



**THIRD STREET PRESCHOOL**  
**Parent Handbook**  
**2016-2017**

THIRD STREET MUSIC SCHOOL SETTLEMENT  
235 East 11th Street □ New York, NY 10003  
Phone: (212) 777-3240 □ Fax: (212) 477-1808  
[www.thirdstreetmusicschool.org](http://www.thirdstreetmusicschool.org)



# THIRD STREET PRESCHOOL CALENDAR 2016 - 2017

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**First Day of Preschool** Wednesday, Sept. 14  
**First Day of Toddler Program** Monday, Sept. 19

## **PARENT MEETINGS, 6:00p.m.**

Preschool Parent Orientation Monday, Sept. 12  
Toddler Parent Orientation Thursday, Sept. 15  
Curriculum Meetings  
    *2/3s AM, 3/4s AM, Full-Day Sessions* Thursday, Oct. 13  
    *2/3s PM and 3/4s PM* Thursday, Oct. 20

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

Rosh Hashanah	Monday, Oct. 3 – Tuesday, Oct. 4
Columbus Day	Monday, Oct. 10
Yom Kippur	Wednesday, Oct. 12
Parent/Teacher Conferences	Thursday, Nov. 10
Thanksgiving Recess	Wednesday, Nov. 23 – Friday, Nov. 25
Professional Development Day	Thursday, Dec. 1
Winter Break	Monday, Dec. 19 – Monday, Jan. 2
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Monday, Jan. 16
Admissions Playdates	Tuesday, Jan. 17
Mid-Winter Break	Monday, Feb. 20 – Friday, Feb. 24
Spring Break	Monday, April 10 – Friday, April 14
Parent/Teacher Conferences	Thursday, May 4
Memorial Day	Monday, May 29

**Last Day of School** Friday, June 16

## FACULTY & STAFF

### Third Street Preschool

Teacher / Staff Member	Class	Location, Phone	E-mail
<b>Elaine Winter</b> Preschool Director		Ext. 16	<a href="mailto:ewinter@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">ewinter@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Kirstin Aadahl</b> Administrative Assistant		Ext. 48	<a href="mailto:kaadahl@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">kaadahl@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Nancy DiCostanzo</b> Head Teacher	<b>Full-Day Fours</b>	Lower Level, Ext. 22	<a href="mailto:ndicostanzo@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">ndicostanzo@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Jean LaPointe</b> Associate Teacher	<b>Full-Day Fours</b>	Lower Level, Ext. 22	<a href="mailto:jlapointe@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">jlapointe@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Cathy Guy</b> Head Teacher	<b>Three/Fours</b>	2nd Floor - 2A, Ext. 29	<a href="mailto:cguy@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">cguy@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Eileen Doster</b> Associate Teacher, Gardener and Art Specialist	<b>Three/Fours PM</b>	2nd Floor - 2A, Ext. 29	<a href="mailto:edoster@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">edoster@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Maite Castillo</b> Associate Teacher	<b>Three/Fours AM</b>	2nd Floor - 2A, Ext. 29	<a href="mailto:mcastillo@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">mcastillo@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Elisabeth Rothauser</b> Head Teacher	<b>Two/Threes</b>	1st Floor Ext. 12	<a href="mailto:erothausen@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">erothausen@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Dylan LaPointe</b> Associate Teacher	<b>Two/Threes</b>	1st Floor Ext. 12	<a href="mailto:dlapointe@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">dlapointe@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Honora Dearie</b> Associate Teacher	<b>Two/Threes AM</b>	1st Floor Ext. 12	<a href="mailto:hdearie@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">hdearie@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Crystal Bock</b> Head Teacher	<b>Third Street Toddlers</b>	2nd Floor 2F & Dance Studio	<a href="mailto:cbock@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">cbock@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>
<b>Marini Pickering</b> Teacher Aide	<b>Third Street Toddlers</b>	2nd Floor 2F & Dance Studio	<a href="mailto:mpickering@thirdstreetmusicschool.org">mpickering@thirdstreetmusicschool.org</a>

## **OUR MISSION**

The mission of Third Street Preschool is to instill in young children a deep curiosity about their world and to equip them with the tools they need to explore it. Preschoolers are encouraged to grow as creative thinkers and problem solvers, as risk takers with ever-changing interests, as imaginative playmates and as caring classmates. Our goal is to instill in young children a lifelong love of learning and the arts.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Through guided exploration, music and play, Third Street Preschool builds on preschoolers' eagerness to grow and learn. Children build and pretend, cook and paint, organize and count, write and draw. They sing, run, move to music, drum and dance. They learn about themselves and their classmates. As their confidence grows, preschoolers enjoy an emerging sense of competence and independence, along with a deepening respect for each another.

Children learn many things through music. At Third Street, we provide a range of rich musical experiences, from instrument introductions, to movement and sing-alongs. Each week, the arts spark children's imaginations.

## **CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS**

Third Street Preschool teachers lay the groundwork with classroom environments that are clear and "readable" to young children. They set clear expectations and maintain fair and consistent limits. What some call "structure"; we call a framework for education.

Our Approach:

- Teachers maintain consistent, doable routines and expectations
- They offer choices and respect children's initiative
- They rely on conversation and natural consequences to support collaboration
- They engage children in problem-solving

- They always acknowledge children's feelings
- Many times each day, teachers share their healthy sense of humor

## **COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS**

Please bring any questions or concerns directly to your child's teacher. If you need further assistance, Elaine (ext. 16) is happy to speak with you. Remember that teachers will not be available during the school day. **Do not text or phone your child's teacher while school is in session.** Should you need to contact them, you may do so through Kirstin or Elaine.

Expect to receive a weekly class Newsletter from your child's teacher and occasional letters from Elaine. We encourage you to let us know what is going on in your child's life as well.

## **SPECIAL PRESCHOOL & TODDLER OPPORTUNITIES:**

- Toddler Movement Classes are a part of each toddler session. Teachers are Pauline Pisano and Jackie Wolff.
- Preschool Movement Classes take place on Mondays and are taught by Julie Gayer-Kris.
- Preschool Music Classes take place on Wednesdays and are taught by Mik Manenti.
- Sing-Alongs take place once a month and are led by Cathy Guy. Family Sing-Alongs are held four times a year (dates TBD).
- Preschool Instrument Partners (PIP) provides optional, discounted instrument lessons to students in the Full-Day Fours.
- Early Bird Childcare makes it possible for parents to drop off their children as early as 8:30 a.m. on a regular or as-needed basis.
- Sustainable Gardening in the west yard of St. Marks Church-in-the-Bowery brings together children and parents for planting and garden care. Gardening initiatives are led by EiLeen Doster with the support of parent volunteers.

## **THIRD STREET TODDLER GUIDELINES**

Third Street Toddlers enjoy the support of their accompanying adults who guide their interactions and encourage participation. If you are in class, please:

- Keep your cell phone turned off, unless you are taking a photo
- Pitch in as needed during class transitions and clean-up times
- Know that your child will get messy as she plays and dress her appropriately

### **STROLLER PARKING**

- Stroller parking is available in the lobby for fold-up “umbrella” strollers.
- Please fold and hang your stroller before leaving the lobby.

### **COURTYARD & LOBBY GUIDELINES**

Families are welcome to use both the courtyard and lobby before and after school. These community spaces are great for lunch, outdoor play and socializing; please take advantage of them! Our guidelines are:

- Preschool children must be accompanied by an adult *at all times*. Please do not send your child to get a drink or use the bathroom on their own.
- Teachers may store outdoor equipment in the courtyard during the lunch hour. Your children are welcome to play with the balls, but please do not use building and climbing equipment.
- Clean up after your child’s lunch or snack. An outdoor garbage can is located beneath the fire escape.
- Help your child keep noise volume to a minimum, as classes will be ongoing.
- **Remind your children to stay clear of the stairwell doors on the ground floor – often these doors open quickly and people may not see that a child is behind them.**

### **SCHOOL SECURITY**

**Fire and Evacuation Drills:** As mandated by the NYC Fire Department, Toddler and Preschool classes observe regular Fire and Evacuation Drills. Third Street’s “Safe Haven” evacuation sites are t. marks Church-in-the-Bowery and the Asser Levy School, PS 19. A **Shelter in Place Policy** is also in effect, and teachers have been trained in its observance.

**Lobby Security** - We are fortunate to have two security guards who are on duty throughout the school day. These guards, Mario Cox and Beverly Harper, know our families well and screen all visitors. The renovated lobby allows for increased visibility.

## **ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL POLICIES**

### **Arrival**

**Please arrive on time.** On-time arrival is key to your child's participation. Arriving late can leave them feeling disoriented, unsure what they may have missed.

