
5. Enrollment Form and Fee (after application has been accepted)

## **TOILET TRAINING POLICY**

**All children must be toilet trained by the first day of school. Each child must know when he/she needs to use the toilet and do so on his/her own. Pull-up style disposable training pants are considered diapers. In the event of repeated accidents, we will ask that the child not return to school until they are able to demonstrate self-sufficiency. Tuition will continue to be charged during this grace period. If a child cannot display self-sufficiency upon returning, the child will be withdrawn from the program. St. Theresa's staff will address all issues on an individual basis.**

## **CURRICULUM - LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

Saint Theresa Little Flower Early Childhood Center provides a developmentally appropriate, play based learning curriculum and follows guidelines provided by the Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Schools Office. We foster a child's love of learning by instilling activities and lessons that encourage development of the whole child. This includes: spiritual, cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth in a spirit of gospel values.

### **Religion – Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd – sometimes referred to as “Atrium” class – is a Montessori-based religious education experience which was begun in Rome in 1954. Its primary aim is to provide each child with personal time and reflective opportunity to encounter God through contemplative “works.” Materials are very hands-on. The class is not taught, per se, but rather facilitated by catechists who have received specialized education and training in the method unique to the program. In the Atrium, each child is free to explore, reflect, and discover God in his or her own way. Seeds are planted along the way, but it is the Holy Spirit that nurtures and directs their growth.

**Social/ Emotional** – Children will learn skills necessary for positive, Christ-like interactions with others such as identification of feelings, developmentally appropriate problem solving skills, empathy for others, cooperation, independence, and self care.

**Language and Literacy** – Children will develop early reading, writing and verbal skills that enable the child to share their world with others, while enjoying stories, classic nursery rhymes, poems, and parables of Christ's life through creative lessons and activities connected to weekly lesson themes and built on the alphabetic principle. Heggerty Phonics is used in Pre-K and T-K as part of the phonics curriculum.

**Mathematics** – Children will develop cognitive skills and explore numbers related to counting, one-to-one correspondence, cardinality, sequencing, comparison, patterns, sorting, classifying, data analysis, nonstandard units of measurement, spatial reasoning, and basic addition and subtraction concepts.

**Science** – Children will observe, discover and experience the wonder of God's creations through His gift of our senses therefore promoting the child's inquiry and exploration.

**Social Studies** – Children will experience a sense of belonging to a community including our Catholic community, while learning how to respect and care for self, others, and the world which God has gifted us with.

**Physical Development, Health and Safety** – Children will develop fine and gross motor skills, self care habits, and identify the importance of following rules for safety and prevention of injury.

**Creative Art Experiences** –Children will express their creativity through the use of a variety of tools and techniques including teacher directed lessons and independently created pieces.

**Music** – Children will appreciate music through learning songs and prayer filled hymns by listening, singing, dancing and movement, rhythm skills, and instruments.

**Physical Education** – Children will develop large motor skills through physical activities that promote health, wellness, and cooperation with others.

**Spanish** - Children will be introduced to simple, spanish words and phrases. This will include: colors, days of the week, numbers, months, and simple songs.

### **TUITION AND FEES**

#### **Preschool 2.5 and 3's**

Full Day M-F           \$9,750

Full Day M, W, F      \$6,600

½ Day M-F             \$6,950

½ Day M, W, F        \$5,400

#### **PreKindergarten (PK) Transitional Kindergarten (TK)**

Full Day M-F           \$9,850

Registration fees and tuition are set for the following year in the spring.

All tuition payments will be made through FACTS beginning on August 5 and are due each month for 10 months, semi-annually (August 5 and January 5), or paid in full by August 5. An additional fee of \$30 will be charged to your account for returned payments due to insufficient funds. Extended Care, used uniforms, etc., fees will be posted to your FACTS account.

### **CLASS SIZE**

#### **Age Group**

#### **Staff:Children**

Preschool 2.5 and 3 year old

1:8 for 2.5 and 1:13 for 3 year olds

Pre-K 4 year olds

1:15

Transitional Kindergarten 5 year olds

1:15

## **CLASS HOURS**

Classroom doors open at 7:55 a.m. Class will begin promptly at 8:10 am.

