

Immanuel-St. James Early Childhood Handbook 2012-2013



He tends his flock like a shepherd:
He gathers the lambs in his arms
and carries them close to his heart;
He gently leads those that have young.

Isaiah 40:11

PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE

It is the philosophy of Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool that early childhood should be a time of fun, warmth, security, exploring, and discovery. Preschool children are creative and receptive; the staff strives to nurture and encourage these qualities in children who attend.

The preschool's purpose is to provide a Christian atmosphere that encourages social, emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual growth and development of the whole child.

Planned within the framework of philosophy and purpose, Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool's curriculum includes sharing and conversation time; stories, songs, and fingerplays; creative art activities and small muscle developing crafts; games and large muscle activities; field trips throughout the community; food preparation; science and nature activities; exposure to shapes colors, numbers, and letters; and the celebration of birthdays and holidays.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin. All students are entitled to the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, athletic and other school-administered programs.

ADMISSIONS

Children who are 3 years old up to kindergarten age are eligible to enroll in the preschool. Admission requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

1. A child must be 3 years old by September 1 to be admitted into the 3-year-old class.
2. A child must be 4 years old by September 1 to be admitted into the 4-year-old class.
3. A child must be 5 years old by March 1 to be admitted into the Young 5's class.
4. If the classes are filled when a parent calls, the child's name will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur.
5. Classes are filled on a first-come/first-served basis according to date of enrollment.

EDUCATIONAL GOALS

A child who listens:

- to directions without interrupting.
- to stories and poems for five to six minutes without restlessness.

A child who hears and sees:

- similarities and differences in pictures, shapes, and designs.
- letters, numbers, and words that match.

A child who understands:

- the relationship of words, such as up and down, above and below, top and bottom, little and big.
- the classification of words that represent people, places, and things.

A child who speaks and can:

- retain a topic within class discussion.
- retell a story or poem in correct sequence.
- tell a story, relate, or create an experience of his or her own.

A child who:

- plays cooperatively with other children.
- shares, takes turns, and assumes his or her share of group responsibility.
- can run, hop, jump, and throw a ball with comparative dexterity.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The educational program outlined in the next several pages is used for 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds. The difference in instruction for various age levels lies in the child's level of development and the interaction between the child and the teacher.

RELIGION

Learn about God and Jesus' love through:

- worship
- Bible stories
- living as God's children
- Bible words and verses
- Christian based music
- prayers
- puppets
- videos

SOCIALIZATION

Through classroom experiences, the child will learn to:

- take turns
- share materials
- follow and understand group rules
- assume responsibilities
- accept suggestions
- be courteous and cooperative
- associate happily with others

PLAY

Play is necessary to the child's mental and physical health. The child will be helped to develop a strong body, good posture, muscle control, and coordination through:

- rhythm
- games
- use of toys and educational materials
- dramatic play
- free play
- creative and expressive play

LANGUAGE READINESS

Through conversations, the child learns to express his/her own ideas, to listen to others, and to appreciate the thoughts of others as he/she takes part in:

- informal discussions and dramatizations
- listening to stories and poems
- conversations when the teacher and children make plans, share feelings and ideas
- discussion of daily events and new experiences

READING READINESS

In preparation for reading, a child will:

- listen to stories
- develop a familiarity with many books
- interpret pictures
- learn to relate simple events and stories
- dramatize stories
- learn to detect similarities and differences
- learn to recognize names of classmates
- learn to recognize letters of the alphabet
- learn to place a story in sequential order
- recall events from stories

MATH READINESS

The foundation is laid for the mathematics program, which begins in preschool. Through planned activities, the preschool child will:

- develop an interest in numbers
- gain understanding of the value and use of numbers
- learn to count with meaning
- acquire a number vocabulary
- recognize a group of objects
- recognize number symbols
- recognize shapes
- pattern objects according to colors, shapes and size
- simple graphing

SOCIAL STUDIES READINESS

Readiness in this area is further developed as the child learns:

- more about family life
- more about school
- more about the community
- more about community workers
- to play and share with others
- to respect the rights of others

SCIENCE READINESS

Readiness for science also has its beginning at this age. Carefully planned experiences aim to stimulate the child's interest and curiosity in the world around him/her and answer many of their questions. The child will be given opportunities to:

- watch as animals, plants, and people grow
- take field trips into the community (offered for 4 and 5 year olds)
- observe changes in weather, temperature, and seasons
- use and understand their senses

ART

Through the use of many materials the child will discover the joy of expressing himself/herself. He or she will:

- draw pictures and designs
- draw pictures of himself/herself
- model with clay and playdough
- cut and paste
- create his/her own ideas of the world with paint
- construct objects with paper
- study pictures
- create pictures with many textural objects (sand, plaster, pasta, etc.)

