



Preschool Parent Handbook 2026 - 2027

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St. Ignatius of Loyola Preschool Handbook

Introduction

Welcome to **St. Ignatius Preschool**. St. Ignatius of Loyola School has long been recognized for excellence in the Greater Cincinnati Area. Our success is rooted in our commitment to educating the whole person. The spiritual, moral, physical, emotional, and intellectual development of each student is promoted in a value-centered environment.

These same values and commitment to excellence will continue with our preschool program. We recognize the unique and God-given potential of each child, leading them in their discovery of faith and fostering the love of learning. Our Preschool offers a Catholic-based, kindergarten readiness program that will enable children to grow academically, spiritually, physically, emotionally, and artistically by:

- Teaching children through a Catholic foundation of bible stories and prayer that God loves them and listens to them.
- Instilling in children that we are called to serve one another through service to others.
- Providing an atmosphere where hands-on learning and experiential learning are foundations.
- Introducing children to a variety of literature, science, technology, and academic activities.
- Providing children opportunities to further develop fine and gross motor skills through play and planned activities.
- Teaching appropriate peer interactions and self-control through sharing, good manners and cooperation.
- Instilling in children a sense of self-worth, self-confidence, and the joy of childhood.
- Preparing children for a successful transition to Kindergarten.

Our program includes:

- Phonetic based reading
- Exposure to a variety of literature
- Experiences in science, math and technology
- Sensory and dramatic play
- Prayer times – **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**
- Playtime and peer interaction
- Christian service opportunities

St. Ignatius Preschool Philosophy and Goals

Research shows how critical the early years are for later success in school and life. The brain develops faster during early childhood than at any other time, especially when a child is engaged in enriching relationships and activities, like reading, singing, building, and pretend play. Knowledgeable teachers providing those kinds of experiences, along with a Catholic education, will give children a solid start in school. Children who attend St. Ignatius Preschool will gain competencies in language and literacy, math, problem-solving, and self-control skills such as paying attention and getting along with others. We want children and families to see our school as a fun, exciting, and caring place that will lay the foundation for lifelong curiosity, learning and Catholic identity.

Our preschool philosophy is based on current research and theory of best practices in meeting the needs of young children. We believe that children learn best through direct interactions with materials and people and we draw on the research of Erikson, Montessori, Piaget, and Vygotsky. These are developmentally appropriate, hands-on experiences that encourage children to play, explore, experiment, problem solve and critically think. Our program is aligned with the Ohio Early Learning and Development Standards, the Archdiocese of Cincinnati Early Education Standards, and St. Ignatius School's Core Values.

Core Values

Since 1946, Saint Ignatius Loyola School has embraced a proud tradition of excellence in Catholic education. The school's success is driven by six core values:

1. **The Centrality of God and the Catholic Faith:** We celebrate a strong Catholic tradition while maintaining Christ-centered academics and activities on a day-to-day basis. The presence of God is a constant at Saint I's. Together, with their parents, Saint I's introduces their students to the long-standing legacy of the Catholic faith. This provides a strong foundation, instilling ethics, morals, and the love for Jesus Christ.
2. **Focusing on the Whole Child:** Saint I's excellent test scores, consistently in the top 10% of the country, are only one aspect of its quality education. The staff and faculty focus on the whole child, realizing the importance of spiritual, academic, physical, emotional, moral, intellectual, and social development. This comprehensive, whole child approach provides an environment where each student's unique abilities are both embraced and challenged, building the foundation for greater self-worth and life-long happiness.
3. **Celebrating Diversity:** Embracing all God's Children: Utilizing Christian law as our cornerstone and the Commandment "Love your neighbor as yourself", Saint I embraces diverse talents, abilities, and backgrounds. Our commitment to this Commandment begins with the inclusion of all students.
4. **Modeling Stewardship:** Saint I's faculty, staff, and families provide examples of stewardship as they care for their community, their school, and their students. Their benevolence for the students and the respect that the students learn by their example creates a cycle of stewardship. Our children learn to be stewards of the Catholic Church, the earth, the community, and their individual gifts. Saint I's school is a training ground, teaching students to become good stewards both today and in the future.
5. **Continuous Improvement:** Saint Ignatius School deliberately and intentionally works to continuously improve. We aim to be the best at getting better. Already a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and a recognized leader in academics and inclusion, the faculty is constantly planning for the future and building on its current success. Embracing the saying "You only coast when going downhill," both the school and the students are constantly reaching toward their personal best.
6. **Cultivating Community:** Ignatius begins with I and ends with Us. Saint Ignatius is a dynamic experience for their students and their families. The students enter the school as individuals, but will soon become an integral part of the school, the Catholic Church, and the larger community. Becoming part of the "Us" comes with the responsibility to strengthen these communities, and our students achieve this through volunteerism, good citizenship, and the outward love for Jesus Christ