Students enrolled in **half day preschool** (3 year olds only), dismissal is at noon daily.

Students enrolled in **full day Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten or Transitional Kindergarten**, dismissal will be promptly at 2:45 pm, Monday - Thursday and every Friday at 12:20 p.m. after Closing Prayer. Periodically there will be half days with a noon dismissal.

If a child arrives after 8:05 a.m., a parent or responsible adult must obtain a **Tardy Pass from the School Office** and return it to the teacher. The student will then be marked tardy.

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Before and after school Little Flower ECC parents may park in the north lot off of Thomas Rd. The pedestrian gate will be unlocked at 7:50 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. If you need to enter campus during the school day, please press the call button on the pin-pad near the gate to be buzzed in, then proceed to the STCS front office to sign in.

Students will be dropped off at the classroom door, and pick-up will be at the classroom door only for Preschool and T-K, and outside the ECC gate for Pre-K 1 and 2. Upon arrival and dismissal the parent is required to sign the child in/out in the classroom log book. The Arizona State Department of Health requires the signature for both *drop off* (sign-in) and *pick up* (sign-out) and must include the ***first initial and full last name*** of the person checking in the student. The time of the check-in/out is also required.

If someone other than the parent is picking up the child, *including an older sibling*, a dated and signed note must be received by the teacher before dismissal, giving the name of the person picking up that child. ***This person should be listed on the blue Emergency Information and Immunization Record Card in the authorized individuals to collect the child if the parent cannot be contacted . Preschool staff will not allow a child to go home with any person other than the parent or the adult that has been authorized by parents.***

If prior notice was not given, staff is directed to call parents for authorization. ID will be required to show at the door before the child is dismissed. Parents must be on time to pick the children up at the end of class. If an emergency situation arises, Extended Care is available from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This service does require an enrollment application before the student's first date of attendance.

**Please do not send toys to school.** If a toy is lost or broken at school, it may be very upsetting for the child. There will be days when the teacher(s) will have “Show and Tell.” At that time, your child may bring toys as part of the academic program. If a book is brought to school please put the child’s name on the book.

### **REPORTING AN ABSENCE**

A parent must notify the school front office, **and** the child’s teacher or preschool director, if their child will be absent or tardy. The school can be reached at the number on the front page or email your child’s teacher.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

Transportation is not provided for children in our Early Childhood Center.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

The Little Flower Preschool students will not participate in off campus field trips. We do have outside vendors visit the school such as the Wildlife Zoo, Arizona Puppet Theater and The Phoenix Library. Parents will be notified in advance of upcoming events.

### **SNACKS AND LUNCHES**

Students will need to come to school everyday with a **water bottle, healthy snack, and lunch.** Drinking water is available in the classroom and water bottles will be filled as necessary. A healthy snack which includes two of the following: protein, dairy, grain, and fruit or vegetable. When providing your child a healthy lunch it should include a protein, dairy, grain, and fruit or vegetable. Lunch will be eaten in classrooms, or, weather permitting, outside.

Please send prepared food that does not require refrigeration (ice pack suggested), microwaving, cutting, or difficult peeling. Please limit sugar in the lunches. Candy, soda and chocolate milk are NOT allowed as stated in the Diocese of Phoenix School Wellness Policy (details below).

Purchased lunch is available for a fee from the school’s lunch vendor. Remember that good nutrition enhances learning.

Saint Theresa Catholic School and Little Flower ECC abide by the Wellness Policy of the Diocese of Phoenix and the Arizona Department of Health Services. We are a licensed child care center that is enrolled in the Empower Program implemented by the state. If sending juice in your child’s lunch, it is imperative that parents send 100% fruit juice. Flavored water drinks with lower sugar that show water as the first ingredient are acceptable.



## **UNIFORMS**

New uniforms can be purchased at [Anton Uniform](https://antonuniforms.com/) at <https://antonuniforms.com/>. Used uniforms can be purchased at numerous PTO events or through the main office. Used uniforms are \$5 each.

