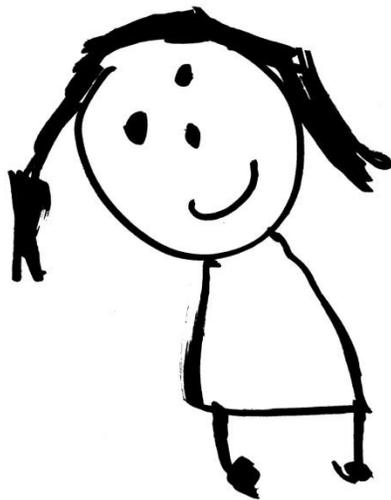


PRESCHOOL



Parent Manual
2018-2019

ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

As the family of God at St. Thomas More Parish, we are a Eucharistic Community of believers, called to live in faithfulness to the Gospel, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, in unity with our Pope and our Bishop. Nourished by his Body and Blood, we seek to offer worship to God as Jesus taught us, to pray for and serve one another in love and to live in faith and humility following the example of Mary.

The Gospel is our hope. In the spirit of our patron, St. Thomas More, we strive to educate ourselves, our children and our neighbors in its witness and its power. We seek its justice, while serving the needs of the weak and deprived, in the name of the Risen Lord.

ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More Catholic School provides students with a Catholic atmosphere to know, love, and serve God.

ST. THOMAS MORE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Each individual is created by God with a unique mind, heart, body and spirit. St. Thomas More Catholic School, in partnership with the home, ministers to our children in developing his/her intellectual, spiritual, social, and physical potential.

Christ as the servant model guides us to know, love, and serve God. Through traditional education and the use of current technology, we emphasize the importance of acquiring foundational knowledge and critical thinking skills. We integrate citizenship and faith throughout the curriculum to develop responsible stewards who live Gospel values.

ST. THOMAS MORE PRESCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

St. Thomas More Preschool exists to provide a safe, Christian, learning environment for preschool children.

The Preschool supports the St. Thomas More School Handbook policies.

ST. THOMAS MORE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

The staff at St Thomas More Preschool believes that all children are capable learners who learn best by interacting with their environment and having hands on experiences. We strive to provide a Catholic-based atmosphere where each child's strengths and differences are valued and integrated into the curriculum. St. Thomas More focuses our curriculum in the preschool program on the social and emotional growth of our students with an academic emphasis being added into the pre-kindergarten program.

We will provide a wide range of activities for the children, many of which will be able to be explored upon a child's choice, while some will be teacher directed. All lessons will be tailored to the group of children in the classroom so that all children can experience success and growth.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Parents are responsible for bringing their children to and from school. If an individual, other than the parent or legal guardian, is responsible for transportation of the child after the school day, written permission must be given in advance.

Doors are open 5 minutes before the start of class. A teacher will greet you and your child at the door. Children will be lined up promptly for pick up. **Please be prompt when picking up your child so the teacher may begin their planning time.**

BILLING AND PAYMENTS

For the convenience of the parents, there are multiple plans to pay tuition. We have a 1 payment, quarterly and a ten month payment plan. The first payment on all these plans is due on August 5th prior to the start of school. Tuition notices are available on the Sycamore website. Invoices can be sent through the mail, upon request. Families with balance owing for preschool will jeopardize their place in admission to kindergarten. You may send your payment by mailing your payment to the school, dropping it off in the Preschool payment box, bringing it to the school office, or having your debit/credit card automatically debited (a convenience charge applies).

Children who remain all day when only enrolled for a ½ day will be assessed the drop-in rate for this additional time. This arrangement needs to be discussed with the teacher prior to the day and is only available if there is space.

Fees paid are non-refundable and Tuition is only refundable if paid in advance of actual cost per month. Tuition will only be refunded for full month(s) not in attendance. For example: Should a student be withdrawn on November 15th, there will be NO pro-rated refund.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a great celebration and will be celebrated during the preschoolers' day. Summer birthdays can be celebrated in the late spring. Due to allergy concerns, all treats must be store bought with an ingredient list that the staff can read prior to handing out. We would kindly ask that you send birthday party invitations through the mail unless every child is invited.

