

St. Thomas Preschool

COVID-19 Safety Precautions and Practices

In response to COVID-19 and following the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the AZ Department of Health and our local Pima County Health Department guidelines, we have tightened our regular protocols. The health and safety of our children, staff, and families is a high priority issue. We ask all parents and caregivers to be especially vigilant in assessing the health of their children and themselves. We reserve the right to excuse any child from our program if they appear to have any symptoms that may be connected to any illness.

We plan to err on the side of caution to protect everyone. We ask any of our families to immediately disclose possible contact with or exposure to COVID-19 (occupational contact, social or familial contact or travel related contact.) We reserve the right to make decisions at our own discretion for the health and safety of everyone. For the sake of respecting others, we ask you that you keep you and your child at home if you develop symptoms that are potentially COVID-19.

We ask that you read these new protocols and sign that you have read and are willing to comply. Thank you for helping us keep your children and our beloved staff as safe as possible. We have a medical consultant who we are using for guidance as needed, and we will continue to update these as needed.

Arrival to and Departure from School

- Parents will be asked to wear masks at drop off and pick up.
- We ask that only ONE parent/guardian/caregiver accompanies your child at drop off and at pick up.
- The goal is to minimize the number of people accessing the school campus and limit exposure for everyone, but we understand that some situations will involve siblings being present at pick up and/or drop off. Please keep children who are not enrolled at St. Thomas Preschool within your reach.
- Parents/adults will be asked a series of health screening questions upon entry of the school gate to protect the well-being of our staff and children.
- All parents/adults, teachers, staff and children temperature will be taken when entering the school.
- A hand sanitizing station will be set up at the gate entrance. Upon arrival, adults and children will be asked to sanitize their hands after touching the gate keypad and entering.
- We ask that you ENTER through the main gate at the top of the stairs and EXIT through the back gate at the end of the playground. This will help facilitate the flow of traffic and maintain social distancing.
- Drop off and pick up should be swift processes to reduce the gathering of people and maintain social distancing guidelines.
- We ask that parents do not enter the classroom during drop off or pick up.

Lunch Boxes

- Please pack your child's lunch box with an ice pack inside.
- Lunch boxes will be kept in your child's backpack or tote bag on their assigned hook outside their classroom.

Time Clock

- Families will continue to clock children in and out using the ProCare time clock.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for use **AFTER** using the time clock, as the alcohol content in the sanitizer may have a negative effect on the touch screen and scanner.
- Using a stylus on the touch screen is also an option. (ask in the office for this option)

Handwashing

- Handwashing will be the primary practice to stop the spread of germs with children. Hand sanitizers will be used at a minimum with children (i.e. when running water is not easily accessible during transition times).
- Upon drop off, children will be required to wash hands prior to beginning any activities or expectations for the school day.
- Daily routines will include handwashing several times throughout the day.
- We will continue to provide on-going handwashing hygiene lessons books and a song.
- All classrooms will receive the same instruction to ensure uniformity.
- This information will be shared with all families so that the same strategies can be used at home and when out in the community.

Disinfecting Public Areas

- Staff and teachers will be assigned public areas to disinfect throughout the school day using EPA approved wipes (gate, keypads, door handles, door frames, sink areas, water fountains, classroom tables, bathrooms).
- Bleach solutions will be used in the classrooms when children are present.
- EPA approved solutions will be used in the classrooms when children are not present.
- We have a professional cleaning company that cleans and sanitizes the campus daily.

Education of Staff, Teachers, and Families

- St. Thomas Preschool will train all staff and teachers on procedures.
- Procedures will be evaluated at least once a week, if not more, to ensure operations are working effectively to minimize the spread of germs.
- Families will receive on-going communication to understand the importance of procedures.

Social Distancing

St. Thomas Preschool provides a high level of care and education to all children which involves physical and emotional interactions (i.e. comforting children, showing affection, assisting with hygiene needs), and social distancing guidelines are not conducive to maintaining this standards. Classroom set up has been simplified to mitigate shared touched items and distancing.

Wearing Masks

Facial expressions, oral movements, and body language are integral aspects of learning emotion, developing language, and building social skills.

Teachers and staff will wear masks during drop off only. Children are not expected to wear masks at school. If you would like your child to wear a mask while at school we will do our best to ensure this practice.

Positive COVID-19

We will have an additional staff on board in case there are teachers and staff out sick. In the event that you, your child, or a member of your household tests positive for COVID-19, we ask that your child remain at home for the duration of the infection and quarantine for 14 days. St. Thomas Preschool will maintain the confidentiality of the individual, but will share as appropriate with our community the possibility of infection. Our school has written procedures and plans that will guide our discussion making.

If you, your child, or a member of your household tests positive, please send an email to the office at office@stthomaspreschool.com and contact Michelle Garmon, Director at (520)577-0503 ext. 120.

If you, your child or a family member is considered high risk or in a vulnerable population please consult your doctor for recommendations before returning to school.