### **Dismissal**

Similarly, being picked up late can make children anxious and is unfair to teachers who need the time after class to clean up. Drop-off and pick-up are natural times to discuss issues with your child's teacher, however, if you need to have an extended conversation or discuss a sensitive issue, please arrange to have a conference outside of class hours.

***Please let the school know if someone new will be picking up your child. Children will not be dismissed to someone new without a parent's explicit permission. Please notify us via email if possible.***

### **Absences**

Please notify Kirstin Aadahl, ext. 48 if your child will be absent, particularly if s/he has a contagious illness, or if the absence is due to a significant family event.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

- **Please do NOT send in toys from home.** There are many reasons for this; the most important being that classrooms have so many materials to choose from.
- If your child likes to travel to school with a lovey, please ask them to return it to you at drop off. You will take care of it while they are in school.
- Phase-in Exception – The early days of school are the exception to this rule. If a small stuffed animal or “lovey” can make your child's adjustment easier, please allow them to keep it close.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**Allergies - Third Street is a nut-free school.** Do not send in foods that contain nuts or seeds.

**Hand Washing** - Help your child to wash their hands before entering the classroom. Teachers will reinforce hand-washing procedures throughout the day.

**Infectious Illnesses** - If your child exhibits any of these symptoms, please you keep them at home: fever, diarrhea, vomiting, sore throat, severe coughing, conjunctivitis, a severely runny nose or any contagious illness. Let the school know if your child has a contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, coxsackie, or flu so that we can alert the other parents. **The rule of thumb is to keep your child home until s/he has been symptom-free for 24 hours.**

**Lice** - Head lice is a problem that affects many schools and can be very difficult to control. Please let us know immediately if you detect nits or lice in your child's hair.

**School Emergency Policy** - Children are required by law to have a signed emergency treatment consent form on file in order to attend school. If your child becomes sick at school, you or your emergency contact will be called. We will make every effort to make your child feel comfortable until you arrive. Please note that we will not give any medication to your child without explicit written instructions.

**If a child needs immediate professional medical attention, we will use the emergency room facilities of Beth Israel Hospital.**

- **Health & Emergency Forms** - As mandated by the Department of Health, **all students must have fully completed and signed health and emergency forms on file in order to attend school.**



- o **Allergies & Medication** - Each classroom maintains an allergy list. Please be sure your child's teachers are aware of any allergy and the appropriate medication or response should a reaction occur.
- **Vaccination Requirements** - All preschool children are required by the Department of Health to be fully immunized or to present a letter of exemption. Unless we receive a letter from your pediatrician, your child must be immunized in order to attend school.

### **LUNCH GUIDELINES** – for families of the Three/Fours and Fours

1. **We are a nut and seed free program; do not send your child with peanut butter, hummus, granola bars, seeded bagels and such.**
2. Prepare a lunchbox lunch, clearly marked with your child's name on each container.
3. Include a freezer pack as lunches will not be refrigerated.
4. Send food you know your child likes; avoid "new foods" or unfamiliar leftovers.
5. Send easy-to-eat foods. Finger foods are great!
6. Think healthy! No sweets, please!
7. Pack a quantity you believe your child will eat; don't over-stuff that lunchbox.
8. Make it fun – draw a little heart on the napkin or use a cookie cutter for a shape sandwich.
9. So that you can gauge what works best, uneaten food will be re-packed.
10. For a number of reasons (allergies first and foremost), children will not be permitted to share their lunches.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

- **Class Reps** - Each class has two parent reps who help to coordinate classroom activities, social events and community service initiatives. It is fun and much appreciated!
- **Parent Committees** -  
Please join us on one of the following committees:

- The Green Initiative, which helps to sustain our garden and supports recycling efforts.
- The Diversity Committee, which extends our preschool's commitment to a rich and diverse community.
- Additional liaison support with the larger Third Street Music School and The Parents League are also appreciated.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences** - These are scheduled twice a year and typically run 20 minutes. They are an opportunity for you to discuss a child's progress with your child's teachers. Teachers will share with you what your child does during the day, how s/he has grown, and what goals they have for him or her. If special issues arise, conferences can be scheduled any time of the year with the teacher and/or the Director.
- **Coffee Hours** – During the year, we bring in a speaker to share their expertise on issues of interest to parents.

