

ICS PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK

Philosophy and Goals of the Preschool Program

As a Catholic school, very basic religious concepts such as loving our families, our friends, all living things, and ourselves will be incorporated into the curriculum. Taking care of God's earth and gifts He has given us will be an integral part of the child's learning environment. A Catholic preschool program that operates within a parish day school provides continuity for the child, fosters a smooth transition to kindergarten, and enhances parish family life.

The first years of life are of vital importance to a child's growth and development. Foundations are laid which influence the ability of a child to accept himself, to relate to others, and to respond positively to the environment. Family relationships provide a young child with the best model for developing attitudes, values, and appropriate behavior. Parental involvement is strongly encouraged in our program. Interactions with other adults and children are extremely important and promote ways for a child to relate to the world around him.

Participation in a Catholic Preschool Program helps the child:

- develop a positive self-image and acknowledge his self-worth.
- develop basic social skills.
- increase independence.
- develop a trust in adults other than his parents.
- enjoy being part of a group and begin to accept the need to share and cooperate.
- respect the rights of others and defend their rights.
- develop the desire to learn.
- become aware of the fact that he is a child of God and will grow in His love.
- develop good listening skills.
- encourage creative development.
- develop problem solving.
- enhance physical growth and development.

Admission and Placement Procedures and Requirements

In accordance with Christian principles, Immaculate Conception School recruits and admits students of any race, color, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, scholarships, loans, athletics, fee waivers, or extracurricular activities. In addition, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court administrative agency ordered, or public school district initiated, desegregation.

Immaculate Conception will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

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Any child who turns three years old on or before August 1 of the current school year and who is potty-trained will be eligible for enrollment in the current school year.

Preschool will be in session for nine months. Each child is enrolled for the entire school year of nine months. Children are placed in a class upon completion of a registration form and receipt of the registration fee. The registration form is kept on file. Parents are required to present a certified birth certificate at the time of registration.

Parents complete an application form which indicates an interest in the program.

When admitting a child into Immaculate Conception School, it is necessary to consider the ability of the program to meet the child's needs. Before a *refusal to accept a child* decision is made, the principal-minister will consult with the pastoral leader.

Enrollment in our preschool program is viewed as the entry into Immaculate Conception School. You are encouraged to continue your child's education at Immaculate Conception through eighth grade.

Registration Fee

A registration fee is payable when you enroll a child for the school year. This fee is neither refundable nor applicable toward tuition. Students are accepted in the order that registration fees are received.

Tuition

Tuition is prepaid in full; loans are available at Fireland's Federal Credit Union. No refund or credit is given for illness, family vacations, scheduled holiday, or vacation periods.

Parents must complete Enrollment and Health forms which shall include the following:

- A statement signed by a licensed physician, a physician's assistant, or a nurse practitioner affirming that the child is in suitable condition for enrollment in the program.
- Physician or dentist's authorization/written instructions to administer prescription medication to a child enrolled in the program.
- Immunization records.
- A list of any allergies and treatment for said allergies.
- A list of any medications, food supplements, modified diets or fluoride supplements currently being administered to the child.
- A list of any chronic physical problems and any history of hospitalization.
- A list of any diseases the child has had.
- Names, addresses, and telephone numbers of physician and dentist to contact in case of emergency.
- Permission of parent for emergency medical and dental care.
- Permission of parent for emergency transportation.

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- Permission Request forms for pictures, field trips, newspaper articles, website, etc.
- Birth Certificate.

Birth Certificate Requirements: State law requires that a certified copy of a student's birth certificate or official verification of age be presented when enrolling a new student in our school. If you do not have a certified birth certificate, you may obtain one from the Bureau of Vital Statistics in the state in which your child was born.

If a birth certificate is unavailable, other official proof of a student's identity may be used. These documents could include naturalization or immigration documents showing date of birth or official hospital birth records, a passport, or a translation of a birth certificate from another country. The documents must be accompanied by an affidavit signed by the parent and a Notary Public documenting the inability to produce a copy of the birth certificate.