BOOK ORDERS

Occasionally, book orders will be sent home. It is entirely optional to purchase these books. They can be an excellent way to create a library for your child/children since the cost is very reasonable. In addition, our class is able to earn free books to add to our library. Please make checks payable to *Scholastic Book Clubs*. Book Orders are also available online for purchase. Our classroom code is H28RT. Information on how to log in is available on www.scholastic.com

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The St. Thomas More Preschool program will report any suspected child abuse, neglect or exploitation to Child Protective Services and the local law enforcement agency.

CLOTHING

Preschool is a hands-on learning environment; therefore, children will get dirty. All clothing should be comfortable, suitable, and appropriate for weather, play and art conditions/activities. We recommend tennis shoes and we do not recommend sandals or flip flops because of the play area. Socks are required by law. **Label all items with your child's name.** Unmarked or lost clothes will be put in the lost and found box and donated to St. Vincent de Paul after one month.

CURRICULUM 3-YEAR-OLD'S

3 yr old	Letters	Math	Science	Religion	Adult Skills	Theme	Dr. Seuss Focus
September	A, B, C	Number sense: 1-5 Counting, 1:1, & Recognition	Measurement & Observation	Creation	Bathroom Skills	Learn about Me	Ten Apples Up On Top
October	D, E, J		Five Senses	The Mass	Sharing	Halloween Autumn	Please Remember the First of October
November	L, M, P	Number sense: 6-10 Counting, 1:1, & Recognition	Colors	Advent	Cleaning up after yourself	Veterans Thanksgiving	Horton Hears a Who
December	R, S, T		Temperature & States of Matter	Nativity	Winter Gear- self dressing	Christmas Silver & Gold	How the Grinch Stole Christmas
January	I, O, U	Geometry	Simple Machines	Noah's Ark	Manners	MLK Jr Diversity	The Cat in the Hat
February	F, G, H	Classifying	Dental & Physical Health	Lent	Germs	Groundhog Valentine's Presidents	Fox in Socks
March	K, N	Representation, Patterns	Weather & Environment	Easter	Scissors	Dr. Seuss St. Patrick Day	Green Eggs and Ham
April	V, W, Q	Subitizing	Dinosaur & Animals	Service	Zippers	Easter	The Lorax
May	X, Y, Z	Review	Butterflies & Plants	Ten Commandme nts	Buttons, Buckles & Snaps	Mother's Day 100th Day	One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish
June	review	End of Year					Oh, The Places You'll Go

"I praise you, so wonderfully you made me;
wonderful are your works."

(Psalm 139:14)

CURRICULUM 4-YEAR-OLD'S

4 yr old	<u>Phonics</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Science</u>	<u>Religion</u>	<u>Geography</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Dr. Seuss Focus</u>
September	S, A, T	1, 2, 3	Measurement & Apples	God Created the World and Me	Intro to the World	Learn about Me	Ten Apples Up On Top
October	I, P, N	4, 5, 6	Five Senses & Pumpkins	God Created my Family	North America	Halloween Autumn	Please Remember the First of October
November	C, K, E	7, 8, 9	Time, Nutrition & Harvest	Saints	South America	Veterans Thanksgiving	Horton Hears a Who
December	H, R	10	Time & Space	Advent & Nativity	Antartica	Christmas Silver & Gold	How the Grinch Stole Christmas
January	M, D, G	11, 12	Water Cycle, Animals in Winter	Prayer and God's Presence	Europe	MLK Jr Diversity	The Cat in the Hat
February	O, L, F	13, 14	Dental Health & Weather	St. Valentine	Asia	Groundhog Valentine's Presidents	Fox in Socks
March	B, Q, U	15, 16	Frog Life Cycle & Mixing Colors	Lent	Africa	Dr. Seuss St. Patrick Day	Green Eggs and Ham
April	J, Z, W	17, 18	Spring & Butterflies	Easter	Australia	Easter	The Lorax
May	V, X, Y	19, 20	Plant Life Cycle	Mary	Oceans	Mother's Day 100th Day	One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish
June	review	End of Year					Oh, The Places You'll Go