Licensing and Inspection

The St. Ignatius Preschool is licensed by the Ohio Department of Children & Youth. Our State License and most current compliance report is posted on the bulletin board outside the Director's office and is available for review at any time. Our licensing record is available from the Ohio Department of Children & Youth upon request from the director. A copy of rules for the preschool program can be found in the office or online at the DCY website. Should any person suspect a violation of the Administrative Code by the school, please phone the Ohio Department of Children & Youth at 877-644-6338.

General Admission Policies

St. Ignatius Preschool is an equal-opportunity program for young children and is licensed by the Ohio Department of Children & Youth. All are welcome regardless of gender, race, religion, ability, or national origin.

Enrollment is subject to completion of all required paperwork.

- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Registration and Enrollment Form
- Proof of Immunization
- Medical Statement signed by a physician (must be updated every year)
- Handbook Acknowledgement Statement, Photo authorization, Photo Release, Class Roster Permission
- Students must be age 3, 4, or 5 by the first day of school
- All preschool students must be **fully toilet trained** prior to the first day of school.
- Admittance to the preschool is processed according to your admission priority category. For more information, please contact the school office. The pastor and principal may make exceptions to this policy.
 - Category 1: All children currently enrolled at St. Ignatius School (and their siblings) who are current on tuition and whose participation in the life of the parish can be documented.
 - Category 2: All children of St. Ignatius parishioners NOT currently enrolled at St. Ignatius School whose participation in the life of the parish can be documented.
 - Category 3: Children of St. Ignatius Parishioners who do not participate in the life of the parish. Full-cost (non-subsidized) tuition will be charged.
 - Category 4: Non-Parishioners. Full-cost (non-subsidized) tuition will be charged.
- Tuition will cover a snack during the day for both the half-day preschool children and the Pre-K children.
- Students in the 5-year-old Pre-K program may purchase school lunch or pack a lunch.
- Before and After-school care is available for children who are 5 years old in the Pre-K program only.
- Bus transportation may be available for some Pre-K children, depending on the school district of residence.

Program Options

- Full Day Pre-Kindergarten – Monday – Friday 8:55 – 3:30
- 4 year old AM Half-Day Preschool – MWF 8:55 – 11:45
- 4 year old PM Half-Day Preschool – MWF 12:45 – 3:30
- 3 year old AM Half-Day Preschool – T/TH 8:55 – 11:45
- 3 year old PM Half-Day Preschool – T/TH 12:45 – 3:30

Arrival and Dismissal

- Drop off procedures:
Our school day begins at **8:55** am for full-day Pre-K children and half-day morning preschool children **AND 12:45** pm for half-day afternoon preschool children. For morning classes, children will be dropped off by way of a single-file carpool line in front of the Preschool which is located on the lower level at the back of the school. Staff will greet children and escort them through the north door, which is located under the blue awning, to their individual classrooms. For afternoon classes, the drop-off location is the top of the Preschool steps just past the Cafeteria doors and the trash bins. Teachers will greet children at the top of the steps and escort them to their classrooms. **Drop-off may begin at 8:30 in the morning and 12:35 in the afternoon.** Bussed Pre-K children will be escorted to their classroom by one of our teacher aids.
- Pick-up procedures:
Morning half-day children must be picked up by 11:45. Afternoon half-day children and Pre-K children must be picked up by 3:30 p.m. Parents will park in spots located behind the church/school and walk over to pick up their child from the Preschool. Staff will only release children to persons authorized to pick up your child. Bussed Pre-K children will be escorted to their appropriate bus. Pre-K children who have signed up for after-care will be brought to the cafeteria where parents will pick them up before 6:00 pm.

