



# Operational Policies & Parent Handbook

5900 Chippewa Blvd., Houston, Texas 77086  
Phone 281-445-9574 Fax 281-977-3390 Email: [mips@mipstx.org](mailto:mips@mipstx.org)

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a Catholic, nurturing community where young children know, experience and grow in God's love.

## PHILOSOPHY

Mary Immaculate Preschool strives to provide a balance of spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth of children in a safe and nurturing environment.

## HISTORY

At all times, the education of youth in the Catholic faith is the main ministry of the Dominican Sisters. Since their arrival in Houston in the late 70's, the Vietnamese Dominican Sisters have taught catechism to children in the local parishes. By the early 90's, the desire to teach as well as the urgent need of the community prompted the Sisters to answer this call to found a Childcare & Preschool Program. In the tradition of St. Dominic and to further expand their teaching mission, Mary Immaculate Preschool was founded in 1995 as a licensed, high-quality early childhood program in Northwest Houston.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Mary Immaculate Preschool does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies and extends to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to students at the school.

## REQUIRED POLICIES

Mary Immaculate Preschool is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. The follow policies are required by Child Care Licensing per The Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers 746.501.

### 1. HOURS OF OPERATION

Mary Immaculate Preschool is opened from 7:00 am - 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday. We close in June and July and on the holidays listed on the school calendar.

### 2. RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Per Texas state laws, parents have a right to access their child at anytime. However, we strongly encourage parents to drop off their children by 9:00 am each day so that the child can take part in our full educational program. In the event that a parent is unable to pick up their child, they may authorize another legal adult to pick up. Children will not be released to a minor. Authorized adults must be listed on the enrollment form to pick up and the authorized adult must bring a picture ID. Children will not be released to adults without a picture ID.

### 3. ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION POLICY

Children who are ill should not attend preschool. Mary Immaculate Preschool observes the standards set by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services for ill children. The most common standards for exclusion are:

1. Illness that prevents the child from participating in child care activities, including outdoor play.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children.
3. Oral temperature of 101 or armpit temperature of 100 degrees.
4. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy,

abnormal breathing, uncontrollable diarrhea, 2 or more vomiting episodes in 24-hours.

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will contact the parent immediately. We will care for the child apart from the other children with proper supervision and give extra attention to hand washing and sanitation practices.

Parents need to pick up children within 1 hour of notification. In the event of severe illness or injury, or if a parent fails to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time, Mary Immaculate Preschool may call for an ambulance at the parent's expense.

If a child is sent home sick from our program, they may not return until the child is symptom-free for 24-hours.

#### 4. MEDICATION

Please inform your physician that your child is in full-day preschool and that you prefer to give medications at home, morning and evening. Knowing this, many doctors will order longer acting medications. Limiting medications

dispensed away from home prevents medication errors. Please remember, Mary Immaculate Preschool is designed for well children.

If medications need to be administered at school, the following conditions must be met:

1. Prescription medication will be accepted only if it is in the original container and hasn't reached its expiration date.
2. Nonprescription medication may only be administered by following the manufacturer's recommendation on the label. Medication must be in the original container and accompanied with a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.
3. Before any prescription or nonprescription medication can be administered, including sunscreen, we must have permission in writing by the child's parent or guardian. Please fill out the medication forms and enter instructions into the Daily Medication Log Book. Please bring a copy of the information given to you by the pharmacy.

4. Medication needs to go home after the last date that the medication is administered.

Health forms are required to be completed at the time of enrollment showing any allergies, physical handicaps, a statement of general health, and a current immunization history. These must be updated and kept current.

Medication may be given to children with a signed medical information sheet. These are located in the front lobby.

## 5. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING EMERGENCIES

In case of minor injury or accident, the staff will administer basic first aid. All injuries or illnesses not requiring immediate parental notification will be documented and reported to parents when the child is picked up at the end of the day.

In case of medical injury or illness requiring immediate professional care (emergency), the staff will call 911, giving location and nature of emergency. As appropriate, the staff will administer CPR or first aid measures. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents are unavailable, those individuals designated as emergency phone contacts will be notified.