Shoes are to be athletic-type (tie or Velcro) playground safe shoes of any color. Neon colors are not allowed. Closed-toe and heel shoes must be worn at all times. Shoes with flashing lights, sandals, flip-flops, crocs, or boots are not permitted at any time. Socks must be worn at all times.

**An extra set of clothes should be available in your child's backpack in case of a bathroom accident. The items should include a full uniform, change of underwear, and socks. If an accident occurs the parent will be made aware and a fresh change of clothing should be sent in the next day. \*\*Please write your child's name on all clothing.**

## **Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten and TK**

### **GIRLS**

- Saint Theresa Unisex Polo - Short/Long Sleeve with School Crest/Logo
- Saint Theresa Plaid Jumper or Skirt  
(Saint Theresa Girl Bike Shorts or Black Mesh Gym Shorts are required underneath)
- Unisex Youth Elastic Short (Navy Twill)
- Saint Theresa Jersey Polo Dress with School Crest/Logo
- Girls Tights (Black or White) or Girls Socks (Black or White)
- Shoes - Primarily black, white, or gray sneakers.

### **BOYS**

- Saint Theresa Unisex Polo - Short/Long Sleeve with School Crest/Logo
- Elastic or Flat Front Shorts or Pants (Navy Twill)
- Boys Socks (Black or White)
- Shoes - Primarily black, white, or gray sneakers.

## **FREE DRESS DAYS**

Students are required to follow the dress code on free dress days. Students are permitted to wear free dress on their birthdays. If their birthday falls on a Mass day, we ask that they wear their free dress on the day before or after. Athletic shoes must be worn.

## **DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES**

Saint Theresa Little Flower Preschool follows the same disciplinary procedure along with the larger Saint Theresa Catholic School community. Discipline With Purpose (DWP) is a developmental approach to teaching children to be self-disciplined.

Refer to our STCS Student/Parent Handbook for a detailed description of DWP. Along with the DWP lessons, teachers are to model cooperative behavior and use kind language with others. Classroom instruction will also provide students with problem solving strategies and self regulation tools to foster strong social- emotional skills.

### **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are invited to participate in many activities throughout the year. In order to do so, parents must undergo our Diocese of Phoenix Safe Environment Training (SET). This training is provided throughout the year at a number of locations as well as Saint Theresa Catholic School at the beginning of the school year. Parents of Saint Theresa Catholic School students are reminded to first complete the *Foundation Training*, and then yearly renew their training. Information on the Diocesan requirements can be found at: <http://websites.web4uonline.com/editor/main.php#/>

For additional information, please contact Mrs. Beth Rons, Saint Theresa Catholic School's SET Coordinator, at (602) 840-0010 extn. 118 or by email at [brons@stcs.us](mailto:brons@stcs.us). If you are *renewing* your SET compliance (due each year on July 1) please follow these instructions: [Renewal Instructions](#). Thank you for your commitment to our student's safety. A list of scheduled events will be provided at the beginning of the school year by the child's teacher.

### **PROGRESS REPORTS**

The following grading scale is used to indicate the level of achievement in individual skills within each subject area:

**Mastering-** does not need teacher's support

**Developing-** requires some support from teacher

**Emerging-** still required a lot of support from teacher

### **WITHDRAWAL**

Parents of students transferring to another school are to notify the admissions coordinator of their child's withdrawal. Before records will be forwarded to a new school or refunds given, the following is to be completed. The school requests the parent to:

- Return any school property
- Pay all fees and tuition, if there is a balance due
- Complete an exit interview
- Complete a withdrawal form

### **EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE AND CRISIS PLAN**

Fire and/or emergency lock down drills are held every month. Exit directions are posted in the classrooms. No one may remain in the building during a fire drill. Immediate evacuation of the building must begin when the fire signal sounds. Students are to leave the room quickly and

silently in a single file. Students will remain outside with their teachers until the all clear signal is given.

For any other emergencies, the children must follow the directives of the teacher. Saint Theresa Catholic School has a Crisis Plan under separate cover that dictates procedures followed in emergencies. Attempts will be made to notify all parents in the event an evacuation is necessary.