Attendance

Classes are held as indicated on the printed school calendar. Attendance is recorded each day by the classroom teachers and the data is kept in the Director's office. Parents are asked to call the Main office by 8:55 AM for morning preschool and 12:30 for PM preschool. If the parent does not call, the office will call to check on the child's whereabouts.

Dress Code

Students must wear a uniform. Students may wear pants or shorts. Pants or shorts shall be solid navy blue. Shirts are to be solid white or navy with a collar and only the top button may remain open. A shirt may be worn with or without the official school logo. Girls may wear a solid navy uniform polo dress. Girls may wear solid navy, black, or white shorts, tights, or tight leggings under the uniform polo dress. Visible logos and writing on clothing are prohibited with the exception of logos on shoes and socks. Only the current school logo may be worn on other items of clothing.

- Uniforms can be purchased at:
 - Shaheen's (513-771-1234) www.shaheens.com
 - Schoolbelles (513-921-3417) www.schoolbelles.com School code S2007.
 - Uniforms may be purchased at other stores if they meet the requirements.

Morning and After School Care (5-year-olds only)

Advanced registration is required. Information and registration forms can be obtained from the school office and online.

- The Morning Care program will be open daily from 7:00 - 8:30 a.m. Students may not be dropped off before 7:00 a.m. At 8:15 buses begin to arrive and a teacher will be on duty until 8:35 when students are dismissed to their classrooms. Fees are \$5.00/day per child.
- The After School Care program is held from 3:30 – 6:00 p.m. each day that there is a full day of school. While children may be picked up by parents/guardians any time during that 2 ½ hours, all children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. Parents should enter the school by the cafeteria doors across from the Parish Office. Ring the doorbell to gain admittance. Parents are required to sign their child out of the program each day. Fees are \$10.00/day per child. A \$1.00/minute late fee per child will be charged if children are not picked up by 6:00 p.m.

General Safety

- All children will remain under constant supervision while at St. Ignatius Preschool. State ratios will be maintained at all times.
- There is a telephone located in the office and each classroom for use in case of an emergency.
- Our school nurse and/or staff members are trained in first aid, CPR, recognition of communicable diseases, and medication administration and are available on the premises at all times. A first aid kit is always available in the Director's office.
- The Preschool Director shall immediately notify the local public children's services agency when they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.
- When an accident or injury occurs, the school shall complete a report in accordance with Rules 5101:2-12-49 of the Administrative Code.

Curriculum and Assessment

St. Ignatius Preschool provides a curriculum that is aligned with Ohio's Early Learning and Developmental Standards. The curriculum focuses on the following learning domains:

- Social-Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Cognitive Development
- General Knowledge (including Mathematics, Science, Social Studies)
- Language and Literacy Development
- Physical, Well Being and Motor Development
- Additionally, through weekly participation in the **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd** children will learn that God loves them and listens to them. Our program will adhere to the Standards of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati for Religious Education.

Our program is continually evolving and allows us to meet each child's learning style and potential. Student development will be assessed formally and informally throughout the school year. With a natural and ongoing assessment process that occurs through observation and interaction, our teachers use their expert knowledge of early childhood developmental milestones to help guide and encourage each student.

Parent-teacher conferences will be held in the fall for both the full-day Pre-K children and the 4-year-old half-day children. Spring conferences will be held for the 3-year-old half-day children. Parents are welcome to request a conference anytime during the school year. Full-day Pre-K children will receive formal Progress Reports at the end of each trimester.

Teacher Qualifications

Lead Teachers have college degrees or masters in Early Childhood Education and are certified in CPR, First Aid, Recognition of Communicable Diseases, and Recognition of Child Abuse. Additionally, they are certified through SafeParish participation through the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and have completed the FBI and BCI background checks. The staff regularly attends seminars and workshops for early childhood educators.

