

Holy Trinity Preschool



Parent Handbook

About Our School

Holy Trinity Preschool is a weekday preschool program stressing living and learning in a Christian context. The Preschool's goal is to foster the individual growth of each child in his/her socialization skills, ability to meet new situations, social interactions, self confidence, positive self image, emotional maturity and language and motor skill development.

Program

The Holy Trinity Preschool program is a holistic approach to learning. Language development skills, large and small motor skills, and age-appropriate academic skills (e.g. color, shape, name and letter recognition) are introduced and taught through various themes throughout the year. Art and science activities, stories, games, songs and finger plays relating to the themes are the vehicles through which the skills are taught. Teaching is individualized, as all children progress at different rates; the children have opportunities each day to work independently, in small and large groups, and to experience self-direction as well as to participate in structured lessons.

Curriculum

The main objective of Holy Trinity Preschool is to help your child develop a positive attitude toward school. We strive to provide a well-balanced program rich in experiences for your child in art, music, science, discussion, play and literature. Combining opportunities for free play with structured group activities, the school employs certified teachers and teacher's assistants to guide your children through a curriculum which includes language development, art, music, number usage, gross and fine motor skills, reading readiness, science and cultural studies.

We will be using 3 classrooms, the fellowship hall and the play yard for our school activities. Individuality is a prime concern for Holy Trinity Preschool. The children will have many opportunities to explore play in large groups, small groups and independently. Our Teachers and Assistants play an important role

in establishing an atmosphere that provides for freedom within the limits of guidance and safety.

Underlying Principles

Learning is fun. School is a positive and exciting place to be.

Gross and fine motor skill development is sequential. Development of these skills occurs according to each individual child's maturation.

Language development is essential to academic success.

Acceptable and appropriate behavior is learned through experience. Students are provided individual as well as small and large group exercises to allow for optimal social growth.

Children crave new experiences that allow for learning and growth.

Success fosters more success; a child's self-concept determines his behavior.

Children differ in abilities, experiences, methods and rates of learning and readiness. All lessons and activities are developed with this in mind.

Imagination, creativity, exploration and independence flourish in a warm and inviting atmosphere.

Depth of understanding increases through experiences and involvement – actively seeing, doing and trying rather than simply listening.

Christian ideals are not a subject apart from daily living, but rather a way to live and work together.

Communication

We believe that parent/teacher communication is important. The primary form of communication will be via email. On occasion information will be sent home via backpack.

If you would like a hard copy of any documents sent via email from the Teacher and/or Director, please let us know in writing. Otherwise, we will assume that you are fine with electronic communication as our primary source of disseminating information.

A bimonthly newsletter will be published to keep parents informed about our curriculum, special projects, upcoming events and field trips. Please read this important information.

There is a Parent Information bulletin board just inside the entrance to the preschool. Please check it for important information and announcements.

Each classroom will have a designated Room Parent. The role of the Room Parent is to help teachers organize and plan classroom parties, coordinate field trips if necessary and coordinate hospitality needs at school-sponsored events. He/she will also serve as a link to the Director and the Board. Ideas, comments and concerns may be addressed to the Room Parent or to any Board member.

Should you need to contact the Director or your child's Teacher, please call Holy Trinity Preschool at 685-5820 or other contact numbers or emails provided by the Director and/or Teacher.

Staff

Desiree Franciamone: Director

Desiree received her B.A. in Industrial Labor Relations with a minor in Business Economics, and a M.S. in Teaching from SUNY Potsdam. She taught for over nine years in the Tupper Lake and Sherburne-Earlville Central School Districts before moving back to Skaneateles. Three of her four children have attended HTP which has allowed her to be an active member of the Preschool as a parent, volunteer, Board member and Board President. She resides in Skaneateles with her husband and four daughters.

JoAnna Schmeling: Assistant to the Director

JoAnna received her CDA (A Child Development Associate Credential is a nationally recognized credential awarded to qualified caregivers who work with children from birth-age 5) through ChildCare Solutions in Syracuse. She has seven years of experience caring for and teaching young children. JoAnna has earned her Associate Degree in Early Education from CCC. She will continue her education this Fall at SUNY Cortland. JoAnna is an active member of her church. She lives in Skaneateles with her husband and twin boys.

Mindy Bathgate: Teacher (4's MWF & Assistant in 4's MW Enrichment)

Mindy has an Associate Degree in Early Education from Cayuga Community College. This is Mindy's 11th year at Holy Trinity Preschool. Prior to joining HTP Mindy worked and taught for 15 years at the Skaneateles Early Childhood Center. She lives in Skaneateles with her husband and two children.