Immunization Requirements

Immunization records are required by section 3313.67 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Code states that "no child shall be permitted to remain in school for more than fourteen days unless the pupil presents written evidence satisfactory to the person in charge of admission, that the pupil has been immunized or is in the process of being immunized by a method of immunization approved by the department of health pursuant to section 3701.13 of the Revised Code" against:

Mumps	Pertussis
Poliomyelitis	Tetanus
Diphtheria	Measles
Chicken pox	Rubella
Hepatitis B	

Medical Examination

According to the Ohio Department of Education (telephone number 614-446-2650) rules for Preschool Programs, the parent shall provide prior to the date of admission or not later than 30 days after the date of admission and every 13 months from the date of examination thereafter, a report from a licensed physician affirming that the child is in suitable condition for enrollment in the program. "Prior to the date of admission" means:

- For children younger than 3 years old at the time of admission, the examination shall occur within six months prior to the date of admission.
- For children 3 years old or older at the time of admission, the examination shall occur within 12 months prior to the date of admission.

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Withdrawal and Transfer of Students

If it becomes necessary to withdraw a child, the custodial parent/guardian withdraws the child from the school through the school office. Records will be sent to the school of choice upon receiving a signed Release of Records. The signed, dated withdrawal form will be kept on file. The school reserves the right to withdraw any child whose needs cannot be met. Prior to withdrawal, a conference will be held with the principal, the child's teacher, and custodial parents/guardians. Immaculate Conception personnel will work for the good of the child to the best of their capabilities. A collaborative effort will be made to find a learning environment best suited to meet the child's needs.

Schedule

Classes are scheduled Monday through Friday from 8 am to 11 am. Parents may request enrollment for two, three, four, or five days each week.

Extended Day

Extended Day is available from 11 am to 2:30 pm. Preschool Extended Day takes place in the preschool room.

Staff/Student Ratio

Immaculate Conception School observes the following staff/student ratio according to the Ohio Department of Education guidelines:

Three year olds — One adult: 12 students --- No more than 24 students will be assigned to any one class.

Four and five year olds — One adult: 14 students --- No more than 28 students will be assigned to any one class.

Curriculum

The Immaculate Conception preschool curriculum is aligned to the Ohio Department of Education Content Standards and the Diocese of Toledo Courses of Study, and supports development in all domains of learning (cognitive, language, social, emotional, physical) and supports learning in the content areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science and social studies. *The Creative Curriculum* has been adopted as it balances teacher-planned and child-initiated learning, emphasizing responsiveness to children's strengths, interests, needs, and learning styles. Nationally known for being forward-thinking, comprehensive, and rigorously researched, *The*

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Creative Curriculum helps teachers plan and implement content-rich, developmentally appropriate programs that support active learning and promote children's progress in all developmental areas.

The curriculum for religion uses the Loyola Press Series that is used throughout our entire school. This curriculum seeks to give children the guidance and vocabulary to enable them to become aware of their relationship with God and give expression to it. We help each child to continue to fall in love with God while building community among peers.

Children explore the fundamental theme of covenant, God's call and our response, as reflected in the Bible and as lived in liturgy. 3-6 year-olds have the capacity to receive and enjoy the most essential elements of our faith: the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, the announcement of God's love given for us in the person of Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

Arrival, Dismissal and Absentee Policy

Arrival: An *adult* must accompany the child to the school doorway and sign the child in. It is important for all children to arrive by 8 am to ensure that each child will receive the benefits of the entire class time.

Dismissal: The parent or authorized adult must go to the school doorway at the end of the session to pick up the preschool student. If any person other than the parent is to pick up a student, his name must be on file with the teacher or the student will not be released to that person.

Absence: The Missing Children's Act requires all parents to notify the school when a child will be absent. Parents should notify the school by hand-written note or phone call to the school (419-483-6066) before 8 am.

Parent Notification Procedure

- **Illness/injury:** A parent will be notified immediately of any illness or injury requiring professional medical attention. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be notified. 911 will be called if an illness or injury requires immediate professional medical attention.
- **Crying:** We know how difficult it is to leave a crying child. Please know that we will notify you if your child continues crying for a prolonged period of time. We want your child's experience at Immaculate Conception Preschool to be a happy one, and we will work together with you to make that happen.
- **Biting:** Parents will be notified of any child exhibiting biting behavior. At the third biting offense, the parents will be asked to remove that child from class for two weeks or until such behavior ceases.

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Guidance and Management Policy

Discipline is a way of teaching proper behavior, not punishing improper behavior. At Immaculate Conception Preschool, rules will be simple and discipline will be positive, specific, and consistent. If a child's behavior is not suitable for a particular activity, he or she may be redirected to another activity. An uncooperative or disruptive child may be removed from a situation by further redirection. In extreme cases the child may be required to sit alone in a designated area of the room for a few minutes to think about and observe appropriate behavior ALWAYS within sight of a teacher. These behavior management techniques are employed by all staff members. If all efforts to promote productive behavior fail, a conference with parents will be requested. The preschool teacher sets reasonable limits and maintains them consistently.

