

ST. THOMAS MORE

CATHOLIC SCHOOL

& PAWPRINTS PRESCHOOL

A School of the Omaha Catholic School Consortium

3515 South 48th Avenue Omaha, NE 68106

Phone (402)551-9504 / Fax (402)551-9507

School Website: stmbengals.org

Principal: Mr. Gary D. Davis

Preschool Director: Tamyra Hower

Preschool Extended Care Director: Dianna McCormick



PAWPRINTS PRESCHOOL

2023-2024

Parent Handbook

Program Philosophy

Researchers have found that if we really want to enhance children's readiness to succeed in school, then we must pay as much attention to their emotional health and social competence as we do to their cognitive abilities and academic skills (Shonkoff, 2005). At St. Thomas More Pawprints Preschool we believe in providing a safe and structured preschool environment that will direct needed attention to your child's development in all of these critical areas:

Spirituality... by sharing with your child the knowledge of God as our Creator and the life and love of Jesus Christ through biblical teachings and song we hope to contribute to their spiritual development.

Emotionally... by providing needed reassurance and guidance we help your child learn to respond appropriately to life's joys and disappointments in a nurturing environment.

Socially... by providing the opportunity for children to interact with children their own age and with caring adult care providers they may play and learn together while they develop self-caring skills and responsibility.

Cognitively... by stimulating each child so that they may think critically, problem solve, and reason.

Physically... by offering activities that help each child develop large and small motor coordination.

Discipline Philosophy

Pawprints Preschool staff use a combination of discipline methods in our classrooms. We use a program called Love and Logic which helps to guide and encourage our students through natural consequences to use appropriate behaviors and positive social skills. We also use the Girls and Boys Town discipline educational model known as The Well-Managed Classroom. This discipline model provides instruction for strong, positive teacher-student and peer relationships, instructional methods that motivate students, management techniques that maximize students' on-task behaviors and problem solving, and behavior management techniques that empower students to responsibly manage their behavior.

Teaching social skills is imperative if we are committed to helping students achieve success in school and beyond. By giving students the basic tools for self-discipline and positive social interaction, we are shaping their success experiences in the classroom, with their peers, and in future employment experiences.

If we have a child who is struggling with self-discipline and is therefore creating an environment where children do not feel they are in a safe learning environment, we will work together with the child and their parents to work towards success. Our main goal is to have a classroom environment where children feel they are safe to enjoy learning. **A child's enrollment may be terminated at any given period of time per the Director's discretion.**

Enrollment Procedures

To be eligible to enroll in the preschool, your child must turn three by July 31st of the respective school year and *must* be completely potty trained. Registration begins online at stmbengals.org. A \$150.00 registration fee and the child's immunization records must be submitted to the school office. You may call the office and pay the registration fee with a credit or debit card. There is a 3% fee to pay with a credit card, and no fee to use a debit card. **Please drop off immunizations at the school office or email them to thower@omahacsc.org.** Approximately three weeks after registering online, and submitting your registration fee and immunizations, you will receive an invitation from FACTS to set up your online payment plan. Please be sure to check your spam mail if you have not received an email from FACTS. Once all steps in this process are complete the Director will then notify you of acceptance into the program.

Age Requirements

To be eligible to enroll in the three-year-old class, your child must turn three by July 31st of the respective school year. Four-year-olds must turn four by July 31st of their respective school year.

Tuition

The following rates apply for the 2023/2024 school year:

CLASSES OFFERED AND FEES

- ❖ **STM Pawprints Preschool** offers morning **half day** sessions for 3-year-olds, and for 4/5's from 8:00-11:00 a.m.

Tuition Fees:

Preschool Tues/Thurs Morning Classes for 3's	\$1,400/year
Prekindergarten Mon/Wed/ Fri Morning Classes for 4's & 5's	\$1,780 /year
Prekindergarten Mon-Fri Morning Classes for 4's & 5's	\$2,565/year

- ❖ **STM Pawprints Preschool** offers **all day** sessions for 3-year-olds, and for 4/5's from 8:00a.m.-3:00pm.

Tuition Fees:

Preschool Tues/Thurs All Day Classes for 3's	\$2,200/year
Preschool Mon/Wed/Fri All Day Classes for 3's	\$3,080 /year
Preschool Mon-Fri All Day Classes for 3's	\$4,860/year
Prekindergarten Mon/Wed/Fri All Day Classes for 4's & 5's	\$3,080/year
Prekindergarten Mon-Fri All Day Classes for 4's & 5's	\$4,860/year

A one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$150 is due at the time of registration each year.