Tracy Boehm: Assistant (4's TTHF & 4's TTH Enrichment)

Tracy has a B.A. from University of Buffalo in SSI-Legal Studies. She joined HTP as a substitute three years ago and has completed her first year as an Assistant in the 4's Enrichment class. She enjoys volunteering for her daughter's school and many activities. Tracy resides in Skaneateles with her husband and daughter.

Kelly Daley: Teacher (4's TTHF)

Kelly has a B.A. from Rutgers University and a MS in Reading Education from SUNY Cortland. This is Kelly's 11th year teaching the 4's at Holy Trinity Preschool. She has 15 years of teaching experience. Kelly is an active member of St. Mary's of the Lake Church where she has taught religious education for the past 14 years. She resides in Skaneateles with her husband and four children.

Lori Delasin: Teacher (4's MW Enrichment)

Lori is currently working toward her CDA (A Child Development Associate Credential is a nationally recognized credential awarded to qualified caregivers who work with children from birth-age 5) through ChildCare Solutions in Syracuse. She has been a part of HTP for 5 years, first as an Assistant and now as a Teacher. Lori is an active member of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. She lives in Skaneateles with her husband and 6 children.

Stephanie Fleming: Teacher (3's MW, TTH & F Enrichment)

Stephanie received her CDA (A Child Development Associate Credential is a nationally recognized credential awarded to qualified caregivers who work with children from birth-age 5) through ChildCare Solutions in Syracuse. She is going on 10 years of experience caring for and teaching young children birth to 12 years. This is her first year as the 3's Teacher at Holy Trinity Preschool. Stephanie lives in Elbridge with her husband Jim and son Trenton.

Debbie Eaton Meyer: Teacher (4's TTH Enrichment--Kaleidoscope Kids)

Debbie has degrees in Science and Education from Alfred State University, Catonsville Community College in Maryland, Towson University in Maryland. She attended Marymount University in Arlington, VA and Julliard School of Acting Workshop under John Houseman. She has taught creative dramatics to grades PreK through 12 for over 30 years and preschool, kindergarten and first grade for 28 years both in the USA and at TASIS England. Debbie is originally from Skaneateles and has returned "home" after living in the Baltimore/ Washington area and overseas for 32 years. She enjoyed working with the music department and VBS at Northside Baptist Church. This is Debbie's second year at HTP. She is the proud mom of three adult children and lives in Auburn with her three cats.

Michele Olsen: Assistant (3's MW & TTH and F Enrichment)

Michele has a B.A. in Early Childhood/Elementary Education and English Literature from Rider University. She taught at two different preschools and was a teacher for an after school program at a middle school. She is an active volunteer at her children's schools. This is her fourth year at HTP. Michele resides in Skaneateles with her husband and two daughters.

Jillian Solomon: Assistant (4's MWF)

Jillian has a B.A. from Syracuse University and a M.S. in Elementary Education from Pepperdine University. She has dual certification in Early Childhood and Childhood Education. In addition to working at HTP, she substitute teaches in the Marcellus School District and works at the Skaneateles YMCA. This is Jillian's third year at Holy Trinity Preschool. Jillian lives in Skaneateles.

HTP Board of Directors

4's Parent, President & Promotions Chair:	Michelle Mashia
Secretary & Church Representative:	Sue Eckhardt
Treasurer:	Amy Chabot
3's Parent, Press Chair:	Kari Williams
4's Parent, Newsletter & Co-Chair Cooking Up Preschool	Elizabeth Moro
4's Parent, Co-Chair Cooking Up Preschool	Robin Bradley
3's Parent, Purchaser:	Debbie Sheldon
4's Parent, Special Events & Projects Chair:	Lori Mancini
Church Representative:	Nancy Tiedemann

General

**Please do not send toys from home, unless requested by the teacher. They get lost and are hard to find with the toys we have available at school. We would not want your child to lose a treasured toy.

**Each child will be provided with a tote bag large enough to carry papers, notes, artwork and any necessary clothing/shoes to and from school.

**Please keep emergency and parents' work telephone and cell numbers current in our files.

Enrollment

Priority enrollment is given to children already enrolled in classes at Holy Trinity. A sibling may pre-register for the upcoming semester if a sibling is currently enrolled in the program. Next priority is given to children of church members. Remaining slots will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. All registration dates will be posted and advertised in advance.

In accordance with NYS Education Department enrollment standards, all children must be 3 or 4 years old by December 1 of the school year to register for the 3 year old and 4 year old classes, respectively. Additionally, Holy Trinity Preschool requires children attending it's program to be toilet trained.