### **STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Any student enrolled in a Diocese of Phoenix, Preschool, Kindergarten, Elementary or Secondary School (including Saint Theresa Little Flower Preschool and Extended Care) will be provided accident insurance while on school grounds when school is in session, while taking part in a school-sponsored and supervised activity, or while attending school-sponsored and supervised religious services or instruction.

If a student suffers a covered “accidental injury,” he/she will be eligible for benefits by completing the proper claim documentation which will be available in the school office. Our insurance is provided by Catholic Mutual Insurance who also provides liability insurance. Their address is as follows:

The Catholic Mutual Insurance  
Roman Catholic Diocese of Phoenix  
400 East Monroe Street  
Phoenix AZ 85008

### **PEST CONTROL**

The pest control company applies pesticides to the entire school and parish campus on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of each month. Extermination notification is posted 48 hours prior to application near the school office, at the entrances to the Preschool classrooms and the east entrances of the school. Chemicals used information is available in the School Office.

All inspection reports are available for review upon request. Please see the Preschool Director or individual designated to act on behalf of the director.

### **MEDICAL ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES**

The Little Flower ECC follows the guidelines for the administration of medications as directed by the State of Arizona Health Services, Bureau of Child Care Licensure and the Child Care Facility Rules and Regulations in addition to the guidelines in the STCS Student/Parent Handbook. It is required that a student complete a state required medication consent form that gives permission for an authorized staff member to administer medications to students, including a signed doctor’s authorization for injections. In the case of rescue medications, ie. Epi-pens, inhalers,

antihistamines, left in the Health Care office, parents will be required to supply a second set for Preschool. All medication, which includes but is not limited to, sunscreen, lotions, antibiotic or anti-itch cream are administered by the authorized staff member. During Extended Care hours, the Program Director will administer medications. All medications (prescription and over-the-counter) must be in their original container with the child's name on the packaging.

### **IMMUNIZATIONS**

Arizona Law (Arizona Administrative Code, Title 9, Chapter 6, Article 7, and Vaccine Preventable Disease) requires that all students be immunized against certain diseases before entering school. Your child's health care professional is aware of these requirements, or you may contact the school nurse for further information. Students who cannot produce immunization records, except those who cannot be immunized for health or religious reasons, will not be allowed to remain in school. If your child is to be exempt from the immunization requirements, a form must be signed and returned to the school. A doctor's signature is required if the exemption is for medical reasons.

In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease for which you cannot provide proof of immunity for your child, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the risk period ends.

### **EXTENDED CARE (OPTIONAL)**

Extended Care and Preschool services are licensed and meet all standards established by the State of Arizona Health Services, Bureau of Child Care Licensure, and the Child Care Facility Rules and Regulations Bureau of Health Services, Child Care Facilities.

### **BEFORE SCHOOL CARE (Morning Care)**

Morning Care is offered from 7 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. Parents may enroll students in the Morning Care program on the first day of use. Due to the increase in minimum wage requirements, the Morning Care program will follow the following fee schedule:

- Daily Rate (any part of the time from 7 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.) is \$5.00.
- Weekly Rate (for any 5-day week) is \$20.00.

Signing in students to Morning Care will result in a charge billed through the student's FACTS agreement and account.

### **AFTER SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM**

Serving students from preschool through eighth grade. The program includes:

- Bridge Hour (3 p.m.–4 p.m.)
- PM Program (3 p.m.–6 p.m.)
- Early Dismissal Fridays (1:30 p.m.–6 p.m.)

Saint Theresa's after school care is provided by Innovation Learning. A parent link for online registration is found on the school's website.

***PLEASE NOTE: Children who are sick will not be allowed to stay at Extended Care.***



## **SAINT THERESA LITTLE FLOWER PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

This handbook attempts to address all issues concerning the educational welfare of our students and the good order of our school. However, the pastor, principal, and director reserve the right to amend this handbook for just cause or to make final decisions for the betterment of the school. All parents or guardians of students attending Saint Theresa Catholic School must sign the agreement below and submit it to the homeroom teacher.

In agreement:

I have read, understand, and agree to cooperate and support the policies and guidelines set forth in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature