



Immaculate Heart of Mary School  
Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program  
3K, 4K & 4K Wraparound  
Handbook

4913 Schofield St.  
Monona, Wisconsin 53716  
Phone: 608.222.8831  
Fax: 608.221.4492  
[www.ihmcatholicsschool.org](http://www.ihmcatholicsschool.org)

*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 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 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  
Stephanie Esser, Early Childhood Program Director/3K Teacher  
Lynette Wellnitz, ECE 4K Teacher*

### 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 ECE 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. Please be aware that the 4K wraparound program is run by IHM school, and the students may be exposed to faith-based education or environment.

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

Principal	Mrs. Callie Meiller	<a href="mailto:cmeiller@ihm-school.org">cmeiller@ihm-school.org</a>
ECE Director/3K Teacher	Mrs. Stephanie Esser	<a href="mailto:sesser@ihm-school.org">sesser@ihm-school.org</a>
ECE 4K Teacher	Mrs. Lynette Wellnitz	<a href="mailto:lwellnitz@ihm-school.org">lwellnitz@ihm-school.org</a>
ECE Phone	608.720.1283	

IHM ECE teachers hold Wisconsin teaching licenses and are certified in Early Childhood Education. Immaculate Heart of Mary School is accredited through the Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools (WRISA)

#### 3K, 4K and 4K WRAPAROUND

IHM ECE has three classes, which for some parts of the day may be combined:

- The 3K classroom is for 3 year-olds who need part or full time care, and 4 year-olds who need only part-time care.
- The 4K classroom is for 4-year-olds and young 5-year-olds who attend 5-days per week, half or full-days.
- The 4K Wraparound (when offered) is for students who attend Monona Grove School district's 4K program in a different building,

#### PROGRAM SCHEDULE AND HOURS

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

4K Wraparound hours (when offered) are from 10:40 a.m. until 3:05 p.m. during the school year. Wraparound students can also attend the Afterschool Program from 3:05-5:30 for an extra fee.

Daily schedules will be shared by teachers at the start of the session. Parents must choose the number of days their child will attend (3K & 4K Wraparound) and half-or-full day (3K & 4K) when completing online enrollment. Rotating schedules may cost more per day, and cost will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

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

January 1

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday - 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in January

Good Friday

Easter Monday

Memorial Day - last Monday in May

July 4 and surrounding days, varies by calendar year

Week before School-Year session starts

Labor Day - 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in September

Thanksgiving Day - 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in November

December 24-26

December 31

Approximately one day per month the center will be closed so IHM ECE teachers can plan, clean, etc. Those days will be shared on the school calendar.

### IN-SERVICE DAYS

Approximately one day per month the center will be closed so IHM ECE teachers can plan, clean, etc. Those days will be shared on the school calendar.

### TUITION

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

You will be asked to pick the days you need ECE on the Enrollment Packet. Parents/Guardians can access information about their account at any time on the Internet at <https://factsmgt.com/>.

Any questions about FACTS can be addressed to the IHM School Office, or to the FACTS parent line at 866-441-4637. Tuition amounts are available through the IHM School office.

There are no fee deductions made for absences due to illness or vacations.

### 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 FACTS 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.

### ADMISSION TO IHM ECE

Children **must be potty trained and independent in the bathroom** and age appropriate by September 1 of the current school year. Immaculate Heart of Mary School respects the dignity of each person. All programs are available to any child in the parish without regard to race, national origin, gender or physical disabilities.(if, with reasonable accommodation on the part of the school, the handicapped person can be accommodated).

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 ECE

2. Parishioner of Stella Maris Parish
3. Sibling of Non-Parishioner
4. Non-Parishioner

In all cases, full-time status and/or intent on continued enrollment at IHM School may take precedence.

### ABSENCE AND TARDINESS

Parents are asked to call or email the ECE program teacher before 7:00 AM each day their child is absent. A staff member will make every attempt to contact you if your child does not arrive at their scheduled time and the ECE teacher or the school 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.

