

# St Patrick Catholic Preschool Handbook

## 2025-2026



Director: Amanda Scardina

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THREES- M/W AM; T/TH AM

FOURS: MWF AM; T/TH/F AM; M/T/W/TH PM

FIVES: M/T/W/TH/F AM

<https://stpatricksgretna.org>

Dear Families,

Welcome to St. Patrick's Catholic Preschool. I feel so blessed that you have joined this community and look forward to sharing my faith and enthusiasm for educating young children.

Our goal is to provide a safe and challenging environment where children simply walk out of our doors as a preschool graduate academically and socially prepared for kindergarten but most importantly to know Jesus loves them.

We work closely with Sarpy County Health Department and Gretna Public Schools to implement any necessary protocols and best practice guidelines to keep every happy, safe and healthy. Our students and staff health are our main priority always when making decisions for our preschool.

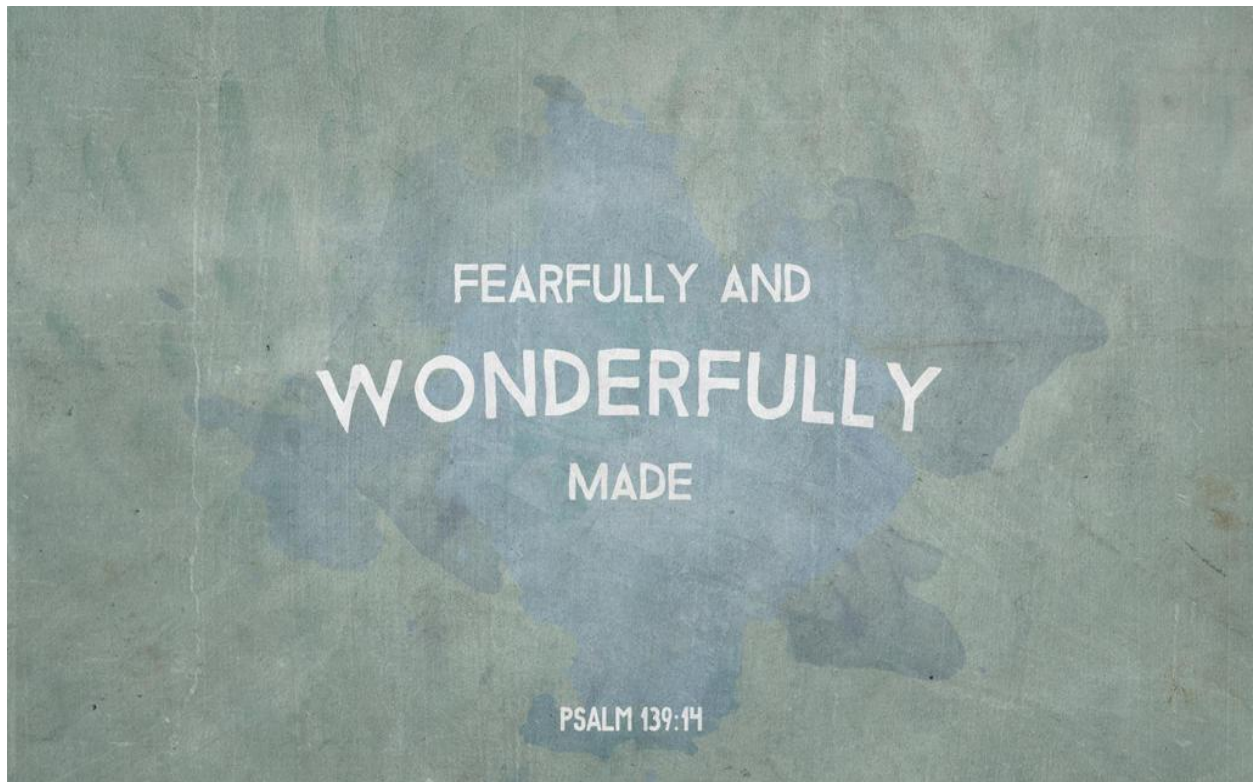
As always, I have an open door, and I invite you to share any thoughts with me.

