

Frequently Asked Questions About the Preschool Program for 4-Year-Olds

Does my child have to have a physical to participate in preschool?

The State of Michigan Licensing Rules require that preschool children have a health appraisal, signed by a physician, on file in the childcare office. This statement must include up-to-date immunization records.

Does my child have to be immunized?

Children must have up-to-date immunizations as required by the State of Michigan. Parents who are choosing NOT to give a specific immunization must complete a parental waiver. If a physician is not giving a specific immunization for a health reason they need to complete a medical waiver. Waiver forms are available from the ESP/Preschool office. We are required by law to complete a state report twice a year. It is also expected that we have a 95% completion rate (immunized children or appropriate waivers).

Where do I drop off and pick up my child?

For morning arrival please escort child directly into the preschool room. The parking lot can be a confusing place in the morning. We want the preschool children to have a comfortable transition into the day. Children who attend half-day will be escorted outside by one of the preschool staff.

Children who attend until 3:00 can be picked up outside on the blacktop. The preschool children will stand near the library wall. Please make sure that your child says goodbye to the preschool teacher and that the teacher responds back. There is a lot going on at this time of the day. Nothing is more disconcerting than not seeing a child leave!

What is the routine for lunch?

Preschool lunch begins about 11:45. Parents provide lunch for their children. Please make sure that your child's name is on the outside of their lunchbox. We do not have refrigeration or heating capabilities so the lunch needs to be able to be eaten as is. You may send a thermos for hot food or an ice pack to keep the lunch cool.

You may sign up for the school milk program. Children will receive their milk with lunch. You may also sign up for the PTG pizza lunch days. The preschool classroom DOES NOT participate in the Heartbeat Pizza Days, Sub Sandwich Days or the Arts Lunch Days. You may sign up for milk and PTG pizza lunch the first week of school.

We encourage children to "eat healthy food first". Therefore, we may help guide children towards the foods to eat first, second, etc. We will send most uneaten food home in the lunchbox so that you will know what your child ate. Messy foods will be thrown in the trash. Food is never forced or withdrawn as a form of behavior control.

No nut or nut products are allowed in the preschool classroom. Please do not send peanut butter sandwiches, peanut butter cookies or foods containing nuts in lunches. Please also check labels for items processed in plants or on equipment that also processes nuts. We have found that the sunflower butter is a pretty good alternative. It is available at the health food stores and at Meijer's. If you use sunflower butter please put a note in the box so the staff know it is safe.

If you forget to send a lunch one will be provided for your child. A charge of \$3.50 will appear on your next billing statement for this service.

How is snack handled in the preschool room?

Snack is offered in the morning for all children. Typically, we offer things like pretzels, crackers, animal cookies, fruit, cereal mix and vegetables. Sometimes we offer items like waffles. The children may help prepare special snacks on occasion. Juice (100%) and water is offered at snack. Children are encouraged to serve themselves, pass to others and use appropriate table manners.

Parents may arrange to bring in snacks for special days like birthdays, holidays or other occasions. We have a list of suggestions to help make it easier for you to plan a special snack. Talk to the teacher to arrange this.

A second snack is offered at 3:00 for the children who stay for the after-school program. After-school attendees are also offered a third snack of graham crackers at 5:15 to help tide them over until dinner.

What kind of clothing do I need to provide for preschool?

We ask that all families keep an extra set of clothing available in school. Please put a complete set of clothing – pants, shirt, socks, underpants – into the tub marked with your child’s name. We go to the gym almost every day. Children need to wear gym shoes to gym. You may either have your child wear gym shoes each day or store a pair in their cubbies. If you leave a pair of gym shoes at school it is helpful to label them with your child’s name.

Children need to come to school each day dressed for the weather. We go outside every day unless the weather does not allow us to do so. Therefore, appropriate outdoor clothing is a must. It is very helpful if parents label outdoor clothing with the child’s name.

Does my child have to take a nap?

The State of Michigan Licensing Rules require that we allow for a specific rest period for children who are in care for the full day. Naptime will be after lunch. Naptime will be about 1 ½ hours including bathroom, story and settle down time. Children who have not fallen asleep in a reasonable time will be offered quiet activities to do while the other children are sleeping. We may need to adjust the time for this period once we know the children’s habits or as the year progresses.

What about blankets, stuffed animals or other special comfort items?

Cot sheets are supplied for every child. The classroom has a few blankets. “Snuggle” items such as a stuffed animal or special blanket may be brought each day. Because storage room is tight and other church groups use the room, we ask that these special items go home each day.

Where will I store my child’s things?

Each child has a cubby. Cubbies are marked with the child’s name. Coats can be hung on the hook under the cubbie. Lunch boxes can be put in the smaller section. Extra clothing is stored in tubs marked with children’s names. Mailboxes are labeled with the child’s last name. Items for the parents will be placed in the mailboxes.

What will my child’s status be when it comes time to make a decision about kindergarten?

Children who are enrolled in the St. Francis School Preschool classroom will receive registration packets along with the other currently enrolled families in the school. Preschool families will have priority over new families when it comes to kindergarten placement.

How do I determine what my kindergarten tuition and schedule will be?

The school sets tuition rates for in-parish and out-of-parish levels. To be considered in-parish a family must be an **active, registered member in good standing**. This means that you must be active in some aspect of the school or parish ministry and must financially support the church. Members from other catholic parishes may join St. Francis and provide a letter of good standing from your former parish to become immediately eligible for in-parish tuition rates.

Catholic families who do not submit a letter from another parish stating that they are active, registered members in good standing will be eligible for in-parish tuition 6 months after they register in the parish. Non-catholic or non-parish families pay the out-of-parish tuition rate.

St. Francis of Assisi School offers a half-day Kindergarten program. The Kindergarten program provides the core academic program necessary to move into first grade. We also offer an Enrichment Kindergarten that allows parents to extend their child’s school day. Children are able to revisit the skills and topics introduced in Kindergarten. Parents can choose the kindergarten schedule that is right for them.