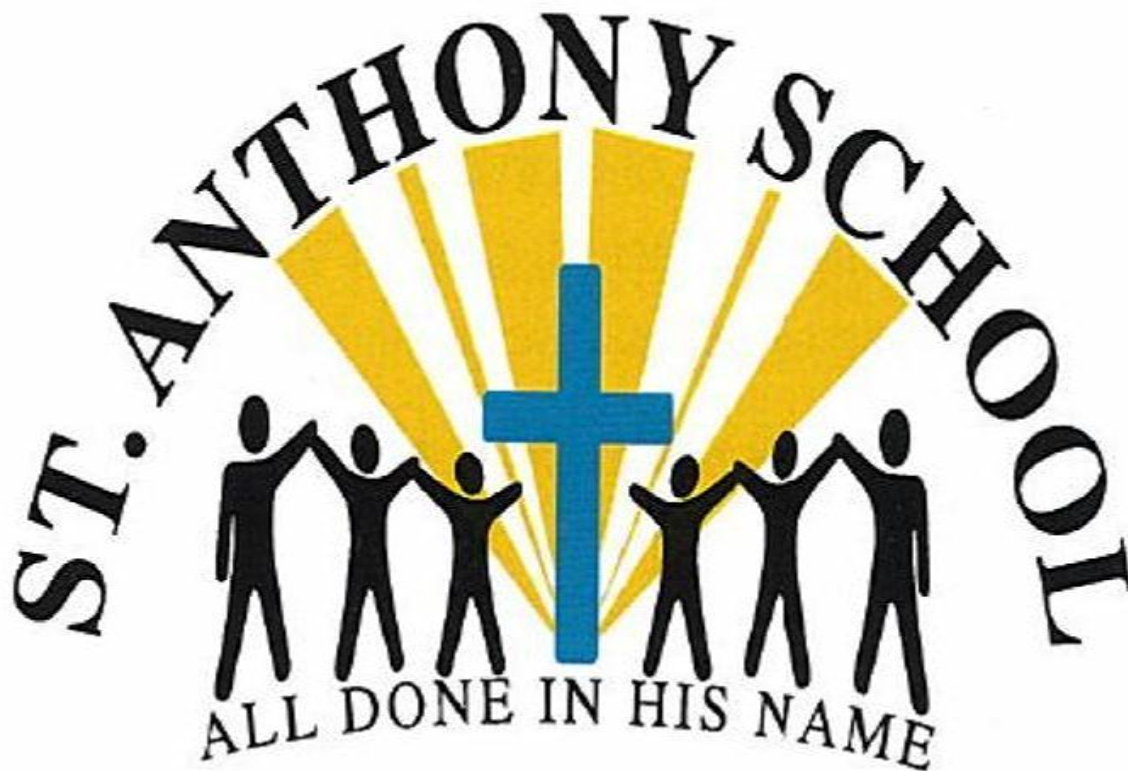


**St. Anthony  
Little Angels  
Preschool**



**PARENT HANDBOOK**

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## **I. Message from the Principal**

Welcome to St. Anthony Little Angels Preschool. We are very excited to have a successful preschool program within our St. Anthony learning community, as it provides a solid foundation of skills and experiences in preparation for the kindergarten to eight years that follow.

The philosophy of our preschool is to offer your child an opportunity to learn through play in a safe and caring environment. The program activities will follow current early childhood practices to meet the social, physical, intellectual, creative, emotional, and spiritual needs of each child. Our goal is to foster your child's development in these areas in order to prepare them for a lifetime of learning.

We look forward to working with both you and your child. Thank you for entrusting your child to our care!

God Bless!

Mrs. Melissa Highfield, Principal

## **II. Message from the Instructor Mrs. Miller**

I am very excited to meet new little friends and to renew friendships with those I already know. One of my favorite things to do is read and my greatest hope will be to inspire that love of literature within your child. Music and singing are another one of

my loves, so I try to share it with the children as well. Most importantly I want to share with the children and yourselves the greatness of our God through his love and examples of kindness, comforting, guiding, caring and sharing.