Tuition will be collected through an automatic bank transfer. Families enrolling in the preschool/prekindergarten program will need to enroll in FACTS to set up their account and will receive an email from FACTS approximately two to three weeks after online registration and payment of the \$150 registration fee is complete. Students will not be considered registered until these steps are complete. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Omaha Catholic School Consortium at (402)590-2810.

A pay in full discount of \$150 per family is offered for preschool and prekindergarten tuition paid in full by August 1, 2023.

Enrollment is on a first come first served basis. Class sizes are limited to 20 students in the four and five year old classes, and 12 to 14 students in the three year old classes.

A child's enrollment may be terminated at any given period of time per the Director's discretion due to delinquent tuition payments.

Baptismal Certificate

If your child has been baptized, please submit a copy of their baptismal certificate to the school office at the time of registration, or on or before sneak a peek.

Birth Certificate

Please bring your child's **original** birth certificate to the school office at the time of registration, or on or before sneak a peek. We will take a photocopy to file at that time.

Arrival & Pickup

Dropping Off Students

Drop off will be from 7:40- 7:55 a.m. Parents will be required to pre-screen students before coming to school. If the student has a temperature of 100.4° or higher they will not be able to come to school.

We would like our Prekindergarten families to drop their children off at Station #1. For Station #1, all cars enter the parking lot from 48th Street by the Bell Tower and exit going east on Grover.

One of our preschool/prek staff members will help your child out of the car and will walk them in to their class. If your child is not ready to exit the car when you pull up, please just circle around and go back through the line.

This way other students can still pull up and get to class.

If your family is assigned to drop off at another station and you would like to have an older sibling walk your preschool/prekindergarten student to their class you are welcome to do so and go through your assigned station.

Due to the layout, cars will not be able to enter from “A” Street or traveling from the south on 48th St. Families who carpool should use the station assigned to the family that is driving.

Picking Up of Morning Students at 11:00 a.m.

School recesses will be in session at our 11:00 a.m. dismissal time. To insure the safety of all of our school children, preschool/prekindergarten families picking up a child at 11:00 a.m. will need to park on 48th St. and then wait at the West side of the church until we bring your child outside. Please do not visit with any children who are out at recess. In the case of inclement weather, if there are no children on the playground, we will remove a cone so that you can pull up into the parking lot to pick up your child.

Picking Up of Students at End of Day

The preschool and prekindergarten classes dismiss from the school’s front doors (by the yellow bench) at 3:00 p.m. Parents should plan to spread out using as much of the available parking areas along 48th St., 48th Ave. and B Streets. Please wait at the West side of the church until we bring your child outside.

Important Parking Note

The small parking lot on the North side of the school is for staff parking and for church adorers only.

Restroom Readiness

Please have your child use the restroom prior to coming to school. We would like for all boys to be familiar with using a urinal as well as a regular toilet. The bathroom available for preschool age boys has only one toilet and they may have to wait in line if they aren’t used to using the urinal.

Classroom Rules

The following rules were developed with the help of our past preschool students. Students will be expected to follow them on a daily basis.

- Listen politely
- Clean up
- Treat others nicely
- Use your manners
- Do neat work

Dress Code

Our school uniforms may be purchased at Dennis Uniform 726-740 N. 109th Ct. Omaha, NE 68154, Phone 408-496-9911 or at DiGiorgio’s Sportswear 14111 Q Street Omaha, NE 68137 Phone 402-894-5627. While uniform shirts, shorts, and pants do not have to be purchased at these stores, they must be of the same style. They are the only stores where the school skirts, skorts, and sweaters may be purchased. Both vendors will place a permanent school monogram of the St. Thomas More logo on any white or navy uniform polo shirt for a small fee. The school encourages students to proudly wear their school logo on their uniform shirts. In adherence to our philosophy, proper dress will enhance the learning environment. Personal appearance, cleanliness and hygiene should reflect an attitude of self-worth and school pride on the part of the student. It is the parents’ responsibility to know and ensure their students follow the uniform code for students

in Pre-School through the eighth grades. Students who are out of uniform will receive demerits and/or may lose privileges. This may include not being eligible for Spirit Days / dress down days.