If a child ingests or comes in contact with a poisonous substance the staff will contact the Poison Control Center 1.800.222.1222. All children must have an emergency medical release form on file in case of such an emergency.

## 6. PARENT NOTIFICATIONS

Open Communication with parents is very important to children's success. Mary Immaculate Preschool has multiple ways of communicating with parents. In some situations, parents may be asked to sign documents acknowledging that communication has taken place. Listed below are ways that Mary Immaculate Preschool may communicate with parents:

- Through email notifications
- Written memos placed in your child's weekly folders
- Verbal communication with the child's teachers and director

## 7. DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY

Mary Immaculate Preschool staff members are trained to use a positive method of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Just a few examples used in this situation are: praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior; reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements and redirecting behaviors. There may be times during the day when a supervised separation time is needed. This is a "time-out" and is used according to the child's age and development and limited to one minute per year of the child's age. Mary Immaculate Preschool staff will never use Corporal Punishment or negative discipline that may hurt or humiliate a child.

Research has shown that positive guidance teaches children skills which help them get along in their physical and social environment. This aim is to develop personal standards in self-discipline, not to enforce a set of inflexible rules. Giving children understandable guidelines and redirecting their behavior helps them to develop internal control of their actions and encourages acceptable behavior. Mary Immaculate Preschool reserves the right to terminate care for the child for discipline problems at any time.

## 8. FOOD SERVICE & PREPARATION

Mary Immaculate Preschool provides breakfast for all children present at 8:15 am - 8:45 am. Lunch is served between 11:15 am - 12:30 pm. Afternoon snack is served after the rest period around 3:15 pm. Please advise the center of any allergies.

## 9. IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Immunization records must be current for all children enrolled in the Toddler, Preschool and Pre-K programs. A copy must be in the child's file. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that your child's immunizations are current. Failure to keep children current on immunizations may lead to disenrollment.

From time to time Mary Immaculate Preschool may have children enrolled

that have not received immunizations due to personal belief. A notarized affidavit must be on file for these children.

## 10. TUBERCULIN TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Based on local health department guidelines, proof of TB testing is not required in order to be enrolled in our program.

## 11. HEARING AND VISION SCREENING

Hearing and Vision Screening for possible vision and hearing problems is required by the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapter 36, for children who are 4-years old. Mary Immaculate Preschool will schedule annual screenings at our school. Parents may also bring in screening proof from their local pediatrician.

## 12. ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Upon selecting Mary Immaculate Preschool to meet your child's educational needs, all enrollment paperwork is required before the child can start our program. Paperwork required for enrollment includes:

- Enrollment Form
- Authorization for Emergency Medical Attention
- Physician's Statement
- Tuition Agreement

Parents will be notified within 15 days of any policy change in writing. Signatures from parents may be required.

## 13. FIELD TRIPS

To enhance children's learning experience, Pre K students will go on one field trip per year. Parents will be notified in writing about the field trip.

## 14. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If parents have questions or concerns about our program, we encourage you to have open communication with your child's teacher and the Center Director. Through open communication, we can ensure that all parties are well informed and working as partners in the child's education. From time

to time, the center director may complete a Parent Concern Form. Parents will receive a copy of this form with the appropriate outcome.

## 15. PARENT PARTICIPATION

We encourage parent involvement, especially during school events, field trips and helping with class parties. Also, if you have a concern, please schedule a time to meet with the classroom teacher and/or the director of the facility.

## 16. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Mary Immaculate Preschool is licensed and regulated by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services and we follow the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. Parents may review a copy of these standards in our front office or view the standards online at:

[www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Child\\_Care\\_Standards\\_and\\_Regulations/default.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Child_Care_Standards_and_Regulations/default.asp)

## 17. COMPLIANCE HISTORY

Mary Immaculate Preschool encourages parents to view our compliance history with Child Care Licensing. Our most recent inspection is posted on our parent communication board or you may view this at: [www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child\\_Care/Search\\_Texas\\_Child\\_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/Search_Texas_Child_Care/ppFacilitySearchDayCare.asp) Parents may also contact our local child care licensing office at 214-583-4253.

## 18. GANG-FREE ZONE

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child care center is a gang-free zone, where criminal offenses related to organized criminal activity are subject to a harsher penalty. Mary Immaculate Preschool is a GANG-FREE ZONE.

