



# **Early Childhood Program Parent Handbook**

Academy of the Sacred Heart seeks to build relationships of mutual trust, respect, and collaboration between all constituents. For the sake of our children, the School takes seriously the commitment to communicate with clarity, integrity, and compassion. We know that the partnerships created between school and home create the foundation for our education, and make every effort to make honest communication, reconciliation in times of conflict, and a commitment to confidential dialogue our practice. With a commitment to the [Goals and Criteria](#) of Sacred Heart education, the guidelines in this handbook serve as common criteria for school operations.

## **HANDBOOK INTRODUCTION**

The following information and policies are written to guide families in the Early Childhood Program in understanding the student experience and expectations of members of the school community.

## **OUR MISSION**

As a Catholic, Independent, Sacred Heart school for students of all faiths, Academy of the Sacred Heart educates students to learn, serve, and lead with confidence, self-awareness, and integrity.

## **OUR VISION**

Academy of the Sacred Heart graduates are collaborative problem solvers and transformative leaders. We accomplish this by fostering a community of learners who are purposeful, authentic, knowledgeable, inquisitive, analytical, creative, discerning, empathetic, humble, and resilient.

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## **ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL**

In the event of absence from school, email [attendance@ashmi.org](mailto:attendance@ashmi.org). If the school is not notified by 9:00 a.m. the Academy will call home to verify the student's absence. In the event an absence is not reported, the assistant will call the student's parents.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Parents may provide a birthday treat for the class on their child's birthday. Send a note or speak to one of your child's Early Childhood Program teachers in advance to obtain an accurate number of treats needed and allergy restrictions in the classroom.

## **BITING POLICY**

It is the responsibility of the Academy of the Sacred Heart's Early Childhood Program to ensure the safety of every child in the program. The School is aware that biting is not unusual and, at times, age-appropriate behavior.

- Teachers will evaluate each biting incident in the classroom as it occurs. Both sets of parents will be called. If biting continues, a conference with the parents of the child biting will be requested to set in place a plan of action. Plans of action can provide consistency for the child while at school and at home.
- Appropriate coping and or prevention techniques will be consistently employed, with the objective of correcting the child's behavior.
- If these efforts fail, a temporary suspension may be necessary. In a rare case, a child could be asked to leave the program after all attempts to change the behavior are not met.

Parents must sign an acknowledgment of the Biting Policy.

## **CLEANING PROTOCOL**

The Academy's contracted facility management and cleaning team, cleans the school each day and evening, Early Childhood Program staff use a three-step cleaning process for classroom toys each day, as well as wiping down cots after nap time each day. Tables are sanitized throughout the day and before and after children eat.

## **CONFERENCES**

Parent-Teacher conferences provide an essential link between home and school. Held twice per year, this meeting time allows for open conversation with your child's teacher and the development of the parent-teacher partnership. Teachers are often available to chat briefly at pick up or drop off each day if a situation arises; you don't have to wait for conferences to check in on how your child is doing.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Kristen Miller, ECP Co-Director

248-646-8900 x441, [kmiller@ashmi.org](mailto:kmiller@ashmi.org)

Tabatha Russell, ECP Co-Director

248-646-8900 x442, [trussell@ashmi.org](mailto:trussell@ashmi.org)

Fax Number

248-646-4143

Website

[www.ashmi.org](http://www.ashmi.org)

## **COMMUNICATION THROUGH PROPER CHANNELS**

Sacred Heart can expect parents to use proper channels to communicate concerns and to seek a collaborative solution to problems. First contact should be with the teacher, extracurricular program advisor or coach. If the concern is not addressed, the next step would be to contact the Division Head. If after this step there is still concern, the last step would be to contact the Head of School.