Young Ladies The uniform for preschool and prekindergarten girls is the Campbell plaid shift/jumper. Shifts/jumpers must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee. Girls may wear navy uniform pants in place of the plaid shift. (Pants must be similar to those sold by Dennis Uniform—no cargo, corduroy, wind pants, leggings, ankle, capri, etc.). If blouses are worn, they are to be long or short sleeved, tailored, and collared. Navy or white knit/polo shirts may be worn as long as they meet the same standard (no non-school logos). Shirts must be tucked in at the waist. No t-shirts with writing or designs that show through the shirts are allowed.

Young Men The uniform for preschool and prekindergarten boys is solid navy slacks/uniform pants. (Uniform pants must be similar to those sold by Dennis Uniform—**no cargo, corduroy, wind pants, etc.**) Shirts are to be long or short sleeved, tailored, and collared. Navy or white knit (polo) shirts may be worn as long as they meet the same standard (no non-school logos). Shirts must be tucked in at the waist. T-shirts with writing or designs that show through the shirts are not allowed.

Shorts Uniform navy walking shorts may be worn by students from **the beginning of the school year until October 15 and from April 15th to the end of the year**, in addition to other times as determined by the administration. Shorts should be knee length. Shorts must be similar to those sold by Dennis Uniform—no cargo, corduroy, nylon, etc. Shorts are to be worn with uniform blouses/shirts.

Sweaters/Sweatshirts A navy cardigan sweater with the St. Thomas More crest emblem worn with a white or navy collared shirt underneath may be purchased from Dennis Uniform or at DiGiorgio's Sportswear. You may also purchase a grey ¼ zipped pullover sweatshirt with the St. Thomas More logo that may be purchased only from DiGiorgio's Sportswear. This also must be worn with a white or navy collared shirt underneath. We advise parents to have a uniform sweater or ¼ zipped uniform sweatshirt for their student. **This is the only sweater or sweatshirt that may be worn as part of the school uniform. Students are not allowed to wear nonuniform sweatshirts, coats, or hoodies on uniform days in the school building.** Please be sure to write your child's name on the tag of their sweater or sweatshirt.

Socks Socks are to be **plain with no logos** in white, gray, navy, or black. Girls may wear tights or leggings with their jumper in the same colors only. Socks that are visible from the top of the shoe must be worn at all times.

Shoes Preschool/Prekindergarten students must wear athletic/tennis shoes. They must be neat, clean and in good condition. Shoes with laces must be properly tied. Please avoid wearing dark soled shoes that leave marks on our floors. During cold and/or wet weather, appropriate boots should be worn for recess; however, no boots may be worn in the classrooms. Shoes must have a solid sole and cover the entire foot - no sandal type shoes may be worn.

Extra Clothes Accidents do happen, so please keep an extra uniform (season appropriate) in your child's backpack. Clothes need to be sealed in a Ziploc bag marked with your child's full name. Each item inside of the bag should have your child's name on it as well. Please be sure to include a shirt, navy pants or shorts, socks, and underwear.

Hair Hairstyles must be simple and not obstruct students' vision. Our uniform vendors sell girls bows and headbands that match our school uniform. Hair must be kept neat and clean. If a style or hair coloration causes a disruption in the learning environment as determined by the principal, it is considered inappropriate. Boy's hair must not cover their eyes and must be above the collar. The Principal will provide final determination of questionable hairstyles/color.

Fingernails Finger nails are to be kept clean and cut to a reasonable length. Girls may wear only clear or very light undetectable nail polish. Black, dark, or bright nail polish is not allowed.

Jewelry Jewelry should be kept simple and appropriate. Dangling earrings are not allowed. Necklaces and bracelets will be limited to religious styles. Students may not wear jewelry on any visible pierced body parts other than the ear. Boys may not wear earrings. Students may wear watches, but may not wear digital / internet connected smart watches.

Make-Up Preschool/Prekindergarten students may not wear makeup.

Tatoos Temporary or permanent tattoos on any visible body part(s) are not allowed.

Spirit / Jean Days / Dress-Up Days Out of uniform days will be announced and defined by the principal.

Spirit / Jeans Days For Spirit Days students may wear a school spirit shirt and jeans. Students may not wear leggings. When Spirit Days are held during shorts season, students may wear **school appropriate** school uniform length non-athletic jean or dress shorts. Typically these days are held as part of a fundraiser and required students to bring an item to participate. The weekly newsletter will provide dates and additional details when these days are scheduled. If students do not follow the guidelines for appropriate dress on Spirit / Jeans / Dress up Days they will not be allowed to participate in the next one.

Dress-Up Days On dress up days students may wear dress-up (nice) clothes, but **NO** t-shirts, wind pants, jeans, shorts, sports clothes, or sweatshirts. Skirts must be the length of uniform skirts. NO flip-flops or slippers may be worn at any time. Shoulders and waists must be covered and shirts must be of sufficient length to reach the top of the waist band. All non-uniform apparel must be of a modest nature. The administration reserves the right for final clothing approval.

Health and Safety

School Nurse St. Thomas More Catholic School contracts with the *Visiting Nurses Association* for a school nurse. The nurse is responsible for maintaining student health records, state health reporting, and staff training. The nurse is on-site a designated number of hours per year. Additionally, the school contracts with Creighton University School of Nursing to conduct student health screenings.

School Counselor St. Thomas More Catholic School has a full-time school counselor who works with students in their classrooms, consults with teachers, and sees students individually. A student can be referred to the counselor by a parent, teacher or principal, or the student may initiate the contact. The counselor will contact the parent if she thinks that the child should be referred to an outside agency for further counseling. The counselor can provide parents information that may be helpful to their child's development and lists of appropriate community agencies and resources. The counselor may come into classrooms to teach all students, working with classroom teachers to deliver curriculum in the areas of academic and career planning, as well as personal and social skill development.

Child Protective Services When there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse / neglect has or will occur the state law mandates a referral to the authorities. In this case, a verbal report needs to be provided to either Child Protective Services (CPS) or to our local Law Enforcement agency. Keep in mind that if the child has physical indications/injuries or there are immediate safety issues, law enforcement (not CPS) has the authority to take immediate protective custody if necessary. The state and the Catholic School Office mandates that schools cooperate with CPS and law enforcement personnel in order to conduct their investigations. **By state statute 28-710 the child abuse mandatory reporting provisions define abuse or neglect as knowingly, intentionally, or negligently causing or permitting a minor to be:**

(1) Placed in a situation that endangers his or her life or physical or mental health;

- (2) Cruelly confined or cruelly punished;
- (3) Deprived of necessary food, clothing, shelter, or care;
- (4) Left unattended in a motor vehicle if such minor child is six years of age or younger;
- (5) Placed in a situation to be sexually abused;
- (6) Placed in a situation to be sexually exploited through sex trafficking of a minor as defined in section [28-830](#) or by allowing, encouraging, or forcing such person to engage in debauchery, public indecency, or obscene or pornographic photography, films, or depictions; or
- (7) Placed in a situation to be a trafficking victim as defined in section [28-830](#);

Immunizations and Communicable Diseases

All students are required to have the immunizations mandated by state law. The State of Nebraska requires that all students will be immunized for diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, poliomyelitis, measles, mumps, hepatitis B, and rubella prior to enrollment. Each vaccination has a specific schedule that must be followed. Chickenpox or varicella vaccine must be given if the child has not had the chickenpox disease. If your child has had the chickenpox disease, written documentation of the date of the disease needs to be signed by the parent and submitted to the school and kept on file in the nurse's office.

The Archdiocese of Omaha states that Catholics are required to promote the common good in society, which includes health and life. Catholics have the moral obligation to submit to just laws regarding vaccinations. Currently vaccines for rubella and chickenpox are the only vaccines derived from cell lines originated from aborted fetuses and there are no alternatives available in the United States. Due to the potential health risks of an outbreak of these diseases, the Catholic Church teaches that, "For the sake of the common good, it is morally licit and advisable for a parent to submit to the vaccines despite their problematic origins."

Despite the potential harm to the common good, a Catholic may, in good conscience, submit a religious exemption for rubella and chickenpox vaccines, and the Catholic Schools will honor that limited exemption request. **Catholics may not submit a religious exemption for any of the other vaccines.** The religious waiver must be on file in the nurse's office. In case of a disease outbreak, the student with the waiver may not remain in school.

A medical exemption may be completed for those students when their health care provider deems that the vaccine in question may be "injurious to the health and wellbeing of the student or any member of the student's family or household." This medical exemption must be completed and signed by an individual licensed under the Nebraska Medicine and Surgery Practice Act to practice medicine and surgery or osteopathic medicine and surgery. This does not include chiropractors. The acceptable exemption forms created by the Archdiocese can be obtained from the school nurse upon request. The medical waiver must be on file in the nurse's office. In case of a disease outbreak, the student with the waiver may not remain in school. The school reserves the right to examine all waivers thoroughly.

Students who are not in compliance with the immunization requirement or have not provided a qualified waiver, may not attend St. Thomas More School until they have complied with the immunization policy. The 2022 - 2023 Nebraska School Immunization Rules and Regulations require students to have the following immunizations **before attending classes.**

Preschool/Prekindergarten

- 4 doses of DTaP, DTP, or DT vaccine
- 3 doses of Polio vaccine
- 3 doses of Hib vaccine or 1 dose of Hib given at or after 15 month of age
- 3 doses of pediatric Hepatitis B vaccine
- 1 dose of MMR or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age
- 1 dose of varicella (chickenpox) or MMRV given on or after 12 months of age. Written documentation (including year) of varicella disease from parent, guardian, or health care provider will be accepted.
- DT vaccine,
- 4 doses of pneumococcal or 1 dose of pneumococcal given on or after 15 months of age

Head Injury A report will be made and parents contacted if their student receives a head injury. The report will contain a list of symptoms associated with head injury and concussion. Parents will be encouraged to contact their doctor if the student displays any of those symptoms.

Rashes

Students with rashes or other symptoms that may be communicable to other students are to be sent home at the discretion of the school nurse, principal or designated personnel. A student with red or draining eyes will also be sent home. The student may return when the rash is gone or the eyes are no longer draining. The only exception to this is, if after being seen by the physician, the physician deems the child not contagious and a note stating it is alright for the child to return to school with the MD's signature is sent to the school office.

Calendar

Pawprints Preschool follows the St. Thomas More Catholic School calendar as closely as possible. A separate preschool calendar is sent home monthly along with a newsletter to keep you up-to-date on preschool happenings. Please also refer to the weekly Bengal News for all school information.

Lunch (All Day Students)

Lunch is available through a prepaid lunch ticket. A nutritional hot lunch served with milk will be made available each day in the cafeteria for children who are enrolled in the All Day Programs. Children are also welcome to bring a cold lunch. Please do not send soda pop with cold lunches.

Lunch Schedule

Preschool/PreK 11:00 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.

Lunch Tickets Students are issued a student bar coded ID badge that is scanned when they purchase a lunch or milk. An automatic notice is sent through Sycamore when their account is below \$5. Parents are able to monitor their family accounts through Sycamore. Additional amounts may be purchased throughout the school year by sending a check made out to OCSC for the amount of lunches needed in an envelope with your student's name and their teacher's name or homeroom number to the school office. You can also stop in or call the school office and use a credit or debit card to make a payment.

*Below are the 2022-2023 lunch prices. These will be updated as prices change. Prices below may change in the fall of 2023.

Preschool Student per lunch cost: \$2.75

Individual Milk cost: \$.50

Milk is already included with the cafeteria lunch.

A milk ticket is available for students who bring their own cold lunch.

Lunch Charge Policy

The goal at St. Thomas More School is to provide students access to nutritious no or low cost meals each school day. However, unpaid charges place a financial burden on our school. The purpose of this policy is to insure compliance with federal requirements for the USDA child nutrition program.

When family lunch accounts fall below \$5.00 you will receive an email notice from Sycamore directly to the parents. You will continue to receive notices until payment has been made.

Should family accounts become over \$20.00 past due a school employee will call a parent. Negative balance status can be avoided by making a payment in the form of cash or check payable to OCSC, or we can accept a credit/debit card payment. A credit card payment will have an added 3% charge, no charge for a debit card payment.

We strongly **discourage meal charges**, but we understand that an occasional emergency is necessary. The following policies will apply regarding charges:

~All students are given a chance to charge.

~Any family accounts that are \$25.00 past due and the student does not bring a lunch from home will be provided with a National School Lunch Program Meal consisting of an American cheese sandwich, with a vegetable, fruit, and milk. This will be provided at the regular cost of a school lunch and will be charged to the student's lunch account.

~~If monies are brought in to purchase a la carte items, it will go towards the negative balance and the child cannot purchase a la carte items.

Parents are strongly encouraged to submit a free/reduced price meal application yearly as well as when household or income information changes. All households can apply for meal benefits any time during the school year. Please notify the school office or the food service program for an application.

***The first Friday of May through the last day of school a "**NO CHARGE**" policy goes into effect in order to eliminate negative balances at the end of the school year. This means the above policy is no longer in effect and there will be no charging of meals.

***Free and Reduced Lunch** - Free and reduced-price lunches are available to families who qualify. Application forms are available in the school office. Students who received Free or Reduced Lunches in the previous year at St. Thomas More School begin the school continuing with this benefit. New Applications must be returned for the New School Year as soon as possible and within 30 school days.

Recess

It is important for everyone to have physical activity as a part of their day. Preschool/Prekindergarten students will have regular recess periods that will be held outside (weather permitting). If weather does not permit outside recess, we will have recess indoors. We take our students at various times in the morning.

Rest Time/Quiet Time (All Day Students)

Each day in the afternoon each child will be expected to participate in one 45 minute rest time/ quiet time. Resting mats will be provided by the preschool/prekindergarten and will not need to be purchased by the parent/guardian. Please send a small blanket to be kept in your child's backpack for resting time. A small stuffed animal is acceptable also, but please do not send items that make noise.

Snack Schedule

We will send a snack schedule home monthly. Your child will only get a snack schedule if they will have a turn to bring snacks for their friends during that month. Healthy snacks (anytime foods) such as vegetables, fruit, cheese, crackers, etc. are strongly encouraged. A small apple, half a banana or a handful of baby carrots make a great snack. Snacks must be in their original containers due to health code regulations. No cookies, candy, or snack cakes please unless they are being sent as a special birthday treat. **No Cupcakes Please.** A birthday cookie or even a nonfood birthday treat is acceptable.

Water Bottles

Your child will need to bring a clear, spill proof, reusable water bottle each day. Please make sure your child's name is on their water bottle. STM water bottles will be available for purchase through our spirit wear website.

Birthdays

If your child's birthday falls within the school year, he/she is allowed to bring snacks that are pre-packaged on a day close to the child's birthday to share with the rest of the class. Homemade items can no longer be brought for snack due to health department regulations. **No Cupcakes Please.** A birthday cookie or even a nonfood birthday treat is acceptable. If your child's birthday is during the summer, we will celebrate it on a specific day at the end of the school year (parents will be notified of the date of the celebration). All summer birthdays will be celebrated together. **If your child is having a birthday party outside of school and you want the invitations to be distributed through school, there must be an invitation for each child. If every child is not invited, then we ask that you send the invitations by mail to the homes of the children that are being invited. We do not want any of the children to feel hurt or left out due to not being invited.**

Volunteers

Pawprints Preschool is always looking for parents who can volunteer time to help with various tasks, both in and out of the classroom. When parents volunteer to assist with students in the school setting, they are required to complete and retain current Safe Environment certification. To do this please go to <https://omaha.cmgconnect.org>. If you have a talent you would like to share with the children, we would love to have you come in.

Parent Participation Program (PPP) The success of St. Thomas More Catholic School depends on a spirit of cooperation and shared sacrifice of time and talent among parents and school staff for the good of students. There are many opportunities for parent volunteer service to the school or parish, such as room parents, volunteering in the lunchroom, helping with class field trips or celebrations, baking for teacher appreciation days, working concessions, coaching teams for the sports club, or working at the Parish Festival. Parents or preschool and prekindergarten are not required to fulfill parent participation hours but are welcome to volunteer. **All volunteers at the school must have successfully completed Safe Environment training and background check.** Go to <https://omaha.cmgconnect.org> to log into their account to see if your Safe Environment certification is current. If not register for a class and complete a background check.

Field Trips

Field trips will be held in the fall and possibly spring with the four and five year old classes. Permission slips will be sent home with your child. Parent chaperones may be requested for some field trips. Parents who volunteer to help on field trips must have completed Safe Environment Training. **We may have in-school field trips rather than taking the children off campus.**

Assessments

Assessments will be conducted at the beginning of the school year and again in the spring. The results of the assessments will help us determine specific areas to focus on with each child. Results will be discussed with parents at Parent-Teacher Conferences.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

In the fall and spring trimesters, parents may be expected to attend a conference to discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher. We hope that you will accept this invitation to share this important information. Teachers are also available for individual conferences during the school year. These meetings must be prearranged. We would like to encourage open communication, so please feel free to contact us at any time if you have concerns or questions.

Sick Policy

Pawprints Preschool & Preschool Extended Care follows the St. Thomas More Catholic School sick policy. Please call the office at 551-9504 to let us know that your child will be unable to attend preschool because of illness. When the student is able to return to school, the parent is to send a written note explaining the reason for the absence. If a child becomes ill during the school day, a staff member will notify the parents immediately. The parent will be expected to arrange for the child to be picked up. **A child must be fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.**

Medication

Pawprints Preschool & Daycare follows the St. Thomas More Catholic School policy on the distribution of medications, prescriptions or over-the-counter: No medicine can be given without a doctor's note. Parents wishing to have their child take a prescribed or over-the-counter medication during school hours must send a written, signed, and dated permission statement from a physician. The medication to be administered must be in its original container and will be kept in the school office unless it is required to be with the child (i.e., an inhaler).