## 19. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

In case of an emergency or need for an evacuation during school hours, the Preschool staff and children will relocate to Mary Immaculate Convent. The convent is located to the east of the preschool campus (directly adjacent to



the school) at 5900 Chippewa Blvd., Houston TX 77086, 281-977-3394.

- The Director is responsible for overseeing and directing the evacuation process as well as keeping a charged cell phone with him/her during the emergency/evacuation.

He/she is the last person to leave the building.

He/she is the contact person for all emergency personnel and parents.

- The Assistant Director is responsible for taking the following items with him/her:
  - a. School emergency Binder, (Parent contact informations, permission slips, ...
  - b. First aid kit, emergency medications (i.e. insulin, EPI pens, asthma medications),
  - c. a charged cell phone.

He/she must accompany the first emergency responder vehicle to the evacuation site.

He/she is in charge at the evacuation site.

He/she will supervise and care for the immediate needs of the school staff.

- The school staff will evacuate with the following essential documentations:
  - a. Class roster;
  - b. Parent and emergency contact information for each child in their care; and
  - c. Authorization for emergency care for each child in their care.

The first responsibility of staff is to move all children to the convent directly adjacent to the school on the east corner of the campus.

The children will evacuate the school by walking in a single file line with their classes to the convent.

Each staff member will use their class roster, daily sign in/out sheet and/or transition sheet to account for all children in attendance and under their direct care at the time of the emergency.

Staff members will continue to supervise and take care of the immediate needs of the children at the evacuation site. Staff are to monitor and watch the children, not the emergency situation.

- After all children and staff have been relocated to the evacuation site, accounted for and are safe, the Director and Assistant Director will designate staff to contact parents and notify them of the emergency situation.

NOTE:

The center's usual verification process for allowing adults to pick up children from the center will be used at the evacuation site. (i.e. only persons listed on the child's enrollment form as authorized to pick up will be allowed to do so after presenting photo ID.)

## 20. CHILD ABUSE REPORTING LAW REQUIREMENTS

Mary Immaculate Preschool staff are REQUIRED by Texas State law and licensing requirements to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services (CPS) any instance when there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. Our staff receive annual training on recognizing and preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse. Mary Immaculate Preschool has made a commitment to help increase awareness and prevention techniques to employees and parents through trainings, memos and monthly newsletters. Mary Immaculate Preschool will also coordinate with community organizations on strategies to prevent abuse and neglect.

The staff may not notify parents when the police or CPS is called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, except on the recommendation of CPS or the police when they are called.

Some examples of abuse and neglect are: leaving a child in a vehicle unattended, not securing a child in a seat belt or booster seat, unexplained marks or bruises on opposite sides of the body, and child hygiene issues.

If parents feel they need assistance to report possible child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse, we encourage you to get help. Please call the National Parent Hotline at: 1-855-427-2736 or visit [www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html](http://www.helpandhope.org/find-help.html)

The statewide Abuse & Neglect hotline is 1-800-252-5400, if you would like to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

## 21. WELL CHECKS

Mary Immaculate Preschool staff will do a visual check of the children upon arrival each morning. If a staff member notices anything unusual they are required to point this out to the parent at that time. If your child has an accident overnight, please notify staff members when dropping off so that we can assist in watching the child for side effects.

## ADDITIONAL POLICIES

### 22. TUITION AND FEES

Mary Immaculate Preschool charges Monthly Tuition, which is due on the first week.

A full tuition is charged for complete as well as partial attendance.

Note: if your child is absent for any reason from our school for a month or more, half of the tuition must be paid.

Please make all tuition checks payable to Mary Immaculate Preschool. For specific details on tuition and fees, please see attached chart.

Tuition is considered “overdue” by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month; after the 10<sup>th</sup> there will be a 10% Late Fee assessed.

### 23. EXTRA FEES

Other fees include:

- Registration fee (non-refundable at time of enrollment)
- Supply fee (annually)
- Special events fee (ie. Field trip, graduation, etc)

If you are late picking up your child, a \$1 PER MINUTE late penalty will be charged to your account.

For hot checks, the current bank charge will be applied to your account.