State law requires that all Preschool children be properly protected with immunizations. Parents are required to furnish the Preschool with a copy of the child's immunization record prior to each and every school year.

Registration

A nontransferable and nonrefundable registration fee of \$50/year is due upon registration.

When a family agrees to enroll their child at HTP, we plan for the tuition in our budget. Therefore, we expect that if you sign your child up for the year, barring special circumstances, the tuition to be paid for the year. Tuition will be billed before each semester, but may be paid in full prior to each semester. Additionally, requests for quarterly or monthly payments will be honored. The first semester tuition is due before the start of school in September. The next semester payment is due on January 17th. Quarterly payments will be due before the start of school, November 1st, January 17th & March 14th.

Tuition is as follows:

Three year olds

2-day program: \$900/year or \$450/semester for each child
add Friday Enrichment for \$450/year

Four year olds

3-day program: \$1240/year or \$620/semester for each child
add 2-day Enrichment \$1000/year (includes 1 hour supervised lunch/recess hour)

A 10% tuition discount will be given to a second child in the immediate family attending preschool in the same school year.

Religious Content

The curriculum will include periodic visits by the Pastor or a Holy Trinity church member. He/She will share short Christian based stories or sing special songs with the children. The curriculum is non-denominational and is not to be confused with a "Sunday School" or religious education class that children would attend at their own churches. Rather, our program emphasizes Christian ideals and values that are not viewed as a subject apart from our daily living, but rather as the way we live and work together.

Attendance & Classroom Rules

Class size will be no larger than 12 children. There will be occasions when, due to special circumstances, a class may have 13 students enrolled. Each class will be taught by one Teacher along with the aide of one Assistant.

Class will be held from 9am -11:30am on Monday & Wednesday or Tuesday & Thursday for the 3-year-olds. The 3's Enrichment class will meet on Friday mornings from 9-11:30am. The 4-Year-Olds will have class on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 9-11:30am or Tuesday, Thursday, Friday mornings from 9-11:30am. The 4's Enrichment classes will be held on Monday & Wednesday or Tuesday & Thursday afternoons from 12:30-3:00pm. Those students attending the 4's Enrichment classes have a supervised lunch/recess hour available to them prior to their Enrichment class from 11:30-12:30.

School will NOT be held on days that Skaneateles Central Schools are not in session (i.e. Staff Development Days) or any snow days. When Skaneateles Central Schools have half days (e.g. Parent Conference Half-Days, Half-Day Staff Development Days), Holy Trinity Preschool will hold its PM classes. There will be no refunds or make-ups for emergency closing dates.

Arrival and Dismissal

No child may arrive before 8:55am/12:25pm as Teachers are not on duty prior to that time and need the time to get ready for the school day. If you arrive early please remain in the entryway area upstairs until 8:55 am or 12:25pm. When a child arrives at school each day, (s)he must be brought to the classroom by the adult who is responsible for him or her (unless using the drop off service). S(h)e is not to be left until greeted by the Teacher/Teacher's Assistant and left in the Teacher's care.

Parents/caregivers should be PROMPT in picking up their children at 11:30am or 3:00pm. Many of our teachers have children that they need to pick up and care for as well, so please be considerate and pick up your children ON TIME.

Parking and Drop Off/Pick Up Service

There is **absolutely** NO PARKING in either driveway of the church—not even for turning around please! The sidewalk in front of the school is very busy during drop off and pick-up times.

At HTP, we continue to try to make drop off/pick up as safe and efficient as possible. We implemented the Drop Off/Pick Up service two years ago and each year we continue to fine tune it in order to best serve our families and their needs.

In order for this service to work it is IMPERATIVE that you **do not** park in the spots in front of the school or those spots in front of the brick house right next to the school. These spots are marked with no parking signs which were put there so that we could implement this service for the safety of our families.

If you plan to get out of your car at drop off and/or pick up time PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE do not park in these spots. Please look for a spot, preferably on the same side of the road as the school if possible, outside of the Drop Off/Pick Up area.

Drop Off

- We will have a Teacher or an Assistant available to retrieve your child from your car at drop off time (8:55–9:05am) if you choose not to park and come inside. If you do not see a staff member please call the school number 685–5820 and one will be sent up to assist you.

Pick Up

- Each family will receive a color coded sign with your child's name on it. This sign must be placed in the front passenger side window at pick up time if you are planning to use this service. This will help the staff to easily identify which child is being picked up and that your child is being sent home with an adult that you have designated.
- A staff member will bring your child to your car and safely strap him/her in their car seat. PLEASE **do not** get out of your car! This slows the process and more importantly negates the safety issue that we are looking to alleviate!
- Once your child is safely strapped in their car seat please carefully pull out so that the cars waiting behind you can move forward.