DAILY SCHEDULE

Time	Schedule
8:00	Breakfast/Open Centers
8:30	Preschool Begins /Open Centers
9:00	Circle
9:30	Dancing and Movement
9:45	Snack
10:00	Projects (PK)/ <i>Outside Play(PS)</i>
10:20	Open Centers
11:00	Outside Play (PK)/ <i>Projects (PS)</i>
11:20	Story Time
11:30	Preschool Ends
11:45	Lunch
12:10	Outside Play
12:30	Story Time
12:45	Rest Time/Quiet Play
2:15	Snack
2:30	Outside Time
2:50	Story Time
3:00	Open Centers
4:00	Combine with EC in PS Room, Open Centers

DISCIPLINE

The staff is educated in the principles of **Love & Logic**, a program authored by Jim Fay and Dr. Foster Cline.

The child's self-concept is always a prime consideration and an equal balance of consequences and empathy replaces punishment. Love allows children to grow through their mistakes. Logic happens when we allow them to live the consequences of their choices. For information on classes or materials contact the school office or a teacher.

EARLY CHILDHOOD GROWTH

Three, four and five-year old children are in a period of rapid physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth. In fact, it is estimated that half of a person's intelligence is formed by the age of four and that two-thirds is formed by the age of six. During this period of rapid, early growth, children become more aware of themselves as they become separate individuals; they test their developing strength and abilities and experience joy in their achievements.

The goal of St. Thomas More Preschool is to help children in the process of discovering their potential and gaining confidence in themselves as individuals. We are looking forward to working with each child and filling each day with new experiences. We anticipate that your child will be happy and eager to be a part of St. Thomas More Preschool.

EXPULSION POLICY

Before a child is asked to leave due to behavioral or other issues, St. Thomas More will complete the following:

- An assessment from child's teacher indicating concern areas
- An independent assessment from another early childhood professional
- A meeting with child's family and teaching staff to set up a behavioral plan

We reserve the right to ask a child to leave our care immediately if they are danger to themselves or other children or staff. The safety of all are considered when making these decisions.

FIELD TRIPS

The preschool children are given the opportunity once a year for a field trip to a local park. We walk with our "fifth-grade buddies" along with teachers, aides and parent volunteers. A permission slip is required to attend the field trip.

HEALTH POLICIES

All children must have a completed immunization form on file prior to the first day of school.

All children must be potty trained.

In order for medication to be given at school, we must have the paperwork required by both the state and the Diocese at Spokane with a physician's signature. Medication must be kept in the original container. For more information please see our *Health Care Policy*. For forms please ask your child's teacher.

No latex balloons will be allowed in the classroom due to their potential as a choking hazard for very young children who may put them in their mouths.

The children will not be served nuts or nut products because of the allergy potential associated with these foods. This does **not** include food that "may have been made on the same equipment as nuts." If your child has any severe food allergy please speak immediately with your child's teacher and get an allergy plan in place.

Health Issues: Parents must notify teachers of all medical conditions and concerns regarding their child. Basic first aid will be administered in the event of minor injuries and written notification of the occurrence will be sent home that day. All teachers have completed First Aid, Safety and CPR classes specifically designed for early childhood caregivers. *The Health Care Policy* is available to review at Preschool Open House or at any time.

Children who become ill while in school should be taken home as soon as possible. Children will be well cared for and removed from the group until parents arrive.

Minor Accidents: These are treated (washed and covered) by the teacher. The designated First Aid team will treat incidents involving bleeding. Parents will be contacted if their child suffers a head injury.

Major Accident or Illness: The parents are notified immediately. If necessary, the child will be transported to the nearest emergency facility or the emergency facility designated by the parents on the 2nd page of the enrollment paperwork: "Permission Form/Parent Manual Verification" which is completed at registration.

Returning to School: Once children have returned to school after an illness, they are expected to participate in all play activities, indoors and outdoors. A child, who is not well enough to go outdoors, should be kept home. Health guidelines suggest that children should be kept home for the first two days of a cold. Also, a child should not be in school if she/he has had a fever within the past 24 hours.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Our learning environment is one in which the uniqueness of each child is emphasized. The group size will not exceed 20, with total registrations capped at 25 children. There will be an aide present for any group larger than 10.

