



Immaculate Heart of Mary School Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program Handbook 2018-2019

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A PARENT'S PRAYER

My God, make my home a happy home,
dedicated to you and founded
on your principle of unselfish
love and sacrifice.

Grant me prudence in judgment
perseverance in effort, and
humility and strength in the
performance of all my duties

Help me appreciate more fully the
importance of “eternal values”
and the joy in accepting
“thy will be done”.

Direct me in teaching your
children and mine these sacred
and essential truths and principles.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The following statement of philosophy was revised by teachers, principal and the Christian Formation Committee. This statement specifies their belief about students, learning and instruction in a Christian environment.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School is committed to the definition of education as a life-long process. As an extension of the home, IHM school welcomes each student as a child of God and seeks to provide diverse opportunities for learning, especially cultivating growth in Catholic Christian values and teachings. A dedicated staff fosters those qualities needed for respect of self and others. An appropriately challenging curriculum for each child results in healthy physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual growth for each child. A safe environment for students, teachers and families is promoted and nurtured with an emphasis on an atmosphere of trust and open communication between the home and school.

Mission Statement

Immaculate Heart of Mary School's greatest assets are the children and families we serve. We promote their spiritual and intellectual growth through the teachings of Jesus Christ. We empower our children with the tools necessary to become strong Catholics: secure in their faith; secure in their education; and secure in their future.

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome! Immaculate Heart of Mary's Early Childhood Education Program (IHM ECE) is designed for parents with pre-kindergarten children. Immaculate Heart of Mary School is accredited through the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools (WRISA). We would like to extend an open invitation for you to drop in often. This will give us an opportunity to become acquainted with your entire family and will allow us to provide optimum learning opportunities for your child.

We place great value on freedom to be oneself for adults and children alike. We offer a relaxed and casual setting developed for the needs and interest of each child. We try to take into consideration individual differences and special abilities as well as family cultural patterns.

IHM has established a set of policies and procedures that are monitored closely in order to assure the quality of our program. All IHM ECE policies are under the umbrella of the policies of IHM School Family Handbook.

This handbook focuses on some of the major policies of our center. We hope this information will answer many of your immediate questions. Keeping the lines of communication open is a valued part of our program. We want to hear your thoughts, concerns, and questions about anything that happens here. Please talk to us about it. Talking to the teacher and then to the Principal is the best route for problem solving. We are here for the quality care of your child.

We thank you for allowing us to join you in providing the care, loving and nurturing of your developing child. We look forward with eagerness to the days ahead.

Sincerely Yours,

Callie Meiller, Principal & Early Childhood Program Director

IHM Early Childhood Education (IHM ECE) Program

IHM ECE serves children from age 3 to 5. IHM focuses on creating a warm and accepting environment which helps each child understand and appreciate himself/herself as a unique person with both personal needs and social responsibilities. Our goal is to provide a creative learning environment which reflects the inquisitive and social nature of the child at this age. We want each child to develop a positive attitude about himself/herself, abilities and social relationships.

Honesty, respect and consideration for others and self are encouraged. The need of the individual will be balanced with the needs of the group.

Skills to enhance independence, self reliance and problem solving will be developed. A variety in programming will be provided to stimulate creativity and encourage exploration and investigation of the environment. There will be opportunities for both large and small muscle development in both indoor and outdoor settings.

The teacher/child ratio will insure a safe and stimulating environment for your child and will meet or exceed the state requirements.

Our program will provide:

1. Reasonable regularity in eating and toilet assistance.
2. Daily periods when a variety of experiences are concurrently available for the children to select their own activities.
3. Protection from excess fatigue and over-stimulation.
4. Individual attention on a one-to-one basis.

The environment at IHM Preschool will focus on the interests of the child, and on independence in learning. We have arranged interest areas to promote creative arts, science exploration, language, reading, math manipulatives, building and imaginative play areas. This choice in participation should allow the child to experience, learn play and be social at his/her own pace.