Child Abuse Policy

The employees of Immaculate Conception School are required by law to immediately notify the local public children services agency when it is suspected that a child has been abused or neglected. All information will be kept strictly confidential.

Safety in the Classroom

The child care staff member in charge of a child or group of children shall be responsible for their safety. No child is ever left alone or unsupervised. A child will never be released to anyone other than his/her parent or guardian unless the teacher has received written permission from the parent or guardian. Once all children have arrived for school, the exterior doors to the school will be locked until dismissal. A Custody Agreement must be on file for those children to which it applies.

Immaculate Conception School will not transport a child to the source of emergency medical or dental care. The Bellevue Hospital and parents will be called in the case of extreme emergencies. Parents will be called for minor emergencies.

Safety Rules

For the safety of each student at Immaculate Conception School, the following rules have been established:

- No child will ever be left alone or unsupervised.
- No child will be allowed to cause bodily harm to other children.
- A teacher or aide will be with the children during arrival/dismissal times.
- No child will be released to a person not authorized by a custodial parent or guardian. We must have a written authorization to allow an adult who is not the custodial parent or the legal guardian to pick up a child.

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- Emergency numbers are posted by the telephone, along with the fire emergency and weather alert plans.
- Monthly fire drills are conducted and a record of these is kept at school. All exits are marked and a fire alarm system is in working order.
- Tornado drills are held in season.
- Crisis and Emergency Level Drills are held twice each year.
- Spray aerosols shall not be used when children are present.
- Electrical outlets are covered when not in use.
- All visitors are to report to the main office during regular school hours. Visitors in the school will be identified by wearing an ICS VISITOR tag.

In compliance with Ohio Code 3301-10 the actual method of discipline shall apply to all persons on the premises and shall be restricted as follows:

- There shall be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments such as but not limited to punching, pinching, shaking, spanking or biting.
- No discipline shall be delegated to any other child.
- No physical restraints shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so the child may regain control.
- No child shall be placed in a locked room or confined in an enclosed area such as a closet, a box or similar cubicle.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about himself or his family or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or for toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest or toilet use.
- Separation is used as a last step and shall be brief in duration and appropriate to the child's age and developmental ability and the child shall be within sight and hearing of a preschool staff member in a safe, lighted and well-ventilated space.
- The school shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Immaculate Conception School believes in a positive behavior support system. Children can be redirected, asked to sit in a quiet area, or “think spot”. “Brain Breaks” are used when frustration appears evident in the classroom. Classroom rules and policy procedures are posted in the classroom.

Snacks

Parents will provide the snack. A snack list is provided to the parents to assist with making proper choices for the snacks. Snacks must be store bought and individually wrapped. They should be brought to school in an unopened package. We ask that snacks be healthy and safe choices for the preschool child. You might consider snacks

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such as raisins, cheese, crackers, pretzels, individual applesauce, yogurt, and so forth. No snack which has been prepared at home can be given at school. Drinks may include skim or 1% unflavored milk that has been unopened.

Please check with your child's teacher for food allergies before bringing a snack for the first time.

Communication

The faculty and staff of Immaculate Conception School believe that communication between home and school is of utmost importance. Most information important to you and your child from the teacher or the administration will come home via email and/or written communication through your child. A weekly Immaculate Conception School Newsletter will be sent via email. You are asked to check your email and your child's backpack daily for newsletters and special information. If you do not pick up your child, please ask whoever does to check your child's backpack as well. It is our intention to post all school information to our website www.icssaints.org as well. This handbook, as well as the calendar and updated information, can be found on the Immaculate Conception School website.

Please keep the preschool teacher and the office advised of any changes to your child's circumstances including your address, phone, and email changes.

Progress Reports and Conferences

The preschool teacher performs ongoing assessments by observing preschool students within the learning centers and in other daily activities. These assessments are a record of their progress and development. Full reports on your child's progress are given in October and June. Individual conferences will be offered twice per year and/or as needed throughout the year and can be requested by either the parent or the teacher.

Procedure for Emergency Situations

Fire Drills are practiced at regular intervals as required by law and for the safety of all children and adults in the building. Preschool children will be escorted to the main parking lot by the preschool teacher. The preschool teacher will account for each student.