Communication and social skills will be encouraged through group activities and cooperative play. Enhancement of gross and fine motor skills will be fostered within the classroom setting and during outside play. The children will also experience prayer and celebration through music, traditions, and Bible stories.

We use an assessment tool, Environment Rating Scales (ERS), to constantly assess our environment for safety and quality. The scales has 43 items to assess that fall into 7 categories: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Language-Reasoning, Activities, Interactions, Program Structure, & Parents and Staff. This tool is researched based and has been proven to improve the quality of a center's environment.

LOCATION AND DRIVING DIRECTIONS

Saint Thomas More Preschool is located in the lower level of the former rectory building. This is to your right as you enter the parking lot; to your left is the gymnasium.

Coming from North Division north of "The Y":

1. Turn right (west) on to Country Homes Boulevard
2. Turn left (South) on to Wall
3. Turn left (east) on to Carolina Way.
4. Proceed directly into the parking lot or turn right then left into the circular driveway.

Coming from South Division

1. Turn left (west) on to Cascade Way
2. Turn right (north) on to Wall
3. Turn right (east) on to Carolina Way
4. Proceed directly into the parking lot or turn right then left into the circular driveway.

NAPTIME

Children in All Day care will be given an opportunity to rest or relax in the afternoon. On your child's "Getting to Know Me" form you will be asked if they nap or not. We will respect the

wishes of parents on naptime, as we are aware that this can directly affect the quality of sleep in the evening. Children who no longer need a nap will be given quiet activities to do while the other children are napping. Nappers will be located in their own room to preserve their quality of sleep. Any child who requests a nap, unless parents have specifically asked for no naps, will be given a nap.

We ask that all children who nap bring 2 blankets-1 for under and 1 for over the child. Children are also allowed to bring a comfort item if needed that will only be brought out during naptime. These items need to be brought home on Friday for laundering and returned on Monday.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The St. Thomas More Preschool program shall comply with the spirit of equal opportunity and with the letter of all applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

NUTRITION

St Thomas More Preschool is committed to the health of the children in our care. We will provide nutritious meals and snacks based on the current USDA guidelines. If children are in our care before 8am they will receive a nutritious breakfast. All children will be offered a snack at 9:30am, Lunch at 11:30, and snack at 2:30pm. Children who are in our care at 5pm will be given a late afternoon snack. 2% milk will be served at all meals.

Monthly menus will be given to parents and hung in each building. Parents are always welcome to send alternative food for lunch for their child. We ask that you clearly label the food or container with the child's first and last name and date of bringing to the school.

If your child is allergic to a food item, we need to have an allergy plan in place and documented in order to provide alternative food from our own supply.

OPENINGS AND CLOSINGS

Our calendar runs from September through June. We will generally follow the St. Thomas More Catholic School calendar that is available on the school website: www.thomasmorespokane.org. **Please, also check the monthly all school calendar for changes that naturally occur during the year. Note that the Preschool classes are also closed on teacher in-service days.** In case of bad weather, we will follow the St. Thomas More School schedule for school closings or delays. Days lost due to inclement weather will not be made up or credited.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT and COMMUNICATION

The staff encourages communication and cooperation between school and home to make your child's preschool experience the best it can be. **Parents, as visitors, are welcome at the Preschool at any time.**

A monthly Preschool newsletter will be sent home to provide parents with the upcoming curriculum and special events. An informal conference can be held upon request at any time. A formal conference will be held each fall, winter and spring. Please look for the sign up form to meet with your child's teacher(s) when these times get closer.

The director will also send out a newsletter quarterly entitled “From the Director’s Desk”, with topics based on early childhood education research, advocating for early childhood education and other topics that affect education and early childhood education in our community and globally.

There will be many occasions for parent volunteers in the preschool setting, as well as opportunities for parents to help by preparing things at home. Siblings are welcome to come with you on your Parent-Volunteer Day; however, we would ask you to respectfully consider whether another child’s presence would be a distraction. All volunteers in the school must attend a training and receive a background check. Please see your child’s teacher for more information.