Please Note

- To use this service your child's car seat must be placed behind the front passenger's seat for the safety of your child and our staff.
- Pull up as far as you can in the available spots. This will allow the service to work as efficiently as possible.
- Your teacher will often share quick information about the day with you while they strap your child in, but please do not try to use this time to engage your child's teacher in a lengthy discussion as they need to get all the children safely dismissed--which is their primary focus during this time.

If you are bringing your child in to the school please do not use try to use drop off or pick up time to engage your child's Teachers in lengthy discussions as it creates confusion for the children and interferes with the Teachers' primary focus which is to either get the day started with the class or get all of their students safely dismissed. If you have an issue that you would like to discuss with your child's Teacher please be considerate and set up an appropriate time. Your child's Teacher will very much appreciate this consideration and be more than happy to set up a time to speak with you by phone, email or in person.

A child is not released until the Teacher or Assistant recognizes the parent of the child. A child may be released to a carpool parent or other adult authorized to pick up your child. In the case of a "non-parent" collecting the child (grandparent, friend, relative, caregiver), a note from the parent must be given to the Teacher before the child is released to them.

Snow Closing Policy

If Skaneateles Schools close due to inclement weather, Holy Trinity will be closed.

If Skaneateles Schools announce a delay in opening, the AM preschool session will be cancelled. The PM class will be in session.

If Skaneateles Schools open on time but then announce an early dismissal (prior to 12:30) due to inclement weather, the PM preschool session will be cancelled.

Clothing

Dress your child so that (s)he feels comfortable about joining in activities and can handle going to the bathroom without too much help from the Teachers. Children feel more independent when they are wearing apparel that allows them freedom to move, play and participate.

Whenever possible, outdoor play will be encouraged. Always dress your child for possible outdoor play with appropriate jackets, coats, scarves, mittens, boots etc.

Rubber soled shoes prevent falling and slipping and are highly recommended. If snow/rain boots are worn, please bring in shoes/sneakers for the classroom. Boots are to be taken off and placed neatly on the boot trays beneath cubbies.

Your child's name should be on all clothing, shoes, lunch bags, water bottles, and backpacks.

Please send an extra change of clothes in your child's backpack in case of an "accident" or wetness from the weather.

Health

Parents are asked to cooperate with staff members in taking every precaution to prevent the spread of contagious diseases. Notify the school when your child has contracted a communicable disease. Be available to pick up your child during the school day if he or she becomes ill. Keep your child home until he/she has passed the infectious stage of the illness. A child who has been ill should not be brought in unless his/her temperature has been normal for the preceding 24 hrs. If at any time during the year you do not want your child to participate in outdoor play, please write a note explaining the reason and the child will remain indoors with the Teacher's Assistant. Please do not take advantage of this exception. In most instances, if the child is not well enough to play outdoors, (s)he is not well enough to attend school.

Snack

We ask the parents, on a rotating basis, to provide nutritious snacks -- fresh fruits and vegetables or cheese--for the entire class. The children will have the opportunity to eat until they are finished and may choose to bring home the "leftovers" if they are full.

Birthday and special occasion treats are allowed. These can be either homemade or commercially prepared. All treats/snacks brought into HTP **must be peanut/treenut free**. A list of nut-free snacks will be provided by your child's teacher and will be available on our website: holyltrinitypreschool.com.

An exception to the list will be during lunch time for the 4's Enrichment students. Following the policy of the Skaneateles Elementary Schools, we will have a nut free table at which all children who have lunches containing items without nuts will be able to sit. Children who have a peanut butter and jelly

sandwich, for example, will sit at a separate table with other children who aren't allergic and who have lunches both with or without nuts.

Birthdays may be shared at school, but please keep refreshments simple. Contact your child's teachers if you wish to bring special refreshments for birthdays or other special occasions. Please make certain that you bring enough refreshments for all children in the class. No party favors please. Summer birthdays will be celebrated in June.

**A special note regarding birthdays: Please do not pass out invitations to any private, home birthday parties at school as we wish to avoid hurt feelings of any little ones who you may not be able to invite. You will be provided with a class list with addresses in order to mail invitations, if you wish.

Classroom Guidance

We believe that children learn through positive reinforcement. The two most prevalent types of guidance used in the classroom are redirection and allowing the child an opportunity to correct his/her behavior (with an apology, clean-up, repair etc). If behavior problems persist, a parent/teacher conference will be recommended. No child will be made to feel humiliated, shamed or frightened. Holy Trinity encourages responsibility and compassion. Children will be encouraged to help each other feel good on the "inside" and the "outside".