Guidance and Behavior Management Policy

Our teachers are committed to using constructive, developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques in the area of discipline. Our goal is for children to have fun, feel good about themselves, and learn to regulate their own behavior by practicing social skills in a group setting.

Our teachers will use the following techniques to help guide children's behavior:

- Setting clear limits
- Redirecting the child to an appropriate activity
- Showing children positive alternatives
- Modeling respectful interactions with others, using their own words and actions to develop an understanding of how to deal with conflict
- Intervening when needed as quickly as possible to ensure the safety of all the children
- Encouraging children to control their own behavior, cooperate with others and solving problems by talking things out.

If there are any problems with a child's behavior in the program, the teacher will speak directly with the parent. Keeping open lines of communication, the teacher will work with the parent to prevent future problems.

- There will 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 restraint shall be used to confine a child by any means other than holding a child for a short period of time, such as 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.
- No child shall be subjected to profane language, threats, derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family, or other verbal abuse.
- Discipline shall not be imposed on a child for failure to eat, failure to sleep, or toileting accidents.
- Techniques of discipline shall not humiliate, shame, or frighten a child.
- Discipline shall not include withholding food, rest, or toilet use.

- Separation, when used as discipline 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, well-ventilated space.
- The preschool shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in attendance in the preschool program.

Emergency, Safety, and Security Procedures

Crisis Plan – St. Ignatius has a crisis plan in place that ensures the safety of all students. The plan is reviewed yearly, with faculty and emergency personnel. All staff and faculty are appropriately trained to carry out the plan in the case of an emergency.

Fire and Tornado Drills – Monthly fire drills are conducted throughout the school year. Tornado drills will be held in the spring of each year. Directions are posted in each classroom to instruct occupants where to go in case of an emergency. Teachers will escort the students to their specified safe zone. We ask that all adults who are in the building at the time of a drill follow the safety rules.

Lockdown Drill – A lockdown will occur if there is immediate danger outside the school/church building or if an intruder has entered the building. During this time, all efforts are made to keep all students safe either by being secured in their classrooms or evacuating the building to a safe location. These drills are conducted several times during a school year.

Shelter in Place – Shelter in Place is a safety procedure designed to help protect the staff and students at our school during a serious airborne hazardous material emergency. It means taking shelter inside the school until the danger has passed. The goal of the Shelter in Place is to prevent contaminated outside air from entering the school for the duration of the incident. It is important to keep students in school during a hazardous material emergency. During this time no student will be allowed to leave the building nor will anyone be allowed to enter. If this situation should arise, you will be notified through our automated call system.

Emergency Closing Plan

For Inclement weather conditions, in most cases, we follow the Northwest School District postings. Should school be closed or delayed, parents and students should wait to be notified through our Parent Square notification system, automated call system, emails, school website, social media outlets, and/or radio and television announcements. Should Northwest call for a two-hour delay, morning ½ day classes will not be held. Remember children will still need to be picked up at their regular dismissal time.

Medical and Dental Emergency Plan

- The First Aid Kit is located in the Director's office
- Current emergency telephone numbers for the emergency squad, fire department, the hospital and poison control center, children's protective agency, and the police department are posted in each classroom and the Director's office.
- A staff member trained in first aid, recognition of child abuse, recognition of communicable diseases, and CPR is always on-site.

- Children's medical and admission records are located in the file cabinet in the Director's office.
- All staff will participate in first aid training to keep it updated. All staff are aware of the correct supervision of children during an emergency.
- Staff will observe a child upon entering school for signs of communicable diseases. Children who become ill during school hours will be isolated and the parent/guardian will be contacted at once.
- The Ohio Department of Health's dental first-aid chart is posted in the nurse's office. All staff have been trained to act in accordance with it.
- In the case of a minor incident/accident staff will administer basic first aid and the family will be contacted. If an incident/accident is life-threatening, EMS will be contacted and the family will be notified. The child's records will be transported with the child when seeking emergency treatment. Emergency transportation will be provided by Ambulance only.
- An incident/accident form will be provided to the parent/guardian any time an incident/accident occurs within 24 hours of the day of the incident/accident.