Many blessings,

Amanda Scardina  
Preschool Director

## **Mission Statement**

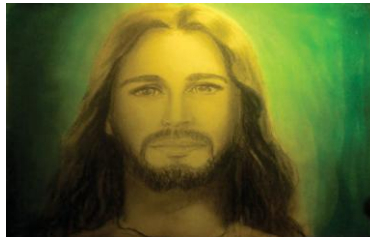
Our goal at St. Patrick's Catholic Preschool is to provide a nurturing Christ Centered environment where children are allowed to nurture their faith and become followers of Jesus while developing socially, cognitively, physically, emotionally, and spiritually through developmentally appropriate activities that promote the whole child. Our play-based preschool will incorporate the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines to encourage academic excellence and inspire service to their community and parish.



St Patrick Catholic Preschool Goals
Love and respect God.
Love and respect ourselves.
Love and respect others.

## Programs

<b>THREES</b> <b>Ages: 3-4 years old</b> <b>AM: 8:40-11:10</b> <b>M W/T TH</b> <b>\$145/month</b>	<b>FOURS</b> <b>Ages: 4-5 years old</b> <b>AM: 8:40-11:10</b> <b>M W F/T TH F</b> <b>\$170/month</b>  <b>PM: 12:10-2:40</b> <b>M T W TH</b> <b>\$200/month</b>
<b>FIVES</b> <b>Ages: 5 years old</b> <b>AM: 8:40-11:10</b> <b>M T W TH F</b> <b>\$225/month</b>	<b>TADPOLES</b> <b>Ages: 3 by March 15, 2025</b> <b>Hours: 8:40-11:10</b> <b>Days: Friday Start date</b> <b>January 9, 2026</b> <b>\$80/month</b>



### Registration and Admission Policy

Children enrolling in St. Patrick Catholic Preschool must be three, four or five years of age before October 15 for eligibility in their respective programs. Some exceptions may apply to the age restriction. All children must be toilet trained. Forms below are required to be returned before the first day of classes.

1. Online registration form and \$50 nonrefundable registration fee.
2. Children's Emergency Information and Medical Records packet
3. Authorization for Automatic Withdrawal Form
4. School supplies
5. Childcare Licensing Brochure

**St. Patrick's Catholic Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarships, or any other school-administered program.**

### **St. Patrick's Preschool Advisory Board**

The Preschool Advisory Board is comprised of a group of volunteers organized to support and assist in the development of St. Patrick's Catholic Preschool. They meet monthly to advise, advertise and promote the program. They also develop and implement special projects or fund-raising activities and serve as a liaison for *the parish*. Please contact Amanda if you would like to become involved in this organization.

### **Licensing**

St. Patrick's Catholic Preschool is licensed by the State of Nebraska through the Department of Health and Human Services. All regulations pertaining to childcare centers (from the Nebraska Department of Social Services, the Fire Marshall's Office, and the Douglas County Health Department) are followed.



## Attendance and Illness

Attendance is expected and a wonderful habit to establish in these formative years. Please notify the school if your child will be absent due to a family vacation or illness. This helps with planning.

If your child is overly tired or not feeling well due to the flu or Covid, it is necessary for him/her to stay home. Those symptoms include fever, chills, muscle aches, headaches, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or loss of taste or smell. If your child becomes ill during the school day, we will call parents or the emergency number on the child's emergency forms for immediate pick up. **All students must be fever free, diarrhea free and vomit free for 24 hours before returning to school.** we also ask that you keep siblings home as well to avoid spreading of germs. Our goal is to keep everyone healthy and happy!

If your child is healthy, we appreciate timely arrival. The teachers begin their day promptly when they arrive inside the classroom. A routine is set, and tardy students may struggle establishing that routine if chronically tardy. If this becomes an issue, the director will set up a meeting to discuss.