St. Thomas More Catholic School maintains a website: www.thomasmorespokane.org with Preschool information. The Preschool teachers can be reached at 466-3811, ext. 431. All parents should receive a magnet at Open House with contact information for your child’s teacher. If you ever need a new one please let us know, we will gladly give you one.

We maintain a small library of parenting resource books on premise. These books are for parent’s to check out at will. Please talk to your child’s teacher to check one of these books out. If you have any books you would like to donate for this library, we gladly accept donations.

PESTICIDE POLICY

To minimize potential pesticide exposure to children and staff, pest control practices in this facility will include a variety of non-chemical and chemical methods. This policy includes both notifying parents and staff 48 hours in advance, and posting signs at the time of application. It is our policy **not** to apply any pesticides when children are present unless there is an emergency. A detailed description of this policy is available upon request and will also be available on registration night and at the sign-in area.

PHONE LIST

In the fall, a complete phone list will be available for viewing at www.sycamoreeducation.com. Please contact the director if you need help logging on to Sycamore.

REGISTRATION

St. Thomas More Preschool is open to all children. The registration fee is **non-refundable**. Exceptions are granted for medical issues with written communication from a medical professional.

Pre-registration will be held to ensure enrollment of students in the following order of priority:

1. Children already enrolled in the Preschool Program
2. Siblings of current St. Thomas More Catholic School students
3. Parishioner’s children

General registration will be held after pre-registration is completed. Students will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. A waiting list will be created if all student positions are filled. For 3 year olds who are not yet potty-trained at the time of registration in the spring, we will have a one month time period from the date of the first day of school in which parents can make a decision about whether the child is ready for school. In the event the child is still not potty-trained, we will enroll the next child on the waiting list. The other student will remain at the top of the waiting list until potty-trained and/or space is available.

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

St Thomas More Preschool is connected with St Thomas More Catholic Church and School. Therefore, Catholic teachings are taught, prayer is said before every meal, and religious activities are a frequent part of the curriculum. Children will also attend Mass and prayer services occasionally.

SECURITY ISSUES

All teachers and instructional assistants in Preschool have had a Washington State Patrol check and fingerprinting as required by the Diocese of Spokane, St. Thomas More School, and Washington State Law. Parents who volunteer on a regular basis will be required to have the same checks performed. If you are interested in volunteering in the classroom please fill out the **Parent Volunteer Form**. Only St. Thomas More teachers and instructional assistants will be permitted to escort children to the restroom. The exception, of course, is that a parent may escort his or her own child.

St. Thomas More Preschool will have fire/disaster drills throughout the year. Preschool children will participate. This would be a good time to discuss fire safety at home. St. Thomas More School has a Crisis Plan available to see at Preschool Open House or at any time during the school year.

SICKNESS AND EMERGENCY

Out of generous concern for others, please do not send your child to school if she/he has a fever, severe cold, or cough. Please do not send your child to school if she/he has had diarrhea, vomiting, or fever within the last 24 hours. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be called to take the child home. An emergency form, with at least three persons who can be contacted, must be completed and given to the school by the first day. **It is imperative that we have current phone contacts.**

SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT POLICY

Each child will be signed into St. Thomas More Preschool at the beginning of each daily session. Each child will be signed-out daily at program close. Parents/caregivers must use their **full signature** when signing in and signing out children. Children may be signed-out only by their parent or by those care givers who been authorized by the child's parents in writing on the enrollment forms. Additional names may be added at any time.

TRANSITIONS

During the conference in winter, we will ask you which kindergarten you are planning on enrolling your child in. This way we will be able to help with this important transition and help your child feel comfortable with the move from our preschool to a “big kid” school.

If your child is going to continue their education at St Thomas More, they visit the kindergarten classroom here at St Thomas More and each kindergartner “mentors” one of the preschoolers for their visit so they can ask any questions and even just know a familiar face on the playground next year.

We end the year with a graduation ceremony where all parents and families are invited to celebrate their child’s achievements throughout the year and look forward to the excitement of moving on.

If your child, for whatever reason, needs to change schools mid-year we are happy to help make that transition as easy as possible for them. You are always welcome to ask for a copy of your child’s assessments and as much of their portfolio as is available to take with you to share with your child’s next teacher.