### **III. Welcome to the Preschool Program**

Entering a preschool program is a big step for you and your child. Our goal is to make the transition as smooth as possible.

The program will begin with a staggered entry immediately in the fall. This allows the instructor to welcome the children and ease them into the preschool setting and its routines. It also helps them to get acquainted with the school layout and perhaps meet the principal and other school personnel.

### **IV. Preschool Program at St. Thomas Aquinas Schools**

Early Childhood is a time of rapid growth in all aspects of the child's development: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, creativity, emergent literacy and cognitive skills.

Our preschool instructors create a nurturing environment in which young children can grow. They accomplish this by offering a child-centered and play-based approach. Learning through play, children gather valuable information as they develop the important skills that are necessary for future academic success. This hands-on approach allows the children to have experiences that will allow them to move from concrete to abstract.

Our Catholic preschools operate on the premise that each child is a unique creation of God. They experience God through group and individual activity centers, games, prayers and celebrations.

We welcome children of all faiths who are open to playing and learning in a Catholic environment. We value the diversity of the children and their families and welcome all in an unbiased and inclusive manner.

We plan and provide activities for the children that reflect these principles while continuing to build their communication, pre-academic, motor and social-emotional skills.

## **V. The Preschool Day**

This is just a sample of the activities your child will experience.

Circle Time Sit together as a group for prayer, attendance and other teacher lead activities related to the day's topic.

Craft Time this area provides opportunities for creative expression, emergent literacy and comprehensive tasks.

Literacy children may be involved in storytelling and other literacy related activities.

Physical Education children are provided with physical activities/creative movement and gross motor games.

Snack Time to recognize an opportunity for nutritious food choices and developing social relationships.

Clean Up children assist with cleaning up centers and cleaning up from snack and other activities.

Free Play encourages children to visit with their friends, teacher and play together while having their choice of centres and activities

**Scheduling Extras:** The preschool class will be invited to attend age appropriate cultural functions and/or celebrations that are booked for our school. You will be notified of these events during the school year.



**Arrival/Departure:** We ask that parents are punctual so we can effectively utilize our scheduled time. Parents are expected to sign their children in and out of the program each day. If an alternate person is picking up your child on a specific day, please indicate this in the sign in/out binder and inform the teacher. It is also important to inform the teacher if there are any people not authorized to pick up your child. All children must be accompanied to the preschool. Parking is available at the back of the school. Please ensure that your child is properly dressed for outdoor play each day.

**School Calendar:** The preschool calendar will be provided to parents at Parent Orientation. It will also be posted on the school website.

The preschool will close in conjunction with St. Anthony School closure. This announcement will be made through the St. Anthony School Facebook Page and through School Messenger.

## **VI. Identification and Early Intervention**

Research shows that a strong foundation in the early years increases the probability of positive outcomes particularly if early identification and effective intervention strategies are in place. With this understanding early identification is a very essential component of our program.

STAR Catholic Student Learning Services Team This may include putting a document called a Learning Plan in place and/or providing information to you about accessing community services for your child (at no cost to you.) These services may include

accessing the support of a Speech and Language Pathologist or an Occupational Therapist. In special circumstances, a physical therapist may also be available.

## **VII. How will Community Health Services meet the children's needs**

Taking your child to professionals such as a Speech and Language Pathologist or Occupational Therapist will give us concrete suggestions about how the school and home can support your child.

## **VIII. How will the Preschool Program prepare the children for Kindergarten**

Our preschool programs will give the children opportunities to explore their world through the hard work of play. Play is integral to a child's learning and essential to quality of life in childhood.

We also understand that children have milestones that are met at certain ages and stages in their lives. The children who are identified as having an area of concern will be helped and their progress monitored so that they may reach their goals.

This will help the children to experience success and continue to build their confidence in readiness for Kindergarten and to be lifelong learners.

## IX. Fees

Fees can be paid through School Cash Online (preferred method), by cheque (post-dated or not) or cash. You will have the option of paying in full or setting up your payment plan with up to ten payments. The last payment will be made on June 1 of the current school year.