MUSIC

In the music activities, the child will learn to appreciate the beauty of tone, rhythm, and melody. He or she will have opportunities to:

- sing alone and in groups
- take part in rhythmic activities
- listen to music
- play musical games
- participate in fingerplays

WRITING

Instruction in writing is not given to the preschoolers, but many activities are provided to develop readiness for all age groups.

These activities will lead the child to:

- recognize his/her name in manuscript
- watch as the teacher illustrates stories dictated by the child.
- observe as the teacher writes the children's names on their drawings
- learn to print his/her name
- learn to trace letters and shapes

COMPUTER

Computers are important in our classrooms. Preschool students will have the opportunity to learn:

- to care for computer equipment and software
- basic computer skills by using age-appropriate programs
- to be comfortable with the computer

SNACKS

A snack time is part of the daily routine. Milk is provided by the school and snacks are furnished by parents. Parents will receive a monthly calendar containing the snack schedule. Snacks may be home-made or purchased, but must maintain a nutritional value. We encourage our parents to bring nutritious snacks such as: fruit, granola bars, cheese and crackers, vegetables, dried fruits, etc... When a child is celebrating a birthday, he/she may bring a special birthday treat to share.

HELPER OF THE DAY

The day your child brings snack he/she is also the helper of the day. This means serving as line leader, calendar helper, and snack helper. Your child will look forward to this special day.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

The classroom teacher will supervise all volunteers. Any volunteer who will be in the classroom on a regular basis will need a children's protective services clearance.

FIELD TRIPS

An important part of Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool's curriculum is exposing the children (4 and 5 year olds) to many and varied experiences within the community; therefore, a number of field trips are planned during the school year. Parents will be informed of field trips in advance through newsletters and a permission slip sent home for each trip. It is required that a signed permission slip be returned before the child may go on a field trip. Parents will need to bring in a booster seat on field trip days.

We require that all parent volunteers who will be driving on our field trips have a children's protective services clearance. Each volunteer will also need to provide us with a copy of a valid driver's license, which will be kept on file.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports and Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled as follows:

- 3 year olds will receive two written evaluations during the year. A parent teacher conference will be held in early spring.
- 4 and 5 year olds will receive three written evaluations during the year. Parent teacher conferences will be held once or twice during the year; depending on the child's class assignment.

If at any time you have a concern or a problem that involves your child and school, please call the teacher outside of school hours and either discuss the problem over the phone or make arrangements for an appointment.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONCERNS

The teacher will respond to any concerns or difficulties arising at school and will either notify you by phone, in person, or a written note requesting a consultation. Our staff is always nearby to lend support, answer questions or discuss the needs of your child.

THE CHILD'S PROGRESS

A parent can judge the child's progress by observing whether he/she is:

- becoming more considerate of others
- working independently
- following directions more consistently
- taking better care of belongings
- acting with greater self-confidence
- showing more appreciation of the world around him/her
- becoming more observant
- assuming more responsibilities

DISCIPLINE

Acceptable behavior is encouraged by giving positive verbal rewards. This reinforces a child's good feeling about his/her behavior and serves as an example to other children to act in such a way as to receive this praise. Asking a child to stop and think about his/her unpleasant behavior enables that child to work at self-control.

For a child not cooperating in a group learning situation, the child is reminded by the teacher of acceptable behavior. Removal from the group for a period of time out is the next tactic used for a child who continually demonstrates unacceptable behavior. This time out is not a punishment, but rather a time when the child may calm down, remember what behavior the teacher is asking for, and decide for himself/herself when he/she is ready to rejoin the group with appropriate behavior.