### 24. CONFIDENTIALITY

While your child is enrolled in our program, parents may come across

confidential information about our program, our staff, and sometimes other children. All information received from Mary Immaculate Preschool must remain confidential at all times. Breaching confidentiality may lead to disenrollment.

## 25. PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Please understand, young children are present in our building. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. Mary Immaculate Preschool prohibits swearing or cursing on our property.

Threatening staff, children, or other parents will not be tolerated per Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Mary Immaculate Preschool has the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian.

Mary Immaculate Preschool must follow particular rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property.

## 26. PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Children must be signed in and out by the custodial parent or adult person approved by the parent(s). Please understand that due to liability issues, staff of Mary Immaculate Preschool is not permitted to take children home from our center during operating hours.

In order not to confuse school toys with a child's personal property, we ask that children not bring playthings from home. Mary Immaculate Preschool staff cannot be responsible for lost or broken personal toys. Two exceptions to this are a stuffed animal for use during naptime by full-day preschool children and for Show & Tell purposes. You will be notified by your child's teacher if and when the class will have Show & Tell.

There are several ways you can help us maintain the best possible teaching atmosphere for your child:

- Communicate any concerns regarding our program or your child immediately to staff.

- Pick up and read the notices and information left for you in your child's folder and/or posted outside your child's classroom, at the reception desk, or in e-mail.
- Pick up your child's papers/projects daily. Their work is very important to them and provides another means of communication between parent and child and helps the parent share in the child's day.
- Please be aware of the scheduled meal times of breakfast and lunch, 8:15 am and 11:15 am, and make sure your child arrives in time to be included in those meals.
- Please do not allow your child to bring gum or candy to the classroom. We **STRONGLY** encourage you to allow your child to eat what we are serving that day, unless, of course, food allergies are a concern. In that case, we ask that you bring a note from your physician. Any food brought from home will only be served at the same time that the other children are eating and **MUST** be taken home at the end of the day.
- Periodically check on your child's supply of extra clothing. Please take home soiled clothing promptly.
- The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services do not allow smoking on the premises, either indoors or outdoors.

## 27. WITHDRAWAL FROM PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Three (3) days written notice must be given for withdrawing a child from Mary Immaculate Preschool.

## 28. CUSTODY SITUATIONS

Mary Immaculate Preschool prefers **NOT** to get involved with custody disputes. Mary Immaculate Preschool will follow a court order exactly as written. If your family has a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. **PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.** With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents information. A copy of a child's birth certificate may be requested at the Director's discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on

our property, the local police will be called and asked to handle the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for our facility or staff, Mary Immaculate Preschool has the right to terminate care.

## 29. INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICIES

Mary Immaculate Preschool will open most days during inclement weather. We will notify you of any school closing or information.

In case of serious emergencies such as earthquakes, fire, storms, or loss of power/water, parents will be notified, if possible, and children will be cared for until parents or emergency contacts arrive.

## 30. CURRICULUM

The curriculum offered at Mary Immaculate Preschool is based on the Minimum Standards of the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory services, and the Early Childhood Curriculum Guide from the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. In addition, Mary Immaculate Preschool also uses the Handwriting Without Tears program for handwriting mastery and the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program to teach concepts of the Catholic faith.

These curriculums believe that children learn best through actively engaging with people and things in their environment. Children are involved in hands-on experiences, real-life adventures, and assisted discovery as they explore concepts through play. These programs provide developmentally, spiritually and age-appropriate activities and materials for exciting and wonder filled environments.

To learn more about these programs and the wonderful things they offer, visit [www.cgsusa.org](http://www.cgsusa.org) / <http://www.hwtears.com/hwt> / [http://www.archgh.org/default/School/Quicklinks/Curriculum/Early Childhood Curriculum Guide.pdf](http://www.archgh.org/default/School/Quicklinks/Curriculum/Early%20Childhood%20Curriculum%20Guide.pdf)

## 31. DAILY SCHEDULE

Mary Immaculate Preschool classrooms follow a daily schedule designed

specifically to meet the children's developmental, spiritual, social and emotional, and personal needs. Please see attachment your child's class schedule.