Thank you for your help in this matter.



## Toilet Training

All children enrolled in St. Patrick Preschool must be potty trained. Although the staff understands an occasional developmental accident, a policy will be presented to families if there are multiple consistent accidents that occur during our preschool day. Students are not allowed to wear pull ups during our school day.

## Security

All doors to the "school" area will be locked during preschool class hours. If you arrive during those hours, please ring the doorbell on the south side of the parish center or the doorbell at the bottom of the stairs by the narthex for access. If there is someone other than the "regular" pickup person at dismissal, the staff will be required to check their ID before releasing the child. Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

## Volunteer Opportunity

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher and we are looking forward to collaborating now that regulations have eased.

We are hopeful there will be many opportunities to still become involved with St. Patrick Preschool. Please watch monthly newsletters for updates or needs in our preschool and/or parish.

Safe environment is a mandated training for any volunteer or paid employee that wishes to assist with their own group of children in the archdiocese of Omaha. If you wish to substitute teach or get involved with the parish activities, teach Religious Education and/or supervise an individual group of students, safe environment training is required. Certification is valid for 5 years. **Safe environment training is now required to assist in classrooms and/or chaperoning on preschool field trips.**

**Please contact Shane, our religious education director at (402)332-3454 to register for a training here at St. Patrick's in August. Other dates at various parishes are also available if this date does not work for you.**

## Snacks

All children will be offered a peanut-free snack during their day here at preschool. **Your activity fee at the beginning of the school year will cover snacks for the 2025-2026 school year. The State Licensing Department requires that all snacks must be store bought.** If a child has a particular allergy, parents can bring a bulk snack for their child to store at school to accommodate special dietary needs.

## Birthdays

You will be notified by your child's teacher as your child's birthday approaches. Each classroom teacher celebrates the students in their own individual way. It is allowed to send a special peanut-free treat for your child's class if a parent so desires. Please discuss options and day for treat with the classroom teacher. Please be sure all items are prepackaged.



### **Evacuation Procedure**

In the case of student evacuation from the St. Patrick Catholic Preschool, it is our procedure to safely exit the building from the west doors and proceed around the building to the parking lot across Angus Street. This parking lot is located south of the old entrance to the church. The teachers will collect the student binders, any necessary medication (EpiPens, inhalers, etc..) and their cell phones. Parents will be notified when we reach the destination. An evacuation plan with any special needs students will be discussed upon enrollment.

### **Tornado or Lock-down Drill**

In the event of a tornado or lock-down, the doors will remain locked for everyone, including but not limited to parents of our students until the situation is deemed safe by the director or acting director and/or emergency personnel.

### **Termination**

In the rare event that your child is unable to adjust to the routine of a preschool day or displays physical aggression toward staff or other students, St. Patrick Catholic Preschool reserves the right to terminate the child from their program. If a child is struggling in one of the above areas a conference will be called with parents to discuss a plan of action for the child. If improvement goals are not met, the child will be asked to find an alternative educational placement.

## Communication

A monthly newsletter will be emailed to each family. Your child's teacher will send out daily/ weekly notes through the app Seesaw. **It is important that we have an accurate email on file and that you install the app. If you do not have access to an email/mobile phone access, please let the Director know and other arrangements can be made.**

Please contact your child's teacher if your child is undergoing any changes in their routine due to a move, separation or divorce, death in the family, etc. We strive to help our students and parents with a warm heart and the power of prayer during difficult times.

For emergency phone calls during the preschool day, please call the Preschool office at 402-332-3050 or parish office at 402-332-4444 and the message will be transferred to the director. Any parent grievances, questions or concerns should be communicated with director, Amanda Scardina.

## Arrival

We ask that on your child's first week of school, you park and walk your child into the classroom. Walking your child into the classroom during the first week will help you and your child become acquainted with the teachers, parents, facility, and the routines. It will be an essential part of the transition from home to school. A calm quick exit is easiest for the children if they are having difficulty separating on the first day. We are fully prepared for a little anxiety from our little ones at the beginning of the year.