Large group activities include games, songs, information sharing, role playing and activities centered around a curriculum theme. Topics such as cultural awareness, earth sciences, transportation, food and nutrition, gardening, communities, dinosaurs, etc. are introduced to satisfy the child's thirst for knowledge.

Religious Instruction is centered around the liturgical year and incorporates prayer and biblical stories. A basic understanding of God, Creation and loving your neighbor while practicing basic Christian values is our goal.

As the time for 4K or Kindergarten grows near, special emphasis will be placed on preparing each child for the new experience. Good on-going communication between parents and staff is an important factor in planning a smooth transition. Parent/staff meetings will be scheduled throughout the year to discuss the progress, the needs of the each child and to find ways in which staff may help both the child and family prepare for this new learning experience.

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY - ECE FACULTY

ECE Director	Mrs. Callie Meiller
ECE Teacher	Mrs. Stephanie Esser
ECE Phone	608.222.8831
ECE Fax	608.221.4492

IHM ECE'S lead teacher holds a Wisconsin teaching license and is certified in Early Childhood Education.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School is accredited through the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools (WRISA)

PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND HOURS

IHM ECE is open year-round from 7:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except for the federal and religious Holidays below. Instruction time will be from 8:00-11:00 each day.

Federal/Religious Holidays – IHM ECE will be closed on these days

January 1

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday - 3rd Monday in January

Memorial Day - last Monday in May

Week of July 4

Labor Day - 1st Monday in September

Thanksgiving Day - 4th Thursday in November

December 24

December 25

December 31

IN-SERVICE DAYS

IHM ECE staff receives teacher inservice days throughout the year for curriculum planning. Substitutes will be available to care for the children.

TUITION

Immaculate Heart of Mary School uses a tuition management service called Smart Tuition. All families must enroll in Smart Tuition in order to pay tuition, field trips, and other fees. All tuition/fees are collected through automatic withdrawal.

Parents/Guardians can access information about their account at any time on the Internet at www.smarttuition.com. Enrollment is done online. Information is available in the IHM School office.

Any questions about Smart Tuition can be addressed to the IHM School Office, or to the Smart Tuition parent line at 888-868-8828.

Tuition amounts for the IHM ECE:

½ Day (7:00-11:00): \$25

Full Day tuition 7:00-5:30: \$50

Full time care: \$225 per week

LATE FEES

Any parent/guardian that picks up after the scheduled closing time of 11:00 a.m. or 5:30 p.m. will be assessed a late fee of \$5.00 per 15 minutes late. This fee is assessed per child and no sibling discounts will be given. This fee will be added to your monthly Smart Tuition bill.

UNPAID TUITION BALANCES

If payments have not been made, and all measures (reminders, Parent/Guardian contact, payment schedules, etc.) to collect the balance have been exhausted, dismissal from the program may result until payment is made.



ADMISSION TO IHM ECE

Children must be potty trained and age appropriate by September 1 of the current school year. There is no discrimination on the basis of race, color or creed.

For those wishing to enter the IHM ECE Program, please fill out the online Enrollment Form, link available from the IHM School Office. A non-refundable annual enrollment fee of \$200.00 per family is due upon enrollment. \$150 of the enrollment fee will be applied to the tuition due.

Online registration forms will be available in August. All school forms must be completed before the first day of school. Please notify the office of change in address, telephone numbers, or other emergency information.

In the event of full classrooms necessitating a waiting list, the following procedure is the order which is used to enroll new students into the school.

1. Parishioner with sibling already attending IHM School or Preschool
2. Parishioner of IHM Parish
3. Sibling of Non-Parishioner
4. Non-Parishioner

ABSENCE AND TARDINESS

Parents are asked to call or email the ECE program teacher before 7:00 AM each day their child is absent. There is a voice mailbox for your convenience.

A staff member will make every attempt to contact you if your child does not arrive at their scheduled time and the office has not been notified of an absence.