First contact: Lead Teacher

Next: Co-Director of Learning Community

Infant, Ryan's Roost, Toddler 1, Toddler 2 - Kristen Miller

Young Threes, Preschool - Tabatha Russell

Last: Head of School

## **COVID-19 POLICY**

The School follows the guidance and recommendations of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Oakland County Health Department related to COVID-19. Because the guidance is always evolving, read the school news for updates and changes to the COVID policy.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The spirit of Sacred Heart education is rooted in a child's relationship with God, with self, and with others. As a child grows in age, wisdom, grace, and greater personal responsibility are expected of each child. Through consistency, love, compassion, and high expectations, we form the spirit of each child in recognizing the consequences of behavior and making choices consistent with the values of the *Goals and Criteria*.

The early childhood years are a time when young children are learning how to be in charge of their own behavior. The Academy believes in setting consistent and easy-to-understand limits that are developmentally appropriate to each specific age group. Using positive redirection when a situation occurs leaves the dignity of the child intact while also allowing for a teachable moment. It is important for the adult to model the appropriate behavior and help the child understand why the behavior was inappropriate and how it can be changed. Under no circumstances will discipline be associated with withholding food, toileting, rest/nap, or outdoor activity.

## **POSITIVE DISCIPLINE**

Academy of the Sacred Heart incorporates the Positive Discipline program into our school culture. It is a program that encourages the development of healthy social and other life skills that is mutually respectful to adults and children.

Positive Discipline uses both kindness and firmness at the same time and is neither punitive nor permissive.

Interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, judgment and the ability to respond to the limits and consequences of everyday life with responsibility and integrity are emphasized by our faculty and staff in their daily interactions. Positive Discipline is preventive: as individuals in the community develop more skills to self-regulate and problem-solve, disciplinary incidents are reduced.

In the event that a child does not respond to positive guidance, the School will notify the parents and work together to come up with a plan to help the child succeed. If the child becomes harmful to others or her/himself, Academy of the Sacred Heart has the right to withdraw the child from the program. It is the School's intention to prevent such a situation.

## DRESS CODE

The Early Childhood Program requires all children to be dressed in age-appropriate, ready-for-play clothing. Costumes, including princess dresses and shoes, are not recommended for students during the school day as they can become a distraction. In addition, children should wear clothing conducive to potty training and toileting-friendly attire as the goal is to foster independence.

## ELECTRONIC ENROLLMENT CONTRACT

The Early Childhood Program electronic enrollment contract is continuous, meaning you'll only have to sign one contract for the time your child is continually enrolled in the Early Child Program. The Academy's fiscal year runs from July 1 - June 30, and you'll be notified annually with updated terms and conditions, including tuition rates for the coming fiscal year.

## EMERGENCY DRILLS

The Academy is committed to maintaining a safe, secure, and faith-filled community for all. Academy of the Sacred Heart practices emergency drills throughout the year including fire, tornado, and lockdown drills. Careful, developmentally-appropriate communication with students and frequent practice provides the basis for emergency procedures.

## ENTRY LOCATIONS & PARKING

The Early Childhood Program's main entrance is the South Circle Door and is available from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Students are expected to arrive by 8:30 a.m. to start their day with circle time in their classrooms. Do not arrive to pick up your child before 3:00 p.m. as the Early Childhood Programs reserves that time for naps. Early Childhood Program parents may park in the South Circle Drive. A parent or guardian is required to walk each Early Childhood Program student into the building each day and park and walk in to pick up as well. Parents and guardians can name additional authorized adults to pick up their child; a driver's license will be checked upon arrival. If you must enter the building between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., use the West Circle Door.

Academy of the Sacred Heart Entrances and Parking



## **GOALS & CRITERIA**

Originally developed in 1975 and refined in 2005, these principles safeguard the vision and legacy of Sacred Heart education in the United States. The five *Goals* define the mission and specific *Criteria* used for the regular evaluation of Network Schools. Moving to its current location in 1958, The Academy of the Sacred Heart, Bloomfield Hills has a rich [history](#).

## **GLOSSARY OF SACRED HEART TERMS**

### **HEALTH POLICY**

If your child is joining the Early Childhood Program as his/her first experience outside of home, know that s/he may experience common childhood illnesses resulting in the first six months. The School takes all necessary precautions to keep a clean environment to decrease the likelihood of illness.