If you arrive later than 8:40, you will need to ring the doorbell on the south entrance to the parish center and wait for a staff member to walk upstairs to retrieve your child and escort them to their classroom.

Our staff will be available daily from 8:30-8:40 for curbside arrival beginning on September 9th. A procedure for curb side arrival will be explained during your child's open house. If you choose to not utilize curb side drop off and wish to walk your child to the parish center doors, we ask that you park along the concrete median so car flow can remain constant, and walkers remain safe.

Each morning, we ask that you pre-screen your child for symptoms of illness. These symptoms include but are not limited to fever, chills, muscle aches, headaches, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing or loss of taste or smell.

## Dismissal

We will be dismissing curbside this year. During the first week of preschool, we ask that you come and pick up your students from the reception area of the Preschool downstairs. This will help you and your child get acclimated to the routine. The dismissal procedures will be explained in detail at Open House. Car curbside dismissal will begin on September 9th.

The staff at St. Patrick has the right to refuse dismissal of one of our students with someone that may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Police will be notified in this event.

Please make every effort to be punctual in your child's dismissal as the time after class is important for teachers as they clean up from their daily projects and plan and prepare for the very best preschool experience for your child. A late fee of \$10/family per occurrence will be implemented after written warning if needed. If your child is picked up after 11:20 (AM) or 2:50 (PM), this will be considered a late pickup. Thank you for your understanding in this matter. It is not our desire to implement this policy but is necessary to ensure enough time is available to prepare and sanitize for all our students.

Curbside dismissal procedure:

1. Pull all the way up to the cone area on your assigned side of parking lot when picking up your student. Wait inside the vehicle for dismissal.
2. Each family will receive a CAR ID sign to put in the side/front window of the car to help us recognize cars. Your child will only be released to the people listed in the Emergency Form that you complete in August.  
**\*Be patient and do not pull around another vehicle\***
3. Staff will escort the child to the vehicle and help into the car. Once your child is in the vehicle, please pull forward into a parking space to buckle up. Our goal is to be efficient, yet safe.

Curb side dismissal will begin at 11:10am for students. After all cars are loaded, the staff will depart for the preschool rooms to clean and prepare for the following day. Any child who has not been picked up will come down to the reception area to wait for their parents. Please ring the doorbell on the south side of the parish center entrance and a staff member will bring your child to you when you arrive.

## Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences will be scheduled during the preschool day in February for students in our preschool. There will be no conferences for our THREES, however, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's milestones or development, we are happy to meet with you. Please watch our monthly newsletter for more information. A progress note will be sent out in early November and May for all students and a detailed progress report will be sent in January. Informal or formal visits that pertain to the positive growth and development of each child are always encouraged.

## Snow Days

Please note that in the event Gretna Public Schools have a late start or are closed due to inclement weather, we will be closed for the day. Listen to your local radio (KFAB is the official station for Gretna Public Schools) or television station for information on school closings. Following Gretna Schools cancellation notice, an email and text will be sent to all preschool parents with a subsequent cancellation for St. Patrick's Preschool. There may be a rare instance that we decide we do not want to endanger our families by having them out in the elements. **If this occurs, you will receive a personal phone call by a staff member.**

## TUITION

Payment for tuition will be withdrawn on a monthly basis from your account that is set up through our Parish Soft program **or** paid in full at Open House with cash or check. In the unusual circumstance tuition is not charged due to a mandated closure for indefinite periods of time, payment will be stopped for the month for automatic withdrawals. If you pay for tuition in full, please understand refunds will not be issued until May 2026.

**For anyone wishing to have their tuition withdrawn monthly, please return the authorization form to the office at Open house.** Turning in form after that provides less dates to select your withdrawal date in a month. ***Please take special notice that the expiration date on your card is dated 05/26 or after.***

If a problem with the cost of tuition arises, please discuss with the Preschool Director, Amanda Scardina. Tuition is prorated on a nine- month basis so that your tuition rate will remain the same each month regardless of how many preschool days are in the month.