The IHM ECE should be notified in advance of all absences other than those due to illness (dentist appointments, vacations, etc.). This should be done in writing and given or emailed to your child's teacher or the school office.

For those using the program full time: due to the discount, there are no fee deductions made for absences due to illness or vacations.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

When you arrive in the morning, give yourself extra time to assist or guide your child with his/her outside clothing. Each child will have a designated location to put belongings.

Because mornings can be busy, take advantage of these few minutes to devote all of your attention to your child. The quality of time spent together may erase any apprehensions your child may have about this transition in the day.

Please escort your child to a teacher. Do not leave your child at the entrance of the school building.

BULLETIN BOARD

A parent information board is located at the entrance of the classroom for all groups.

Parents are welcome to use their child's folder for communication with the staff (notes regarding appointments, requests, questions, etc.).



CLOTHING

Please dress your child appropriately each day for activities both indoors and outdoors. We do include 'messy' fun activities for the children in the program such as painting, play dough, etc. Children should have an extra set of clothing at school for emergencies.

Children should be dressed appropriately for all weather conditions since they go outside daily. We will not go outdoors in extreme heat or cold.

Please have all clothing items labeled.

CHILD GUIDANCE (DISCIPLINE)

With small classes, teachers will have time to learn about the likes and dislikes of each child. If a child is interested and excited about learning, aggressive behavior should be rare and will be dealt with immediately. Teachers are trained to use behavior modification and techniques appropriate for the behavior. A variety of activities will be planned, incorporating active and passive methods in accordance with the needs of each child. Choices, modeling, active listening, praise, ignoring and redirection are techniques that will be used to guide the child to the appropriate behavior. Aggressive behavior such as spitting, biting, hitting, kicking, etc., will be handled immediately. The offender will be redirected from the other child or children for a 'cool down' period of no more than 4 minutes. The victim will be attended to immediately. The staff, using discussion techniques, and occasionally using role play, will lead the children to verbalize their own rules about various situations such as respecting one another as individuals, respecting the property of others and sharing with one another.

Parents will be notified by the teacher by note or a phone call at the end of class if there is behavior concern. When necessary, parents will be asked to come in for a parent-teacher conference, or to reinforce teaching at home.

There are times when a child may become distraught, fussy or will not stop crying. An attempt will be made to determine the cause of the distress. It may be related to a basic need such as hunger or comfort, or it may be the child needs extra time and attention. We understand crying is normal and there may be times when a child cannot stop crying. At these times, the staff member will remain calm and do whatever is necessary to soothe the child. Sometimes this may mean allowing the child to cry for a few minutes then try again. However, if all methods have been exhausted, the parents will be contacted for advice or assistance. IHM Preschool reserves the right to terminate enrollment after every effort has been made to accommodate the child, especially in situations impacting the health and safety of others.

COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

The best way to deal with concerns is to first approach the person with whom there is a problem. "Acting as Jesus would want us to act should be the goal of all in the Catholic school community – pastors, principals, teachers and other staff members, parents, and students. We should try to deal with differences of opinion in a manner that indicates to all observers that we are Christians." (Shaughnessy, Mary Angela. (2003) *Home & School Working Together: The Rights & Responsibilities of Catholic School Parents* [Booklet])

1. If the parent/guardian has a concern about what is happening in the classroom, please make an appointment with the teacher.
2. If you have met with the teacher and are not satisfied, then make an appointment with the Principal. At that time, a meeting with the teacher, student, Principal and parents/guardians may be called.
3. If you are not satisfied with the results of the meeting with the Principal, then make an appointment with the Pastor.