If behavior problems persist, the parent is asked to a conference to discuss what may be helpful in motivating the child to behave in an acceptable way. It may be suggested that the child be involved in a behavior modification program, with the parent having the option of being involved in the process as well.

CLASS SESSIONS

Morning Sessions	8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Afternoon Sessions	12:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.

2 DAY PROGRAM

Morning - Tuesday and Thursday
Afternoon - Tuesday and Thursday
3 and early 4 year old children

3 DAY PROGRAM

Morning - Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Afternoon - Monday, Wednesday and Friday
Young 5's - Monday through Friday 12:30 p.m. - 3:10 p.m.

Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool reserves the right to cancel a class if a minimum of ten (10) students are not enrolled in the program.

CLASSROOM SCHEDULE

Morning Sessions

8:30—9:10	Readiness Activities and Learning Centers
9:10—9:30	Bible Story Time, Music, and Fingerplays
9:30— 10:05	Art Time and Small Group Time

(The class is split into two groups for art time and small group time. In small group time, the children will learn about the letter of the week, and participate in readiness and large muscle activities.)

10:05—10:20	Calendar Time
10:20—10:35	Snack Time
10:35—10:50	Recess Time
10:50—11:00	Share Bag and Dismissal

Afternoon Sessions

12:15—12:50	Readiness Activities and Learning Centers
12:50—1:10	Bible Story Time, Music, and Fingerplays
1:10— 1:45	Art Time and Small Group Time

(The class is split into two groups for art time and small group time. In small group time, the children will learn about the letter of the week, and participate in readiness and large muscle activities.)

1:45—2:00	Calendar Time
2:00—2:15	Snack Time
2:15—2:35	Recess Time
2:35—2:45	Share Bag and Dismissal

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The preschool year usually begins after Labor Day and ends the week before Memorial Day for a total of 34 weeks in session. You will be provided with a school calendar at the beginning of the school year to aid you in planning.

The preschool follows the Immanuel-St. James School year calendar, closing for the same holidays and vacations. Because of the state regulations concerning class size and teacher ratio, missed days may not be made up on non-scheduled days.

TUITION

<u>Program</u>	<u>Yearly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>
2-Day Program	\$895.00	\$89.50
3 Day Program	\$1,195.00	\$119.50
Young 5's	\$1,990.00	\$199.00

A reduced tuition is available to families with more than one child enrolled in our preschool. Please call the school office at 363-0505 for details. Because tuition is an annual fee, no refunds are given for illness, vacations, or snow days, and those days are not made up.

ENROLLMENT FEES

There is a yearly enrollment fee of \$60.00 per preschool family which is non-refundable and not applicable toward the tuition. This \$60.00 reserves your child's place in a preschool class. This fee is due at the time of enrollment.

TERMS OF PAYMENT

Your tuition can be paid as follows:

- in full — due on or before July 20 (3% discount)
- semi-annually — 1/2 due July 20 and
1/2 due December 20
- monthly — due on the 20th of each month
(July through April)

A statement and payment coupons will be mailed to you in June. Thereafter, statements will be mailed only when an account becomes delinquent or if the applicant requests a statement.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Please make payments by check or money order. We cannot be responsible for cash payments sent by mail or given in any other manner. Payments should be mailed to the main school office.

Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool
2066 Oakwood Ave. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

LATE FEES

- a. A Reminder Notice will be issued 10 days after a missed monthly payment along with a late fee.
- b. If any monthly payment remains unpaid on the 20th of the following month, a Past Due Notice will be issued.
- c. If past due tuition is not paid in full by the 20th of the following month, a Final Notice will be issued. Once a Final Notice has been issued, all further payments must be made in advance.
- d. If past due tuition is not paid in full 10 days after the Final Notice is sent, the student will be suspended until payment is made in full.
- e. Any balance due at the end of the school year must be paid in full in order for records to be released or a child to be advanced to the next grade.

RETURNED CHECKS

Any checks returned for NSF (Non-Sufficient Funds) will be charged a \$25.00 fee.

WITHDRAWAL

If it becomes necessary for you to withdraw your child from school, please notify the school office in writing thirty (30) school days prior to the date of withdrawal.

REFUNDS:

If tuition has been paid in full and student withdraws by:

If a student withdraws before August 15, a 90% refund shall be made.