Discipline

Should an incident occur in the classroom involving unfavorable behavior on the part of a child, the classroom teacher will file an incident report with the preschool Director and inform the parents of the situation. In the event of a persistent behavior problem (i.e. chronic biting), the classroom teacher and the Director will meet with the parents to discuss a course of action. The Preschool reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child, should a situation arise that endangers the welfare of the other children and cannot be resolved in a timely fashion. This action would be taken only after a fair trial period and a consultation with the parents has taken place. The safety and comfort of all children is important.

Conferences

An individual parent/teacher conference for each child will be held in the Spring of each academic year. However, teachers are available for consultation for any specific concerns throughout the semester. Please see the teacher to schedule such a conference if the need arises.

Safety

No child will ever be left alone or unsupervised.

Our preschool has regular fire drills. There is a fire emergency plan posted in the classroom explaining exit routes. Parents should familiarize themselves with this plan.

In the event of an emergency evacuation, all students and staff will walk to The Presbyterian Manor located at 49 West Genesee Street (685-7302) until help arrives.

Visitors are required to sign in and show identification. All visitors are encouraged to make an appointment with staff in advance.

The Holy Trinity Preschool Entrance will be locked from 9:45-11:00am for the morning session and 1:00-2:30 for the afternoon session. If you need to come in to the school during those hours, please call the preschool at 685-5820 and one of the staff will let you in.

Please keep emergency and parents' work telephone numbers current in our files.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of your child's preschool program. They enhance the learning taking place in the classroom and increase your child's awareness of his/her community.

While many trips are scheduled on the HTP calendar, there may be changes and/or additional dates that you will be kept updated on through an email from your child's Teacher or the Director. Information regarding and reminders of all trips will be sent via email by the Teachers.

For all walking field trips, the children will be dropped off and picked up at school just as they would on any other school day. The Teacher may request a certain number of parents sign up to help chaperone these trips.

For all of our non-walking field trips, Holy Trinity Preschool requests that you meet your child's Teacher and classmates at the field trip location. We ask that you provide transportation to and from the trip site. We feel this is the safest way for your child to participate in this type of experience. Parents should plan on dropping off or picking their child up at the trip site on those days. Again, Teachers may request that a certain number of parents sign up to chaperone

these trips. These trips do not always end at the “normal” end of school day time so please be aware of the pick up time if you plan to drop off your child at the field trip site and come back for pick up at the field trip site, as opposed to staying. The students will not meet at school on non-walking field trip days. If a non-walking field trip is cancelled due to weather, school will be in session as usual.

Car pool arrangements are encouraged, but must be made by the parent or through the Room Parent, not the classroom Teacher.

Your child’s field trips are a new and exciting experience for him/her. With that in mind, we ask that you make arrangements for siblings and not bring them along on these trips. Your child will appreciate this special time with you!

Parent Involvement/Fundraising

We appreciate and encourage parent involvement at our Preschool. Parents are welcome to observe or participate in the classroom at any time. If you have any special hobbies or talents that you would like to share with the children, please contact the Teacher.

Back to School Social – Parents’ Night Out – Friday, September 20th

6:30–8:30pm at Skaneateles Country Club

This is our second annual Parent’s Night Event which has been coordinated by parents/Board members Michelle Mashia and Lori Mancini. Flyers went home in registration packets and will be emailed as well. This new and fun event for parents (as well as Teachers, Staff & Board) will give those new to HTP a chance to meet other parents and others involved with HTP.

We are introducing a brand new fundraiser this year called **Stories and Sundaes**. It is scheduled for **Saturday, October 19th**. We are planning to have a story teller come in to spin some tales in the church sanctuary and afterwards we will have ice cream sundaes in the fellowship hall. This fundraiser will include some exciting raffles which we will ask for help from our families in selling tickets for prior to the event (drawing to be made at the event), as well as some additional raffle items available the day of the event.

Cooking Up Preschool is our main fundraiser. This event was started two years ago and has proven to be a big success. The date is currently set for **Monday, May 19th**. This was an amazing event where we had three chefs: HTP dad Ed Moro (Moro’s Table), former HTP dad Jamie Hunt (The Garage) and HTP friend Fabio Santalucia (Fabio’s Italian Restaurant–Cortland) share their favorite recipes as they demonstrated and provided tastings. This past year we included a silent auction with many wonderful offerings! We plan to do the

same this year and will need parent's help in donating and/or procuring auction items for the event.

Any and all involvement and help is greatly appreciated!

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students

Holy Trinity Preschool admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and other school-administered programs.