Asbestos Notice

Our building materials contain asbestos. There is no danger to anyone as long as the material is not disturbed. Parents may view our state-approved management plan by contacting the school office.

Fire and Disaster Drills

In order to ensure the safety of the students, plans have been developed for use in case of either a fire or tornado emergency. These plans are practiced periodically throughout the year to ensure the students are aware of procedure. Students with special needs will follow the same plans and will be accompanied by a teacher. The tornado shelters have been inspected and approved by the Omaha/Douglas County Office of Civil Defense. In case of a tornado, students will remain at school until they may safely leave. No child will be allowed to leave without a parent or authorized adult during a tornado warning.

Reading Program

We invite your child to join our book club! All you have to do to join is to read at home to your child! When you read a book, write that book's title on a book slip along with the date and your child's name. Each book slip will have seven spaces (one for each day of the week). Please use one book slip per week, including weekends. We will be sending home book slips weekly. If you run out, please let us know. Children will bring their book slips on Thursday for 3 year olds, or on Fridays for 4/5 year olds. A completed book slip could mean as little as one book per day read together for a total of seven days of reading.

Note...Prekindergarten book slips are incorporated within the weekly “Pawprints Homework/Home Activities” sheets.

When your child has read for 25 days, a new book can be chosen out of the treasure chest and is theirs to keep. We call these “Bing, bing, bings!” (Please consider donating a book or two to our classroom “bing, bing, bing” bin for our Book Club participants. Your child will receive a new book for every 25th day of reading.

Scholastic Book Clubs

Scholastic book club order forms are sent home monthly. These book orders are optional. However, if you would like to purchase books, please make your check payable only to “**Scholastic**”. You can also order your books online.

Please consider purchasing books during the year to donate to our Book Club Participants. Simply write “gift” on the order form next to the items you wish to donate, include payment, and send to school with your child. **Also, each time you purchase books through Scholastic Book Club, you help our class earn points that we can use to purchase books for our Bing, Bing, Bing, bin! We thank you!**

Preschool Teachers

Three year old program:

Mrs. Lilla, Miss Kerry Storm, and Mrs. McCormick

Four and Five year old program:

Mrs. Vomacka, Mrs. Martinez, Mrs. Hower, and Miss Mather

About Preschool/Prekindergarten Extended Care

Preschool Extended Care is available for students enrolled in our three day and five day classes. Pawprints Preschool Extended Care was established in 2007 to compliment the hours of our preschool for working parents. Children will spend their time in quality activities under the supervision of compassionate and caring teachers. The requirements of children enrolled in the daycare are the same as the [preschool/prekindergarten requirements](#) .

Hours of Operation

Preschool Extended Care shall be open between the hours of 6:45 a.m.-7:45 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. at the normal rate. **Students staying between 5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. will incur an additional charge of \$8 per day. Any family with a student who has not been picked up by the closing time of 6:00 p.m. will incur a fee of \$20 for each additional fifteen minutes per child as long as the child remains in our care.**

The operational days will follow the St. Thomas More day school's annual calendar with few exceptions. Preschool/Prekindergarten Extended Care will not be available when preschool is not in session. Due to requirements in student teacher ratio, drop-ins will not be accepted.

All registrations will be accepted on a first come-first served basis and spaces are limited. There is a nonrefundable \$50 registration fee due at the time of registration.

Preschool Extended Care Fees

Preschool/Prekindergarten Extended Care fees are based on a \$5.00 per hour rate and will be assessed on a monthly basis. Preschool/Prekindergarten Extended Care fees are due by the 1st day of the upcoming month. **Extended care fees are paid in advance for the upcoming month.** Due to the demand for Preschool Extended Care, if the monthly payment is not paid when due, unfortunately a family may lose their spot in the extended care program. A signed Preschool/Prekindergarten Extended Care Commitment Form, a DHHS Children's Record form, and a non-refundable \$50 registration fee are required for enrollment in the Preschool Extended Care Program. Please go to Stmbengals.org to download forms and to see exact prices.

Afternoon snack including milk is included in this fee. All extended care fees are due by the 1st day of the month.