Lockdown Drills are required by law. The preschool teacher will follow the lockdown procedures when directed to do so. During Lockdown, students are directed to position themselves in an area in the classroom that is not visible from the windows. Preschool students will be engaged in quiet activities led by the teacher. The doors to the classroom will be locked from the outside. Students remain in Lockdown position until the signal is given from the main office.

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Evacuation Drills are required by law. At the signal for all classrooms to evacuate, teachers will direct students to the prescribed area as quickly as possible. In the event that a real emergency occurs and evacuation to another location is necessary, parents/guardians will be notified as to when and where they may pick up their child. The preschool teacher will be responsible for each preschool student until the student is picked up.

Tornado drills are required by law and are held in the spring. The goal of a tornado drill is to move all students and staff to assigned safe areas. The preschool teacher will account for and be responsible for each preschool student during the drill.

If there are injuries during any of the above situations, students and staff will be triaged by the school nurse and given first responder care. If warranted, a parent will be notified.

If an early dismissal is required, the preschool teacher is responsible for recording student names as they leave with parent/guardian.

Illness, Communicable Diseases, and Emergencies

The Communicable Diseases Chart published by the Ohio Department of Health is posted in the classroom. Staff members have completed the Red Cross Courses on Communicable Disease, First Aid, CPR/AED, and Child Abuse Prevention.

A staff member who is ill or becoming ill will be sent home and a substitute teacher will be contacted to replace her. If a child has or develops any of the communicable disease symptoms during class, parents will be notified and the child will be isolated in the school nurse room until the parent arrives.

Please contact the school if your child has a communicable disease so that we can notify other parents that their child may have been exposed to the illness. A child may return to school upon verification from the parents that the child has been free from the communicable condition for a 24 hour period, or in accordance with the minimum control standards listed on the Communicable Disease Chart posted in the classroom.

In case of an emergency, an attempt will be made to notify the parents and action taken according to instructions given by the parents on the emergency sheet.

Medication, either over-the-counter or prescriptions, will not be administered by any staff member.

Emergency Medication Policy

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Training on bloodborne pathogens, inhalers, and epi-pens is administered yearly before school starts to all staff members. If a child is enrolled in a homeroom that requires emergency medications the school nurse will train staff members independently and staff will sign off on the training. Emergency medications are kept in a locked cabinet and will be administered by a staff member to ameliorate symptoms. When life-saving medications are administered, a call to 911 will be placed and parents will be contacted. Evidence of training in the administration of emergency medications can be provided upon request. Medications kept at school must be accompanied by a form signed by the health care provider. Immaculate Conception School will provide these forms in the August welcome to school packet and upon request.

Communicable Disease Symptoms

Ohio Department of Education Rules for Preschool Program 3301-37-11

- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period).
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)
- Unusual spots or skin rash
- Temperature of 100 taken by the axillary method when in combination with any other sign of illness
- Untreated infected skin patches
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Green/yellow discharge from nose
- Lice infestation
- Stiff neck
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray-white stool

Should a child exhibit any of the above symptoms, the child will be isolated and the nurse consulted. After a consultation with the nurse, and a phone call home, the child could be discharged for the remainder of the day. The day of return will be determined by the medical personnel consulted within the school and/or the parent's medical professional. The nurse will also determine how and when to inform the other parents in the classroom regarding the potential transmission of these symptoms to other children in the classroom.

Management of Communicable Diseases

If a child has more than a runny or stuffy nose, he should not come to school. Please follow these guidelines when your child is ill:

- Please keep your child home 24 hours after the break of a fever without the use of medicine.

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- If your child is sick during the night or before school, please keep him home.
- If you suspect strep throat and have a culture taken, please do not send your child to school until you have received the results of the culture.

If a child has an axillary temperature of 100 or more, skin rash, diarrhea, vomiting, or evidence of lice, the parent will be called to pick up the child. The child will be isolated in the nurse's office until the parent arrives. Children may return to school after symptoms are gone or with a note from the health care provider depending on the illness. Please inform us if your child becomes ill with a contagious illness. Families of the other children in the class and in the school will be warned of contact and incubation of communicable disease.

HEALTHCHEK- CHECK IT OUT!

Did you know Ohio's Medicaid program includes Healthchek services for children up to 21 years of age? (These services are also called EPSDT sometimes.) Healthchek services help children stay healthy and reduce the chances of sickness by treating health problems early. All Healthchek services are free. You can get help and information by contacting your county Healthchek Coordinator, or your managed care.

Forms for the Healthchek program are located in the Appendix of the handbook. Forms are also available in the school office.