Health Procedures and Policies

Childhood Sickness/Illness. For the health and safety of all children, sick children will not be admitted into school. We ask that you keep any child who exhibits any of the following at home:

- Fever of greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit within the past 24 hours.
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period.)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficulty or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of eye or eyelid, thick and purulent pus discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching, or eye pain
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots, or rashes
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.

If a child develops any of these symptoms while at school, the child will be isolated on a cot in the Nurse's office or Director's office. The child's parents will be notified to pick up their child. Your child may return to school when they have been free of all symptoms for 24 hours, without a fever-reducing medication such as Tylenol (Acetaminophen) or Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil). If a child is found to have a temperature greater than 100.0F while at school, he/she may not remain at school.

Administering Medication Policy

The administration of medication requires the written consent of the parent/legal guardian and a doctor's order before any medication can be given at school. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter medication such as (Tylenol, Motrin, skin creams, ointments, eye drops, etc.)

A copy of the “Administration of Medication” form is available from your child’s teacher or the preschool Director. If your child needs medication, take this form to their physician and have it filled out and brought to the Preschool Director. Please make sure that the form is filled out completely and that both the physician and parent/legal guardian sign the form before it is sent to school with the medication.

The physician’s order and parent’s written request are valid for 1 school year. A new order and request must be obtained at the beginning of each school year.

For any change in dosage or time a medication needs to be given, etc., a new physician’s order needs to be provided.

All medication will be stored in a classroom cabinet or the Director’s office out of reach of the children.

All medication MUST be in its original container.

Please refer to the Saint Ignatius Loyola School Student Handbook for complete medication policy.

Physicals and Immunizations

Each student must have a medical record on file by the first day of school. Every student needs to provide an immunization record completed by a physician along with a current physical. This physical is good for one year and must be updated annually.

Students not immunized in accordance with state requirements must be excluded from school until their immunizations are in compliance with Ohio state law.

What to Bring to School

Each child should have a complete change of clothes to stay in their backpack. Check periodically to make sure they fit your child. Please make sure all items are in a ziplock bag marked with your child’s name (even if your child no longer has accidents). A change of clothes may be needed due to water play or messy art activities.

Keep children’s personal toys at home. Teachers will let you know if there is a sharing day when children can bring personal toys from home.

For Pre-K students - A nap mat or small pillow and light blanket for rest time.

Students will need a folder clearly labeled with their first and last names. Each child should bring a backpack that can fit their child’s folder and ziplock of clothes. Please check your child’s folder daily for any paper or notes that have been sent home.

Please label ALL items your child brings to school, especially coats, jackets, hats, & gloves.

Parent & Volunteer Involvement

The Archdiocesan Decree on Child Protection requires all school volunteers and employees to be certified and participate in the **Archdiocesan SafeParish Training and register on Selection.com. To ensure a consistent learning atmosphere we cannot allow non-school-age children to accompany parents when they volunteer (lunch room, classroom, and field trips).**

These two items are required in order to be considered to volunteer at any time during the school year. Please check with the school office or Wildcat Wire for directions on how to enroll in SafeParish.

Parents are welcome at any time in our classroom. Other visitors need to schedule a time with administration/office staff and the teacher. Our goal is to form a strong, loving partnership between the teacher, families, and community.

Transportation

Transportation may be available for 5-year-old kindergarten-eligible children according to their specific Public School District. Please contact your Public School District for more information. Currently, we do not have any Field Trips scheduled where we would need public/private transportation.

Withdrawal Information

If for any reason a child needs to withdraw from the preschool program, please let the preschool Director and Main School Office know of your intention in writing 30 days prior to departure.

For Tuition Information and additional School Policies please refer to the St. Ignatius Family Handbook.



**St. Ignatius
Loyola School**

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Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received and read the St. Ignatius
Preschool Handbook.

Student's Name: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____