The school nurse is available Monday - Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. to help ensure the health and welfare of the community. Students may be sent home at the nurse's discretion. Specific health policies are as follows:

1. Michigan state law requires that a student have a complete immunization record and current health appraisal form on file in Magnus Health in order to attend school.
2. All medications brought to school, including over-the-counter medicines, and prescription medication must be accompanied by a written doctor's order and parental permission and be stored in the original packaging. All medical forms may be found in Magnus Health. Magnus Health can be accessed by the Parent Portal under Resources.
3. To prevent the possible spread of infection in school, a child who has a temperature of 100.4 °F or higher may not attend school and not return to school until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. Additionally, a child who is vomiting or has diarrhea is not to return to school until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours. For details, see "Exclusion Due to Illness" in Magnus Health.
4. Parents must verify all information on emergency cards each fall. If a change is made in the emergency information, log in to the Parent Portal and update the appropriate information.
5. Parents are asked to notify the school office immediately upon learning a child has a communicable disease.

The Plan for Parent Notification of Accidents, Injuries, and Illness can be found [here](#).

### **LABELING**

It is imperative that everything that comes to school is labeled with the child's name; lunch boxes, spoons, clothes, bottles, nap gear, winter clothes, everything! Early Childhood Program staff can help lost items be returned to their owner when labeled.

### **LATE PICK-UP FEES**

Late pick-ups are hard on your child; make plans to arrive by 6:00 p.m. each day. After 6:00 p.m., a \$50 late fee will be assessed. After 6:15 p.m., a \$5 late fee for every 5 minutes or portion thereof will be added. If you are running late, be sure to call the portry attendant on duty at (248) 646-8900 x400 to report your expected time of arrival so that your child can be reassured.

## **LICENSING**

The Early Childhood Program and Extended Day are controlled by the rules and regulations of the State of Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, LARA.

## **LOST & FOUND**

Due to the volume of items in our lost and found area, we will now be donating items on a monthly basis. You are encouraged to check for misplaced items often, as we cannot be responsible for unclaimed items.

## **LUNCH**

Parents are to pack lunch with a drink for their child every day. Parents provide all nourishment for their child in the infant room (6 weeks - 12 months). Students in Ryan's Roost, Toddler 1, and Toddler 2 have a refrigerator in their classroom. Early Childhood Program staff will put their lunch into the refrigerator in the morning. Students in Young 3 and Preschool should pack non-perishable food or pack a cold pack in their child's lunch.

## **MAGNUS HEALTH**

Upon submitting your electronic enrollment contract, you will receive a welcome letter from Magnus Health, the Academy's secure health information site accessed through the Parent Portal. After creating an account, you'll see the portion for parents to complete a health questionnaire for their child PLUS two forms that require a physician's signature: a health appraisal form with an updated immunization record and a medication authorization form. The school nurse will help parents through this process. The health appraisal form must be turned in within 30 days of the student's start date.

Academy of the Sacred Heart strongly recommends all of its students be fully vaccinated; a waiver from the health department is required before attending school if a student is not vaccinated.

Each year, you'll receive information via email to update your child's health information in Magnus Health. If anything occurs with your child medically throughout the year, reach out to Mrs. Clements and/or update Magnus Health to keep your child's medical information accurate at school.

## **NAP TIME**

Nap time is available on each baby's schedule in the infant room. The School provides a fitted sheet for cribs, laundered weekly. No blankets or lovies are allowed in the crib to provide a safe sleep environment.

Nap time for students 12 months and older is reserved for after lunch and takes place on cots in each classroom. Parents send in a sheet (a fitted crib sheet fits best) and a blanket. One comfort item to be used ONLY for nap time: a small stuffed animal, pacifier, etc. All items must be clearly marked with your child's name and taken home weekly to be laundered.



## **PACKING LIST**

Parents provide diapers, wipes, cream, and a backup pair of clothes (or more) for their child. Proper outerwear can stay in your child's locker or come to school each day. This includes swimwear in the summer months and snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens in the winter. While there is no uniform policy for Early Childhood Program students, be sure your child has freedom of movement and is ready to play. Clothes that can get dirty from outside play and crafts are encouraged.