Receipts will be issued for all funds collected.

Program	Enrollment Age	Program Cost	
5-Day/Week	4 yrs old OR Meets requirements for PUF	\$2680 (Year): \$50 Registration Fee \$2630 Program Fee	- All attendees qualify for Affordability Grant (\$75/month), which will reduce monthly fee - Families can apply for additional subsidy through Alberta Childcare Subsidies - Program fee can be divided into easy monthly payments
2-Day/Week Tuesday/Thursday	4 yrs old 3 yrs old by December 31, 2021	\$1180 (Year): \$50 Registration Fee \$1130 Program Fee	- All attendees qualify for Affordability Grant (\$75/month), which will reduce monthly fee - Families can apply for additional subsidy through Alberta Childcare Subsidies - Program fee can be divided into easy monthly payments



- 1) Information on applying for the Child Care Subsidy is available. Please see the following website for more information: <https://applychildcaresubsidy.alberta.ca/>
- 2) All cheques and post-dated cheques must be received on the first day of Preschool. Receipts will be issued for all funds collected.
- 3) Please inform the office if payment is a concern, as all NSF charges will result in an additional charge.

Should you need to withdraw your child during the school year, for any reason, let the preschool instructor, and the St. Anthony School administration team know, you are still responsible for your monthly fees, as the delivery of the program is based on full time attendance.

## **X. Health and Safety Concerns**

The following guidelines will help to keep our preschool a healthy place to learn and grow.

**Clothing:** All children are required to have a pair of indoor shoes (with non-marking soles) that will be left at the preschool. Please ensure that they are shoes that your

child can easily put on independently and that the shoes are clearly labeled. A complete set of extra clothing should be in each child's backpack in case of an accident or a spill and his/her belongings need to be clearly labeled. Please ensure that your child is properly dressed for outdoor play each day.

**Food/Snacks:** Parents provide snacks for the children at preschool. The provisions are fully discussed at the fall meeting. Licensing requires that children be provided with choices from two food groups. Certain snacks are not to be served in the preschool setting according to the Regional Health Authority. Please do not send the following food items to school: nuts and seeds, hard candies, caramels/toffee, chewing gum, popcorn, gumdrops, jellybeans, and snacks made with toothpicks. For the safety of the children with allergies the preschool is a peanut sensitive environment. Please do not send any food item that contains peanuts, peanut oil or peanut butter. Please be sure to read food labels carefully before packing a snack. Some foods require special preparation before young children consume them. Slice whole grapes and hot dogs. Chop hard fruits and vegetables. Fish with bones is considered a caution food.



**Medical Conditions:** Parents need to advise the teacher of any medical conditions their child may have. If your child requires medication administration or life saving medications (e.g. inhaler/epi-pen) parents must complete and turn in the “Request for Administration of Medication/Medical Treatment Form”.

**Illness:** Parents are encouraged to keep sick children at home. If your child contracts a communicable illness (e.g. Chicken pox, measles, etc.) they are not to attend school until they are no longer communicable. Please inform the teacher if this is the case, as we are required to inform other parents that their child may have been in contact with the illness. Parents will be contacted to pick up their child if they are at school with one of the following symptoms: a high temperature, diarrhea, vomiting, severe pain, or a discharge due to an infection, a new and unexplained rash, cough, sore throat or lice. Children should be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to preschool.

**Injuries:** Injuries will be assessed and a logical course of action will be taken. Minor injuries will be monitored and the parent will be notified upon arrival. For more serious injuries a staff member will stay with the child and the parent (and if need be medical personnel) will be contacted to arrange pick-up and/or transportation.

**Evacuations:** Should it be necessary to evacuate the classroom/school the preschool instructor will follow the evacuation procedures outlined for St. Anthony School. The instructor will carry the portable records and lead the children out of the school following their evacuation route or the safest route available. The volunteer parent helper, as the last person out, closes the classroom door. Aides assigned to special needs students will be responsible to assist in the safe exit of their students. Fire drills will take place periodically during the school year. All parents and school staff are made aware of the procedures and written guidelines are posted in each room. When developmentally appropriate the children will be informed of and practice evacuation procedures.