We are excited about our extracurricular activities such as Music class and Amazing Athletes. We also look forward to both in house and out of building field trips that will enhance our learning.

*If for any reason you choose to withdraw your child from our preschool program, you are responsible for tuition for 30 days from the date of withdrawal.*

**\*If you wish to make your entire cash payment for the school year, you will receive a 3% discount. Because of incurred fees, credit cards are exempt from this discount. \***

## St Patrick's Preschool 2024-2025 Calendar

**Monday, August 26<sup>th</sup>:** 3's Open House at 6:00pm

**Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>:** 4's Open House at 6:00pm

**Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>:** 5's Open House at 6:00pm

**Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>:** First Day of Preschool

**Friday, October 11<sup>th</sup>:** 5's Field Trip- Schramm Park

**Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>:** No Preschool

**Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>:** No Preschool

**Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>:** 3's In-House Field Trip- Stomp Chomp Roar

**Friday, October 25<sup>th</sup>:** 4's Field Trip- Nelson Produce Farm

**Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>:** No School- All Saint's Day

**Monday, November 11<sup>th</sup> - Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>:** Annual Scholastic Bookfair (Fundraiser)

**Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>:** 5's All Saint's Day Program

**Friday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>:** 4's Thanksgiving Feast Program

**Monday, November 25<sup>th</sup>:** 3's Grandparents Day Program

**Wednesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> - Friday, November 29<sup>th</sup>:** No Preschool (Thanksgiving Holiday)

**Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>:** 4's Christmas Program

**Monday, December 16<sup>th</sup>:** 3's Christmas Program

**Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup>:** 5's Christmas Program

**Monday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> - Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>:** No Preschool – Christmas and New Year Holiday Break

**Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>:** Preschool Resumes

**Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>:** Tadpoles Open House at 6:00 p.m.

**Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>:** Tadpoles First Day

**Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>:** No Preschool (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

**Monday, February 10<sup>th</sup>:** No Preschool (President's Day)

**Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>-Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>:** No Preschool

**Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup> - Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup>:** No Preschool (Spring Break)

**Wednesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>:** 3's In-House Field Trip: Wildlife Encounters

**Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>:** 4's & 5's Field Trip: Wildlife Safari

**Friday, April 18-Monday April 21<sup>st</sup>:** No Preschool- Easter Break

**Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>:** Last Day of Preschool

**Wednesday May 14<sup>th</sup>:** Preschool Graduation at 6:00pm

## Sample of Daily Schedule

### THREES

8:40-9:00/12:10-12:30 - Opening/Prayer/Calendar

9:00-9:15/12:30-12:45 - Small Group Instruction

9:15-9:30/12:45-1:00 - Restroom

9:30-9:45/1:00-1:15 – Recess

9:45-10:00/1:15-1:30 - Snack

10:00-11:00/1:30-2:30- Large Group Instruction

11:00-11:10/2:30-2:40 - Closing and Dismissal

### FOURS

8:40-9:00/12:10-12:30 - Opening/Prayer/Calendar

9:00-9:15/12:30-12:45 - Small Group Instruction

9:15-9:30/12:45-1:00 - Restroom

9:30-9:45/1:00-1:15 – Recess

9:45-10:00/1:15-1:30 - Snack

10:00-11:00/1:30-2:30- Large Group Instruction

11:00-11:10/2:30-2:40 - Closing and Dismissal

### FIVES

8:40-9:00/12:10-12:30 - Opening/Prayer/Calendar

9:00-9:15/12:30-12:45 - Small Group Instruction

9:15-9:30/12:45-1:00 - Restroom

9:30-9:45/1:00-1:15 – Recess

9:45-10:00/1:15-1:30 - Snack

10:00-11:00/1:30-2:30- Large Group Instruction

11:00-11:10/2:30-2:40 - Closing and Dismissal