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSES at THIRD STREET**

**Early Childhood Classes** – With an eye to children's early foundational experiences in music and movement, Third Street's expert faculty offers these one-of-a-kind classes for children 5 and under:

- **Baby Sign & Sing for Newborn - 15-month-olds**
- **Let's Dance! for 3-5-year-olds**
- **Pre-Ballet for 2-5-year-olds**
- **Movement with Mik for 18-month - 4-year-olds**
- **Music Makers for 18-month - 3-year-olds**
- **Music & Me for 16-month – 3-year-olds**
- **Musical Connections for 4 - 5-year-olds**

To learn more, visit our website at [www.thirdstreetmusicschool.org](http://www.thirdstreetmusicschool.org).

## **RE-ENROLLMENT**

- **Placement** - All children currently enrolled in our preschool and toddler programs are guaranteed a space for the following year, as long as we agree that the preschool is an appropriate setting for your child, and you observe

the school's enrollment deadline. We will send you a Re-enrollment form in early December to ask if you are planning to return. Financial Aid applications are due at the same time.

In January, you will receive a re-enrollment contract for the following school year, and will have approximately one month to return along with a non-refundable tuition deposit. Please bear in mind that **all outstanding balances must be paid in full in order to register for the following school year.**

- **Third Street Toddlers** – Children enrolled in the toddler program are considered members of our preschool. They will also receive re-enrollment contracts.
- **Early Admission** – Siblings are eligible for early admissions consideration.

## **HOW TO DRESS YOUR CHILD**

- Dress your child in clothes that are easy to put on and take off. This is a great time saver during bathroom visits and before and after Movement.
- Dress your child in clothes that can get messy.
- Choose comfortable, rubber soled shoes. We all know that preschoolers like to run!
- Each classroom has its own lost and found, but we suggest **labeling everything** as many items look similar.

## **SNACKS**

The tradition at Third Street is that parents contribute two weeks of class snacks during the school year. Your child's teacher will schedule your snack weeks and explain the process to you. We encourage you to let them be part of the process to select **healthy, nutritious foods**. Thank you in advance!

## **HOLIDAYS and BIRTHDAYS**

In general, we keep the holidays low-key in the preschool. When we do incorporate holidays into the curriculum, the emphasis is always on exploring the various cultures that are represented in our community, rather than on religious content or

distant historical events. For example, at Thanksgiving, we focus on gratitude and giving. In this spirit, we invite you to talk with your child's teacher about sharing a family tradition with the class.

- **Birthdays!** – We love celebrating children’s birthdays and hope you will join the class for cupcakes and singing. Summer birthdays will be celebrated during the last two weeks of school. If you have a home party for your child, please invite just a few children or the entire class, so that no one feels left out.
- **Halloween** - Each year, Third Street Preschool hosts an exciting Halloween party. Please join us in making this year’s celebration the best ever!
- **Christmas, Chanukah & Kwanza** - December, with Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanza can be a very hectic time for families. Our philosophy is that school should be an oasis for children during this time. We sing, cook, read and discuss these holidays, but do not celebrate them in school.

## **GUIDELINES FOR A SMOOTH SEPARATION**

Please arrange to have a parent or caregiver on hand for the first days of school. As you are aware, we begin the year with a gradual phase-in schedule. While some children are comfortable letting you leave on the first day of school, the process for most is a more gradual one. We encourage you to follow the guidance and recommendations of your child’s teachers. Here are few tried-and-true guidelines:

1. **Be a positive model.** Your own feelings are probably the most important factor in how your child handles separation. The more relaxed, calm and confident you are the better for your child. (Faking it is acceptable!)
2. **Prepare your child before entering the classroom** by discussing what they might like to do, who they will see, etc. *Ask them* these questions -- this helps them to visualize the experience more than just listening to you, and helps make it more concrete.
3. **You may want to send your child to school with a favorite stuffed animal or book**--and perhaps a photo of you or the whole family. This brings a bit of home into school.

4. **Stay busy as you keep your child company.** You are there for comfort, not entertainment. (Your goal is to be boring.) The more often your child is able to interact with her teacher, the easier the transition will be.
6. **Show or tell your child where you will be while s/he is in class.** It helps children to be able to visualize where you are. You might invent an errand that you can share with your child when you return. You might be going to get a newspaper, some bananas, a loaf of bread.
7. **Say good-bye - no matter what!** It may be tempting to sneak out when your child is busily engaged, but it's likely to backfire later. Your child needs to trust that separation is a safe experience.
8. **Speak with your teachers as often as you need to.** They're happy to keep you posted.