Clothing

In order for your child to have freedom of movement and participate in (messy) activities, please dress your child in comfortable play clothes. Non-skid, rubber soled shoes that completely enclose the foot and protect from injury are preferred. *Smooth bottomed shoes are slippery.* No flip-flops or sandals. For safety and sanitary reasons socks must be worn with all shoes. Parents are asked to provide a change of clothing to keep at school.

Field Trips

Walking field trips may take place to the library and/or surrounding locations. Transportation for field trips is provided by parent volunteers. Parents must provide a child safety restraint and booster seat. Children will wear name tags, with the child's name, name of school, address and phone number. A staff member trained in first aid will accompany the group along with a First Aid Kit and the Emergency Transportation and Health Records of the children.

Inclement Weather

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Immaculate Conception School follows the Bellevue City School District procedures regarding inclement weather. Please check your television / radio stations. When Bellevue City Schools are announced for delay or closing, this also includes Immaculate Conception School. An electronic alert system is available for notification by phone, email and/or text through OptionC.

Delayed Opening—Preschool Is Cancelled

Schools will open two hours late in the event of Delayed Opening due to road conditions. In the event of a Delayed Opening, preschool is cancelled for the day. Preschool Extended Day and After Care are still available.

School Closing

Schools will not be open when it appears that road conditions will not improve or will become worse.

Lunch for Children Attending Extended Day

Immaculate Conception School provides milk to all students who attend Extended Day. Students must pack their own lunch for Extended Day. Students may bring a drink that is not carbonated or in a glass container. Forgotten lunches may be dropped off at the office; they are not to be delivered directly to the classroom.

Roster

A list of the names and telephone numbers of the parents or guardians of children attending the program will be given on request to any parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the preschool program. A signed parental statement for inclusion in the roster will be kept on file.

Fundraisers

Fundraisers help to defray expenses for the Immaculate Conception School. Fundraisers vary from year to year with the annual Reverse Raffle being the main source of fundraising for the school. We ask every family to volunteer to help with the implementation of fundraisers as well as participation monetarily.

The Director is Available

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The preschool director is available and you are encouraged to contact her with questions or concerns. She is usually available Monday through Friday from 9:00 – 12:00. She can also be reached via email or phone.

Observation/Evaluations

Custodial parents or guardians of a child enrolled in the Immaculate Conception preschool program shall be permitted unlimited access to the school during hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children or evaluation of the premises and/or care provided. Please notify the office upon entering the building for these purposes. A Custody Agreement must be on file for those children to which it applies.

Change of Address or Information

Please inform your child's teacher and the office of any change in address, phone numbers, email or emergency information.

IT'S CLASS TIME: What are we about?

At Immaculate Conception Preschool your child will:

- work alone and with others.
- follow directions.
- share and take turns.
- develop social and problem solving skills.
- widen and develop new abilities.
- express his/her own thoughts and ideas.
- listen to and develop an awareness of others.

Your child will be participating in activities which:

- develop skills in literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, and arts.
- form a spiritual foundation and relationship with Jesus.
- develop vocabulary.
- improve coordination and physical strength.
- build self-confidence.
- discover new ideas.
- explore new materials.
- develop interest in people, numbers, writing and reading.
- differentiate sounds, sizes, shapes, and colors.

Sample Daily Schedule

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Circle Time/Sharing
Whole group instructional activity
Center time/Small Group
Clean up and bathroom
Snack
Story and Music
Outdoor/Motor activities
Religion activities
Prepare for dismissal
Dismissal

Birthdays

Birthdays are also listed on the calendar so you will know when your child will celebrate their birthday at school. Your child should bring a favorite healthier snack to share with their classmates.

When Problems Occur

We at Immaculate Conception Preschool have your child's best interest at heart at all times. Many problems can be avoided when caring adults communicate openly. Even so, at times problems can occur. When they do, most problems can be resolved when parents and teachers work together for the sake of the child.

With this in mind, it is our policy that at any time your child's teacher feels the need to discuss a problem she will contact you as soon as she is able. Problems should never be discussed in front of a child or another parent, *so a phone call or private conference will be scheduled.*

Should you have a problem or question about the school, a teacher, or school policy please follow these steps until you receive a fair resolution:

- First, ask the teacher for a private conference or phone call to discuss the issue.
- Next, if the problem is not resolved, discuss the problem privately with the principal.
- If the problem still is not satisfactorily resolved, discuss the problem privately with the Immaculate Conception Parish pastor.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C.

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20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

APPENDIX

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Following are the Healthchek information sheet and forms.