TREASURES

Our equipment has been specifically selected to be educational and fun for children. Toys brought from home may be lost or broken. We encourage children to bring items of interest from family trips or items associated with monthly curriculum themes; however, toys become a distraction to the learning environment and are highly discouraged. **Preschool does not accept responsibility for lost or broken toys.** We will ask that toys be placed in “cubbies” or in book bags during school hours. Special comfort items (blankies, or stuffed animals) may be brought to school. Children will be encouraged to also leave them in their “cubbies” except when needed for consolation.

PARENT SUGGESTIONS

You can assist your child with his/her education at home. Here are some simple tasks.

- a) If your child can do a task by his or herself, let her, even if it isn’t perfect. Some suggestions would be: making a bed, pouring juice, choosing clothes, zipping or buttoning.
- b) Include your child in your household chores. It builds confidence, self-esteem and helps them to feel important in the family. Teach the chore and be patient with the results.
- c) Teach your child to print his/her name correctly, with lower case letters, not all uppercase. Feel free to ask for a sample alphabet sheet.
- d) Read, read, read! All the research supports this wonderful activity. Don’t forget to visit the library often.
- e) Scissors, glue, junk mail, or old magazines provide entertainment and teach fine motor skills and creativity.
- f) Limit television, electronic games, and an overabundance of toys. Children need to play and learn on their own. Enjoy watching them – they are little for such a short time! Remember, the big box is often more interesting than the gift!

The First Day of School

I used to be little, but not any more.
Tomorrow I'll get up and walk out the door.
I'm going to school – it's the first time for me.
It's great to be big, but I'm scared as can be.

My tummy's in knots. Do you want to know what?
I'm thinking that maybe, just maybe, I'll cry.
When Dad leaves the school and I'm there all alone.
I'm thinking that maybe I'll want to go home.

But wait – Mommy said I'll play lots of new games,
And meet lots of friends – I can learn all their names.
The first day of school, oh there's so much to do!
There's painting and books and a big playground, too.

I used to be little, but not any more.
Tomorrow I'll get up and walk out the door.
I'm going to school – it's my first day, you see
It's great to be big! I'm so glad that I'm me!

What Every Child Needs for Good Mental Health

To grow healthy and strong, children should have good food, plenty of sleep, exercise and fresh air. Children have emotional needs too. To have perfect health, to be both healthy and happy, all children require...

LOVE – Every child needs to feel that...

- his parents love, want and enjoy him
- she matters very much to someone
- there are people near him who care what happens to him

ACCEPTANCE – Every child needs to believe that...

- her parents like her for herself, just the way she is.
- they like him all the time, and not only when he acts according to their ideas of the way a child should act.
- they always accept him, even though often they may not approve of the things he does.
- they will let her grow and develop in her own way.

SECURITY – Every child needs to know that...

- his home is a good safe place he can feel sure about.
- her parents will always be on hand, especially in times of crisis when she needs them the most.
- he belongs to a family or group; that there is a place where he fits in.

PROTECTION – Every child needs to feel that...

- her parents will keep her safe from harm.
- they will help him when he must face strange, unknown frightening situations.

INDEPENDENCE – Every child needs to know that...

- her parents want her to grow up and encourage her to try new things.
- they have confidence in him and in his ability to do things for himself and by himself.

FAITH – Every child needs to have...

- a set of moral standards to live by.
- a belief in the human values – kindness, courage, honesty, generosity and justice

GUIDANCE – Every child needs to have...

- friendly help in learning how to behave toward persons and things.
- grown-ups around her who show, by example, how to get along with others.

CONTROL – Every child needs to know that...

- there are limits to what he is permitted to do and that his parents will hold him to these limits.
- though it is all right to feel jealous or angry, he will not be allowed to hurt himself or others when he has these feelings.

Keep Me Home If...