Billing and Payment

As stated on the Preschool Extended Care Commitment form, parents will be charged the selected fee for the month. Parents will receive their statement approximately two weeks before the bill is due. Charges for attendance after 5:00 p.m. will be addressed in the following month's statement as will deductions for school cancellation days. The payment must be made by the first day of the upcoming month. Payments may be given to your child's preschool teacher. Insufficient fund checks will be assessed a fee. Checks need to be made out to OCSC (Omaha Catholic School Consortium). Payments must be enclosed in an envelope with your child's name and marked "Preschool Extended Care". Payments may also be paid by credit card in the school office with a 3% fee.

Preschool Extended Care Enrollment Procedures

To be eligible to enroll in Preschool Extended Care your child must turn 3 by July 31st and be completely potty-trained, and be enrolled in our three day or five day classes. To enroll in the program, the parent/guardian needs to obtain a commitment form and a DHHS Children's Record from the school office or school website and must submit it with the \$50.00 Preschool Extended Care registration fee.

Preschool and Preschool Extended Care Problem Resolution

Communication and cooperation between a parent/guardian and a teacher are essential to a student's success. **If at any time issues or concerns arise, the parent must first consult with the teacher to seek understanding or resolution.** If the parent is unsatisfied with the results of that conference then they may seek consultation with the Preschool Director or Preschool Extended Care Director, then the school Principal. The principal may choose to convene a conference to address the matter and may also seek the advice of the Executive Director. If a satisfactory solution is not achieved, the Executive Director may become involved in the process. **A child's enrollment may be terminated at any given period of time per the Director's discretion.**

Parental Dissatisfaction

When parents are seriously dissatisfied with an aspect of the school's program or operation, which the administration deems as integral to or in the best interest of the school, and they have exhausted all efforts at a

mutual resolution of the problem, they should exercise their option of choosing another school. When the dissatisfaction results in continued dissatisfaction on the part of the parent, the administration may exercise the school's right to withdraw permission for enrollment of the child or children.

Director's Right to Amend

The Directors of the Preschool & Preschool Extended Care reserved the right to amend these policies as it becomes necessary to do so.

St. Thomas More School Principal- Mr. Gary Davis

Preschool Director- Mrs. Tamyra Hower

Preschool Extended Care Director- Mrs. Dianna McCormick

Preschool Extended Care Staff-Mrs. McCormick and Miss Mather

Contact Information

St. Thomas More School

& Pawprints Preschool

3515 S. 48th Ave

Omaha, Ne 68106

Phone: 402-551-9504 ext. 106

Fax: 402-551-9507

Omaha Catholic School Consortium

Executive Director/Mr. Michael Goetz

4501 S. 41st St.

Omaha , NE 68107

Phone: 402-590-2810

ST. THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC SCHOOL & Pawprints Preschool

A School of the Omaha Catholic School Consortium
3515 South 48th Avenue Omaha, NE 68106

Phone (402)551-9504 / Fax (402)551-9507 School Website: stmbengals.org

Principal: Mr. Gary D. Davis

Preschool Director: Tamyra Hower

Preschool Extended Care Director: Dianna McCormick

2023 – 2024 Pawprints Preschool Parent Handbook Agreement Form

Dear Parents,

Please be sure to read through the entire St. Thomas More Pawprints Preschool 2023 – 2024 Parent Handbook to be familiar with our school’s practices and procedures. After reading the handbook and talking to your student(s) about the school’s policies please sign and return this agreement form and bring it to your child’s teacher at Sneak-a-Peek.

Preschool/Prekindergarten Student’s Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I want my child to succeed. Therefore, I will encourage him/her by doing the following:

- Ensure that my child attends religious services regularly.
- See that my child is punctual and attends school regularly.
- See that my child dresses in accordance with the school uniform policy.
- Support the school discipline policy as defined in the STM Pawprints Preschool Parent Handbook.
- Encourage my student to treat teachers, staff, and other students with respect and be a model of this behavior for them.
- Establish a time and quiet place to read with my child, and review school activities regularly.
- Encourage my child’s efforts and be available to answer questions.
- Stay aware of what my child is learning
- I understand that my child may lose their spot in Pawprints Preschool or the Pawprints Preschool Extended Care Program at the Director’s discretion for reasons including but not limited to behavioral concerns, lack of potty training, or failure to make payments for either program by their due dates.
- I agree to be governed by the policies as stated in the STM Pawprints Preschool Parent Handbook.

Parent Name & Signature _____ Date _____