**Smoking:** According to School District Policy there is absolutely no smoking allowed on school property, while participating in school related activities or on field trips.

## **XI. Child Guidance Policy**

Our preschool will guide students in developing appropriate behavioral management skills that will strive to protect the self-esteem of the child while ensuring the safety of all. We will utilize both prevention and intervention methods to maintain a functional environment.

#### **Prevention Methods:**

- 1) A well-planned program based on the individual needs of each child will serve to motivate the children and keep the interest level high.
- 2) Planning for the transition time between activities will keep the children on task.
- 3) Outlining limits/expectations to the children in a clear, understandable manner and being consistent when applying the limits. Encourage desired behavior through words or gestures. Explain the logical consequence of any misbehavior.
- 4) Following through when giving the children a choice to make.
- 5) Developing problem-solving skills so the children can learn effective ways to deal with situations on their own.

#### **Intervention Methods:**

These will be used when undesirable behaviors need to be stopped or redirected:

- 1) Moving close to the child, acknowledge their feelings and clearly remind them of the expectations. Focus on the misbehavior while reassuring the child they are valued and cared for. Assist the child with the problem solving process and/or understanding the logical consequences for their misbehavior.
- 2) If a child is unable to reason or control their behavior, the rest of the children will be separated so they cannot hurt themselves or others. They will remain under the observation of a supervisor and when the supervisor feels the child is ready, the procedure outlined in the first step will be tried. When the child is ready to return to the group, signs of acceptable behavior will be positively reinforced.
- 3) If Steps 1 and 2 do not bring about the desired behavior and if after a reasonable amount of time the child shows no signs of regaining control the parents (or

guardian) will be contacted and the child will be sent home for the remainder of the class. Major discipline problems will be documented and discussed with parents where a mutually agreed upon action plan will be established.

## **XII.    Preschool Expectations**

Below is a tentative outline of preschool rules:

- 1. Be kind to others, use kind words and actions**
- 2. Use listening ears and understanding with our hearts when playing with friends**
- 3. Be responsible for all the blessings in our classroom**

When children struggle to meet expectations, staff will encourage understanding through positive and restorative interactions among classmates.

### **XIII. Parent Involvement**

Your involvement is especially important to your child.

It tells your child that their education is very important to you; that it is worthy of your valuable time and support. Your enthusiasm and participation in our activities is helpful to all our families and it helps gel our group as a community of learners.

**Parent Helpers:** Parents acting in the role of Roster Parent help make each class a special and successful day. Your presence is especially important to your child. It tells him/her that education is very important to you; that it is worthy of your valuable time and support. Your enthusiasm and participation in our activities is helpful to all our families and it helps gel our group as a community of learners.

On most days, just one Roster Parent will be needed. The teacher will request extra Roster Parents for special events. Please note that siblings are not allowed to attend preschool due to licensing regulations. At the Parent Orientation Meeting the duties for the Roster Parent will be discussed and a schedule will be made. If you are unable to assist on your scheduled day you must contact Mrs. Miller 780-542-4396 (please leave a message on machine if no one answers) or Mrs. Melissa Highfield (Principal) 780-514-4360, before the start of class, so arrangements can be made.

Prior to volunteering in the classroom, parents are required to obtain a criminal record check, inclusive of the vulnerable sector and a child welfare intervention check, as well as signing the STAR Catholic Volunteer Registration Form.

**St. Anthony Parent Council:** This council meets every month throughout the year. We encourage you to come to these meetings and get involved at your child's school.

*Thank you to those who have registered their child in our preschool. We value your commitment to our program and look forward to a super year!*

CONTACTS

ST. ANTHONY SCHOOL

780-542-4396

[www.stan.starcatholic.ab.ca](http://www.stan.starcatholic.ab.ca)

*Principal: Mrs. Melissa Highfield*

*Vice Principal: Mrs. Janelle Molzan*

*Instructor: Mrs. Roberta Miller*

ST. ANTHONY CHURCH

780-542-5254

*Priest: Father Felix*