If a student withdraws before September 15, a 70% refund shall be made.

If a student withdraws before October 15, a 50% refund shall be made.

If a student withdraws on or after October 15, no refund shall be made.

Month by month tuition is non-refundable. Tuition will be billed 30 days from written notification to ISJ.

TOILET TRAINING

Children must be toilet trained and be able to take care of themselves in the bathroom.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

A child enrolling in preschool shall have a medical examination (within 6 months prior to the start of preschool) before entrance into preschool.

HEALTH APPRAISAL

Parents are required to provide a health appraisal form which will be provided upon the child's enrollment into preschool. The form must be completed and signed by a physician or authorized medical professional. Each child is required by state regulations and/or school policies to have on file a completed health appraisal form, which includes:

- 1. A record of up-to-date immunizations**
- 2. A medical examination**
- 3. The signature of the child's source of medical care**

Your child's health appraisal must be completed and filed in the school office within ten days of the child's admittance into preschool or the child may be excluded from the program.

MEDICATION:

Should students need prescription medication during the school day, parents must send a signed Medication Form to school along with the medication before school personnel will administer the medication.

All students must have and take all prescribed medication according to the doctor's orders. All medication will be kept in the school office.

Students with food allergies must have a parent signed note on file in the office indicating the specific food allergies.

BIRTH CERTIFICATE

A copy of a state or county birth certificate (**NO HOSPITAL BIRTH CERTIFICATES**) must be on file in the school office no later than the first day of school.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION CARD

An Emergency Contact Information Card must be completed and returned to the school office before the child's first day of preschool. The preschool must have on file for each child enrolled, a signed form authorizing emergency care. This card contains emergency numbers for reaching the parent or guardian, the name and phone number of another authorized person, the name and phone number of the child's physician, and a hospital preference must be indicated.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

In case of a medical emergency, first aid will be administered by the staff. The parent or authorized adult will be notified as quickly as possible. If medical attention is required, the staff will call a local ambulance service who will transport the child to a hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the child's own physician.

ILLNESS

Should a child become ill during the day, the parent is notified immediately. The child will remain under adult supervision until the parent or authorized person arrives to take the child home.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Contagious illnesses such as measles, pink eye, strep throat, impetigo, chicken pox, head lice, etc. must be reported by the parent to the school office as soon as it is known. We encourage you to follow closely the instructions given by your family's physician and return your child to school when fully recovered.

A student will not be permitted to attend classes or other school sponsored activities if the student is known to be afflicted with, or liable to transmit any contagious disease, unless the Christian Day School Board of Immanuel-St. James Lutheran School or its designee, has determined, based on medical evidence, that: (1) the student is no longer infected or liable to transmit the disease; or (2) the student is afflicted with a chronic infectious disease which poses little risk of transmission in the school environment with reasonable precautions.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE CLASSROOM

Keep your child home:

- If he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hour period.
- If he/she has a cold.
- If he/she has a heavy nasal discharge.
- If he/she has a constant cough.
- If he/she is vomiting.
- If he/she is fussy, cranky, and generally not himself/herself.
- Keep him/her home even if he/she is overly tired. Rest at such

times may prevent the development of an illness.
- If he/she has symptoms of a possible communicable disease.
(These are usually sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache,
and or abdominal pain, plus fever.) Please notify the school
at once if the child does have a communicable disease.

HEALTH CARE PLAN

Each child and staff member's hands will be washed after use of toilet, and before eating. Each child and staff member will wash their hands after handling bodily fluids, including sneezing, nose wiping, coughing and blowing noses. Staff will monitor children to ensure children lather their hands and rub their hands together for at least 15 seconds.

All toys, equipment and classroom furniture will be thoroughly washed, rinsed and sanitized at least twice a year. Tables used for eating and food preparation will be cleaned with soap and water, rinsed, and then sanitized with a bleach solution before and after each snack.

ABSENTEE CALL IN PROCEDURE

It is the policy of the preschool that a parent is to call the school office at 363-0505 before the child's session begins. Your cooperation will be appreciated.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENT

Our goal is to provide a happy and wholesome school experience for preschool children within a Christian atmosphere. The program is flexible, permitting the teacher to plan activities for the needs and abilities of the particular children in the class. If we are unable to meet the needs of your child within our program, we will assist you to the best of our ability to find a program that will best benefit your child.

TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM PRESCHOOL

Due to the extremely stringent regulations on the busing of preschoolers, parents are responsible for transportation to and from the school. Assistance will be provided in the form of names, addresses and phone numbers of families in your geographic area to aid in the forming of car pools. Parents are responsible for their car pool rules, regulations and schedules.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES FOR SESSIONS

Children may not be brought to and left at school before or after the following times unless they are in the Before Care Program:

Morning Sessions:	8:30 a.m. Arrival
	11:00 a.m. Dismissal
	(8:10 am Arrival—if a sibling is in our day school)

Afternoon Sessions;	12:15 p.m. Arrival
	2:45 p.m. Dismissal

For safety's sake, children must always be left in the care of an adult, with the children being brought directly to the classroom. Children must never be left at the preschool without a teacher present. Parents are asked to return to the classroom to pick up their children after class is over.

It is important that our teachers have adequate time to prepare for the next preschool session or for the next day. Their time is not well used waiting with students for their rides to arrive. The Joint Board has approved the following policy: **“There will be a charge of \$1.00 for every minute a parent is late picking up a child from preschool. The charges will begin 10 minutes after each session is dismissed. Exceptions will be determined by the principal.”**

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

ISJ is now offering Before and After Care for ISJ students. Hours for Before Care will be 6:30 a.m. until the beginning of school. After Care hours will be from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Fees for Before Care: \$5.00 per day per child.

Fees for After Care: \$2.50 per half hour per child. Charges will be incurred 5 minutes into the half-hour.

There is no need to pre-register. You may use this service on an as needed basis.

You must sign your child in and out of the Care Room.

Students will be checked into the Care Room if they arrive at school prior to 7:50 a.m. and if they have not been picked up from school by 3:25 p.m.

More information is available in the Care Room.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP A CHILD

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick the child up. We must have written or verbal authorization for changes in this matter.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Whenever a severe thunderstorm watch or warning or a tornado watch is issued by the U.S. Weather Service, the Preschool Director will decide if the school should remain in session. The policy of Immanuel-St. James is to remain in regular session during a thunderstorm watch or warning or a tornado watch. Whenever a tornado warning is issued, all students and staff will remain in their building, taking shelter in designated areas.

Parents, legal guardians or predetermined persons may pick up students from Immanuel-St. James during any severe weather warning. We do ask that parents refrain from calling the school. It is extremely important that our school and church telephone lines remain open during severe weather.

SCHOOL CLOSING VIA MEDIA

If it becomes necessary to close school due to inclement weather, the Director will notify the

appropriate news media. If you hear the Grand Rapids Public Schools are closed on either radio or television stations due to inclement weather, we are automatically closed.

DRESS

Children are encouraged to wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Daily activities include active and messy play, and the children should feel comfortable enough to enjoy themselves without worrying about their clothes. The child's name should be placed on all outer garments and other belongings to help ensure the return of all the proper possessions and clothes. An extra set of clothing kept in the child's backpack is encouraged.

PARENT TEACHER LEAGUE

Any parent whose child is attending Immanuel-St. James Lutheran Preschool is encouraged to attend our Parent Teacher League meetings held throughout the year. The dates for the meetings are listed on the school calendar.

VOLUNTEERS

We are always in need of volunteers. We need and urge your voluntary assistance in planning trips, programs, public relations activities, recruitment of future students, and other activities. We always need extra parents to accompany us on field trips.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

This booklet has been supplied in an effort to answer many of your questions. Please contact anyone on the staff if you have more questions.

Parents are informed of the activities of the preschool through weekly newsletters and emails. The newsletter includes weekly unit topics, class activities, field trips, and suggestions for parents.

Because of state regulations concerning class size and teacher ratio, it is not possible for children to bring friends to visit.

Parents are encouraged to visit our preschool at any time. Because of occasional field trips and special activities, advance notice is suggested.

If the teachers are not free to talk with you, please understand that the children come first during the class time; the teachers will be happy to talk with you after the children are dismissed.

SUPPLIES

The school furnishes pencils and scissors for the children. A list of supplies each family will need to provide will be mailed out in August.