### 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. **We request that all ECE students be dropped-off before 8:00 A.M., to avoid interruptions to the instructional time.**

Do not leave your child at the entrance of the school building without a teacher present.

### ECE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

#### AM Arrival

Students may be walked into school, or dropped off at DOOR 2, where a teacher will greet you. Students with older siblings should drop off at DOOR 2 in front first, then drive to the back to drop off older siblings.

#### AM Dismissal at 11:00 AM

Please pick up your ECE student at DOOR #2 of the school at 11:00. The teacher will be there to help the students. Please park in front of the school across the street and wait at the door. Please do not park in the bus loading zone or ring the doorbell. If you need to stay longer, please park in the far lot behind the church to pick up your child.

#### PM Arrival for 4K Wraparound (when offered)

Please drop your child off at DOOR #2 from 10:45 on. Please park in front of the school or across the street and wait at the door for the teacher. Please do not ring the doorbell. If you need to conduct further business, please park in the far lot behind the church to drop off your child. The child can proceed directly to their classroom. Please do not drop your child off before 10:45 as there is no supervision available before that time.

#### PM Dismissal

You may pick up your ECE student at DOOR #2 at 3:00. Please park in front of the gym, church, or across the street. Please do not park in the bus loading zone. Refer to the Extended Day Handbook for pick-up between 3:00-5:30

### 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 of potty training, or impacting the health and safety of others.

### IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN:

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 contact the teacher 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 enrollment 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.**

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.

## 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, 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. A Medication Consent Form filled out and signed by the Physician AND the parent, returned to school.
2. The medication in its pharmacy bottle.
3. 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).

## COMMUNICATION

When necessary, an ECE newsletter will be sent home via email. This will give information about upcoming events, units and themes to be presented.

Each Wednesday, the school office sends home an email called the Eagle Express. Much of this information is applicable to IHM ECE families, so please look over the Eagle Express 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. Parents are asked to provide snacks. Teachers will communicate to parents about if snacks are needed at the throughout the year. Parents of children who need a special diet should provide their snack. Parents should inform staff of any food allergies.

1% White milk and water are also offered with snack.

Hot lunch is available daily for full-day students. Hot lunch includes one carton of milk. Milk is available with cold lunch for an extra charge. Menus come out monthly in the Eagle Express email. Hot lunch and lunch milk are charged monthly on FACTS. Please see the Financial Commitments sheet available online or through the school office for lunch prices.

## 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.

## PARENT ALERT SYSTEM

IHM School uses an Parent Alert 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 Parent Alert System on the enrollment packet. 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 Parent Alert 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.

All school visits must be arranged by calling or emailing the teacher or office at least 24 hours ahead.

The Diocese of Madison policy requires completion of the online Virtus Course and background check in order to volunteer in any/all school programs, including classroom aides, chaperones and coaches.

Sign up for volunteering while enrolling your student. All of the above steps can be completed online through the Diocese of Madison.

### 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 potty-training, and those 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 tuition and 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

Parents should fill out a Withdrawal form and submit it to the school office. It is helpful to know the last day your child will be attending classes. Please provide a forwarding address for communication purposes.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School is committed to maintaining low/student/teacher ratio. There is a delicate balance between student enrollment numbers and the commitment needed to meet our financial responsibilities.

The following policy is in effect for withdrawal of students ECE-8:

Date of Withdrawal for following school year:

After July 15            You are responsible for 1<sup>st</sup> trimester tuition

After November 15    You are responsible for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester tuition and all fees

After February 15     You are responsible for the full year's tuition and all fees

### 4K Wraparound Program (when offered)

IHM's 4K Wraparound Program serves children in the Monona Grove 4K (AM only) classes, who join us after their school day, and is run in conjunction with our Early Childhood Education Program (ECE). Our goal for this age level is to provide a fun and interesting social environment which offers the child opportunity and

guidance in developing character and confidence in his/her abilities and maturity. Because IHM is a Catholic school, our Wraparound Program will have religious elements. We want to encourage in each child the development of self-esteem and positive interactions in friendships and respect for the world. Activities are planned daily, challenging skills and providing enjoyment of play with friends.