STUDENT PROGRESS

Parent/Teacher conferences for the IHM ECE are held twice a year, once in the Fall and again in the Spring. Assessment reports are given out three times a year, at the end of each trimester. Please call for an appointment if you would like an additional conference.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

The IHM ECE classes will take field trips in which students walk to their destination in the neighborhood of IHM school. Parent permission for these trips is covered by the online registration at the beginning of the school year. When a field trip is to a more distant location, a permission form will be sent home in the student's communication folder. No student may participate unless a signed parent permission slip is returned and on file in the office. All fees are non-refundable.

Chaperones must complete the Immaculate Heart of Mary volunteer requirements prior to field trip- please see Volunteer section for more information.

Whenever possible, bus transportation will be provided. Every child will be accounted for from an attendance sheet from the point of departure to destination. The same procedure will be followed on the return trip. A physical walk through the bus will be required at final destination. The attendance procedure is also required when a private vehicle is used. Private vehicles will be used only if no other option is available. If a private passenger vehicle must be used, the following must be verified by the driver.

1. The driver must be 21 years of age or older
2. The driver must have a valid, non-probationary driver's license and no physical disability that may impair the ability to drive safely.
3. The vehicle must have a valid registration.
4. The vehicle must be insured for minimum limits of \$100,000 per person/\$300,000 per occurrence.

A signed Volunteer Driver Information Sheet must be submitted to the principal for each vehicle used. Each driver and/or chaperone should be given a copy of the approved itinerary including the route(s) to be followed and a summary of their responsibilities.

HEALTH

ACCIDENT/INJURY

Accidents will be recorded, and the parents of the children involved will be notified. In case of an emergency, the primary childcare teacher will call 911. If necessary, the child will be transported by emergency vehicle to the hospital listed on the registration form. If this is not possible, St. Mary's Hospital will be used as our emergency facility. All injuries are documented by staff and a written form is to be given to parents.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Parents will be notified if their child has been exposed to a communicable disease or illness.

HEAD LICE

If a child comes to school with head lice, or nits (lice eggs), they will be sent home. They cannot return until they are nit-free. Parents will be notified if their child has been exposed to head lice.

ILLNESS

Please take into consideration the other children at the center when sending your child to school. Any child with a fever of 100 degrees or more, vomiting, or diarrhea will be sent home. Children should be kept home until fever/vomiting have been absent without medication for 24 hours.

In emergency cases where no parent is available in case of illness, persons listed on the emergency cards will be notified. Emergency information is included in the online registration process. Please notify the office of change in address and/or telephone numbers.

Remember that your child's energies have to recuperate. A day in the program is full of high activity, both indoors and out. If your child seems pale, listless, run down or just not up to normal, give him/her another day to build up the strength which is needed to fight off more illness. Please do not ask us to keep your child indoors for the day. If a child is not well enough to go outside, then he/she is not well enough to be in the program.

MEDICATION

School personnel will administer all required medication to the preschool students. For **over-the-counter (OTC) medicines** (acetaminophen, aspirin, cough medicine, etc.) the school office needs the following:

1. A Medication Consent Form filled out and signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school
2. The medication in it's original bottle.

For **prescription medication** the school office needs:

1. Physician's Order for Medication Form filled out and signed by the the Physician and returned to school.
2. Medication Consent Form filled out and signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school.
3. The medication in it's pharmacy bottle.
4. Appropriate instruction in the administration of the medication.

The school office will keep these forms on files and will record when the student takes any medication.

All medications given by school personnel must be in pharmacy bottle (if a prescription drug) or in the original bottle (if an OTC drug). The medication must be labeled as follows: Student's Full Name, Name of drug, Amount of dose, Time(s) of day to be given, Physician's name (for prescription drugs only).

NEWSLETTERS

Each month an IHM ECE newsletter will be sent home via email. This will give information about upcoming events, units and themes to be presented. Please post this at home for referral. A paper copy will be available upon request.

Each Wednesday, the school office sends home an email and folder called the Eagle Express. Much of this information is applicable to IHM ECE families, so please look over the Eagle Express folder and check your email each week to make sure you have the information you need.