I'm vomiting

I have a rash or head lice

I have diarrhea

I have an eye infection

I have a sore throat

I'm just not feeling very good

I have a fever

Two or more times in 24 hours

Body rash, with a fever or itching, or head lice

3 or more watery stools in 24 hours

Thick mucus or pus draining from the eye

With fever or swollen glands

Unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, confused or cranky

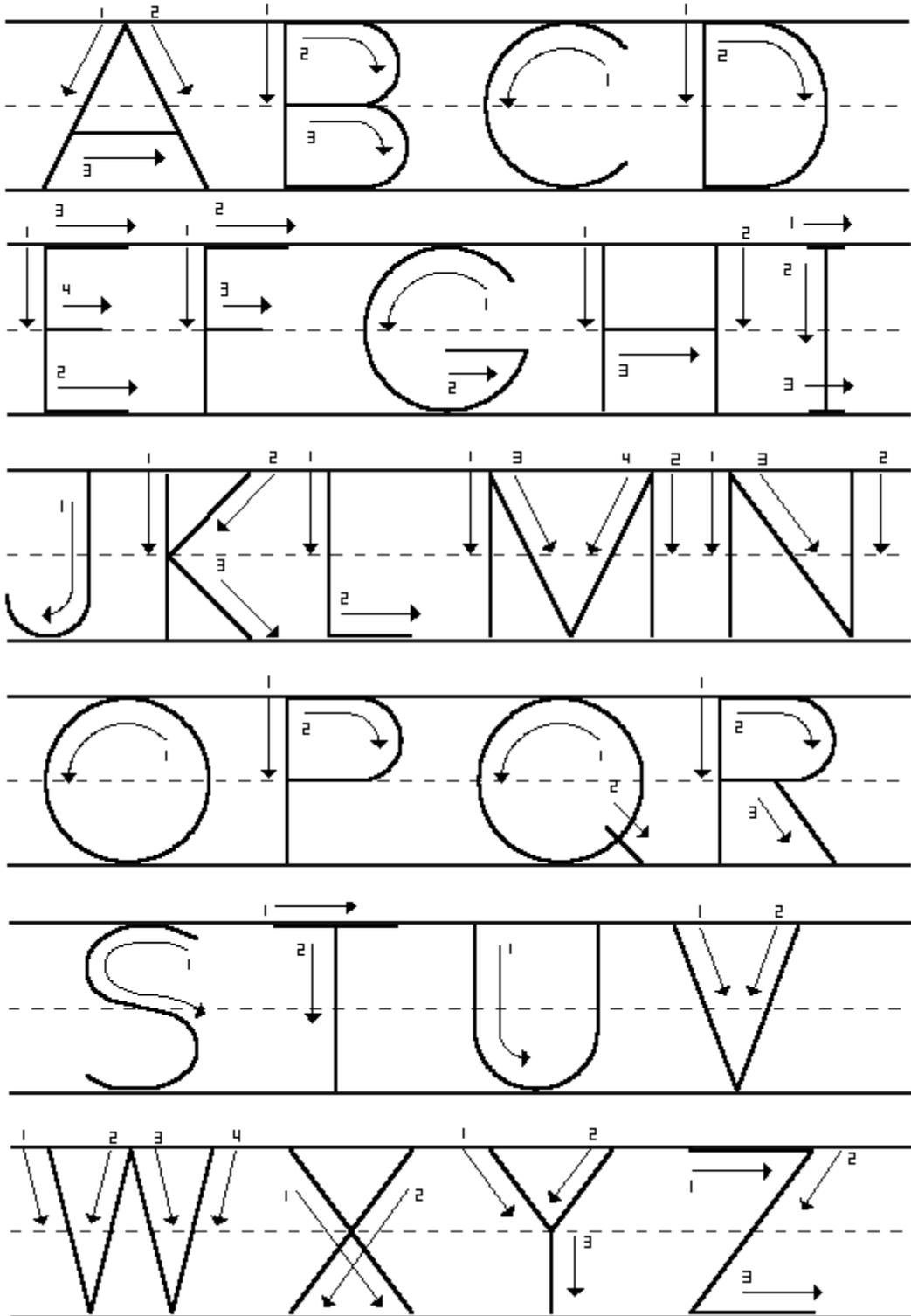
AND sore throat or rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, or just not feeling good

When Your Child is Sick:

1. Have plans for back up child care.
2. Tell your caregiver what is wrong with your child, even if your child stays home.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Tracing Guide



Name: _____

Date: _____

Tracing Guide