### 32. CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

Mary Immaculate Preschool exceeds state ratios in all classrooms. From time to time, we may follow state ratios, unless under emergency situations.

### 34. NAP TIME

Supervised rest periods are provided for all children under five years of age who remain at Mary Immaculate Preschool for six or more hours a day, and for all other children who show a need for a rest time. Your child will be provided a cot to rest on for naptime. Please provide a clean blanket and sheet for naptime and take them home Fridays for washing. You may also bring in a special blanket, or pillow, or stuffed animal if desired, but they must be able to fit in your child's cubby.

### 35. CLOTHING

Preschool children must have a complete change of clothing in their backpack, which is clearly marked with the child's name. All children need to be appropriately dressed for the weather. Caps, mittens, and warm clothing must be worn during the cooler seasons for the daily outdoor playtime. Accidents can happen, even for the older preschoolers, when they wait too long before going to the bathroom, or if they get wet on the playground.

Note: please have your child wear shorts or tights underneath their dress or skirts.

Children should wear shoes, sandals and socks (please refrain from flip flops or slippers) for adequate safety.

### 36. PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Parents must supply all bottles, diapers, wipes and diapering accessories for their child. Please label everything with your child's first and last name.

Please leave all valuable items at home since Mary Immaculate Preschool

cannot be responsible for broken or lost items.

### 37. OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is a regular part of the daily routine. Children should be prepared to play outside some part of every day. Please do not request that your child stay indoors. Per the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, children too sick to go outside should not be at school. Children may not wear flip flops due to the danger these shoes may cause on the playground.

### 38. BIRTHDAYS

Most children enjoy celebrating special events with their school friends (birthdays or holidays). Parents may send a “store bought” treat to share with the class. Please make arrangements with the teacher several days in advance.

### 39. SCHOOL SAFETY POLICIES

Parents need to personally escort their child(ren) inside the building to sign in and out when their children enter and leave the facility. Each classroom has a window for viewing activity from the hallway. However, if you would like to stay and/or spend time with your child during activities, please see the office so we can do a proper criminal history check, as required by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Our facility is equipped with a fire sprinkler system and fire drills are practiced monthly.

### 40. CAMERAS

Mary Immaculate Preschool has closed circuit cameras in all classrooms. A monitor is located in our front lobby for parents to view. The privacy of the children is very important to us. For this reason, the cameras are not available over the internet.

### 41. PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEO

Mary Immaculate Preschool believes in the benefit of using real life pictures in our educational program. Photos and video taken of the children will be



done with a school owned camera and will only be used in our program. If parents choose to allow the Dominican Sisters to use your child's pictures, please check and sign the photo release in the enrollment form.

#### 42. CELL PHONES

Proper parent communication is imperative when working with young children. It is difficult to communicate when cell phones are in use. Effective December 1, 2010, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services passed new regulations prohibiting the personal use of cell phones in classrooms. Please help us stay in compliance with this new standard.

#### 43. TRESPASSING

Under Texas Penal Code § 30.05. (CRIMINAL TRESPASS), it is unlawful for any person to enter, remain or be on the preschool campus without effective consent from the Preschool Director. (ie. Passing out literature, protest, vv...)

#### 44. SCHOOL'S RIGHT TO AMEND

Mary Immaculate Preschool retains the right to amend the handbook for just causes and that parents will be promptly notified in writing if changes are made.

We, at Mary Immaculate Preschool, know that you trust us with your most valuable treasure, your child, and we strive to serve our families the absolute best in preschool education and childcare. We believe that excellent early childhood development is the foundation for a bright future for our children at Mary Immaculate Preschool.

# Immaculate Mary



1. Im - mac - u - late Ma - ry, your
2. In heav - en, the bless - ed your
3. We pray for our Moth - er, the



1. prais - es we sing. You reign now in
2. glo - ry pro - claim. On earth we, your
3. Church up - on earth, and bless, Ho - ly



1. heav - en with Je - sus our King.
2. chil - dren, in - voke your fair name.
3. Ma - ry, the land of our birth.

## Refrain



A - ve, A - ve, A - ve, Ma -



ri - a! A - ve, A - ve, Ma -



ri - - - - a!



“Let the Children come to me.”  
Mt. 19:14