LUNCH/MILK/SNACKS

IHM ECE half and full-day students will have mid-morning snack about 9:45 a.m Parents are asked to provide snacks. Snack sign-up will be available on-line via sign-up genius and then will be posted on the parent communication board. Parents of children who need a special diet should provide their snack. Parents should inform staff of any food allergies.



1% White milk is also offered with snack at a cost of \$0.35 per milk.

Hot lunch is available daily for full-day students at a cost of \$ 2.25 per lunch. Hot lunch includes one carton of milk. Menus come out monthly in the Eagle Express email. Hot lunch and milk fees are charged monthly on Smart Tuition.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

No child will be released to anyone other than a parent/guardian or person authorized on online registration unless written permission is given in advance.

SAFETY

In compliance with Wisconsin State Law, no child will be left unattended in the building, cafeteria, on the playground or anywhere on the school premises during the school day. It is Immaculate Heart of Mary Early Childhood Education Program Policy that each child be closely monitored by the staff. In the unlikely event of a lost child, we will notify the police and the parents immediately.

All staff are required to have CPR training.

Defibrillators are available for staff or parent use in the case of emergency. There is a defibrillator in the lobby of the preschool/gym building, in Marian Hall, and in the Usher's Room in the church.

MANDATORY REPORTING

IHM ECE is a mandatory reporting facility. This means we must report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services and/or law enforcement.

FIRE, TORNADO, and LOCKDOWN DRILLS

IHM ECE practices fire, tornado and lockdown drills on a regular basis. Children are lead quickly and quietly out of the building.

Emergency Notification System

IHM School uses an Emergency Notification system to contact parents quickly for situations such as weather-emergency school closings, school emergencies, and other situations. You will be asked to provide the phone numbers for the Emergency Notification System at the beginning of the school year. Please inform the office if your contact phone number changes.

WEATHER EMERGENCY

IHM ECE follows the Monona Grove Public Schools regarding the closing of school due to bad weather. If radio/television stations report that Monona Grove Public Schools are closed, IHM ECE will also be closed even if we are not mentioned specifically. You will also be contacted by our Emergency Notification System.



VISITING AND VOLUNTEERING

Visits to the school or classroom are welcome. We feel parents and their involvement are extremely important for a quality educational program. We encourage parents to share any special interests or skills they may have with the children of participate in any manner if possible. Parent involvement is not always based on the time spent in the classroom, but can also include volunteer opportunities at our school (parent meetings, field trips, fish fries, etc.) Opportunities are available for parents to assist in an educational process. Please let us know if you are able to help us.

The Diocese of Madison policy requires the following in order to volunteer in any/all school programs, including classroom aides, chaperones and coaches:

1. Signed and dated Statement of Receipt & Agreement with the Diocese of Madison Policy.
2. Background check completed by the Diocese of Madison
3. Completion of "Protecting God's Children" training session

All of these can be completed online. Instructions are included during the registration process, or through the school office.

REMOVAL FROM PROGRAM

The IHM ECE wishes to provide a happy social and learning experience for all of the children enrolled in our center. In order to achieve this goal, however, it may be necessary to remove a child from the program for one or more of the following reasons:

1. The child has needs which cannot be accommodated by our staff or our facility after every effort has been made to meet those needs, especially impacting the health and safety of others. Parents will be notified and conferences will be held. A two week trial period will be given. Written documentation will be done by the child's teacher.
2. Parents are uncooperative in regards to:
 - Completing and returning all necessary forms.
 - Paying fees or making arrangements to do so.
 - Observing the rules of the program relating to arrival and departure times.
 - Other situations which have been discussed with the parents.

WITHDRAWALS

The Director should be notified two weeks in advance if you are planning to withdraw your child from the Program. A child will be considered enrolled in IHM ECE until arranged withdrawal date is set by the parents and the Director. In the case of absences without notification, the withdrawal date will be at the end of the one week period. There are no refunds paid on tuition or fees.



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