## **PARENT NOTIFICATION OF THE LICENSING NOTEBOOK**

The Academy keeps a licensing notebook containing a summary sheet, all licensing inspections and special investigations, and related corrective action plans for the last 5 years. The licensing notebook is available to parents/guardians during regular business hours. Reports from at least the past three years are available at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare). Parents/Guardians are required to complete form [CCL-5053](#) indicating they have been made aware of this licensing requirement.

## **PAASH (Parents Association)**

All Sacred Heart parents are members of the Parents Association of the Academy of the Sacred Heart (PAASH). The Parents Association's objectives are to promote community building among parents of students attending the Academy of the Sacred Heart, faculty, staff, and students; and to initiate and support projects that aid the Academy spiritually, socially, and financially.

PAASH meetings and events are held throughout the school year and can be found at <https://www.ashmi.org/calendars/paash-calendar>. To contact the PAASH Officers, you may email [paash@ashmi.org](mailto:paash@ashmi.org).

## **PROGRAM HOURS**

The Early Childhood Program is available from 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday with days off published on the school calendar, available on the school website ([www.ashmi.org](http://www.ashmi.org)).

The Academy makes every effort to publish holidays and other days the program will be closed on the school website.. Occasionally, the Early Childhood Program may close for teacher professional development or other reasons. If your child is scheduled to attend on a day the program is closed, no refunds or make-up days will be provided. If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or family vacation, or if the school is closed for inclement weather or other reasons, no refunds or make-up days will be provided.

The Early Childhood Program expects every child to be in class by 8:30 a.m. to take part in circle time activities. Children may not be dropped off at school any later than 12:00 p.m. If your child has an appointment after 12:00 noon the child must remain at home for the remainder of the day.

## **SCHOOL CLOSING**

Any cancellation of school will be announced by 6:00 a.m., on television channels 2 (Fox 2), 4 (WDIV), and 7 (WXYZ), and posted on the school website. Parents may use their own discretion in determining whether to pick up a child during the day when the forecast is threatening. The School will communicate last-minute details about closings via text messaging and emailing all parents as well.

## **SMOKING/VAPING**

Academy of the Sacred Heart is a smoke-free/vape-free community. There is no smoking/vaping by anyone at any time in the school building or on the school grounds (this includes cars in the parking lot).

## **SNACKS**

Three daily snacks are provided for Early Childhood Program students 12 months and older. Snacks typically consist of fruit, vegetable, grain, or protein.

## **STAFFING**

The Early Childhood Program classrooms are staffed in compliance with the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) Rules and Regulations. In the instance we have a staffing shortfall, staff may be asked to cover in another classroom.

## **TOYS FROM HOME**

Toys from home are not permitted at school. Leave them at home or in the car, so they are not distracting at drop-off.

## **VACATION POLICY**

Students enrolled in the Early Childhood Program can take up to two (2) tuition-free vacation weeks (in full-week increments) when at least a two-week notice is given to the ECP Director. If notice is not provided, families will be charged for the contracted days. The Vacation Term runs from July 1 through June 30 each year. Enrollment beginning after December 31 is allotted one (1) tuition-free vacation week from January 1 through June 30.

## **WEEKLY COMMUNICATION**

Electronic newsletters are emailed on Wednesday and are also available online in the Parent Portal. Your child's weekly curriculum (monthly in the infant room) titled 'Peek at the Week' is designed by the lead teacher in each classroom. This communication can be viewed electronically in ProCare and is sent home in hard copy on Fridays for the upcoming week. These snapshots of the week are a great way to start a conversation with your child about what happened at school and continue learning at home.

**WITHDRAWAL NOTICE**

Withdrawing a child from the Early Childhood Program requires a written notice to the ECP Director thirty (30) days in advance of the last day of the child's attendance. Tuition will be charged for those thirty (30) days. If the ECP Director is notified of a child's last day of attendance less than thirty (30) days in advance, tuition will still be charged for thirty (30) days.