

Immaculate Heart of Mary School Student and Parent Handbook

Immaculate Heart of Mary Student and Parent Handbook Contract/Agreement

This document contains policies and procedures for which our school community members are responsible. The parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and student(s) accept all the conditions set forth in the current Immaculate Heart of Mary Student and Parent Handbook (hereinafter referred to as “the handbook”) and agree to comply with all school regulations by their signatures on the *Statement of Responsibility* form indicating that they have read and understand the handbook.

The school reserves the right to review and amend the handbook throughout the school year. The Principal, in collaboration with the Pastor, has the right to amend or revise any policy in the handbook. Parent(s)/legal guardian(s) (hereinafter referred to as “parents”) will be given prompt notification in writing if changes are made.

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Section 1 - School Profile

Shortly after founding the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in approximately 1878, the Holy Ghost Fathers had a school built. The original structure was a two-story log building with two classrooms on the ground floor and living quarters for the pastor on the second floor. Lay women were the first teachers and by 1884 there were 83 students in the school. In 1924 the Blue Hill School was built with first through eighth grades. Three grades were taught in each classroom. Benedictine Sisters from St. Scholastica Convent in Fort Smith were sent to run the school. In 1927 the Pulaski County School District took control of the school, thereby making it a public school. During this time the nuns were paid their salaries by the District. In 1953 Blue Hill School withdrew from the District and once again became a parochial school. Under the guidance of Very Rev. Msgr. Thomas J. Prendergast, a larger school was built and dedicated in 1960. A new addition was built in 1991, adding three classrooms and a library. Enrollment continued to increase and another addition had to be made. The Parish Life Center was added in 1998 providing more classrooms, a cafeteria, and a gymnasium.

Immaculate Heart of Mary School is made up of a dynamic faculty, a diverse student body and a community of loving families. Our small classes and individual attention focus on a strong academic curriculum and solid Christian values while expanding to meet our ever-changing educational needs.

1.1 Mission Statement

Immaculate Heart of Mary School promotes the development of Catholic faith in an environment where students respect self and others. With these convictions, we instruct our students by our words and our actions.

1.2 Statement of Philosophy

Immaculate Heart of Mary School seeks to offer a quality academic program integrated in a faith filled community. Immaculate Heart of Mary focuses on a solid foundation of faith which fosters students to be successful and productive members of society.

1.3 Goals and Objectives

- To create a Christian environment that promotes a respect for self and others.
- To develop religious understanding and provide.
- To develop each student into a faithful practicing Christian.
- To facilitate student's opportunity to learn.
- To provide an environment and a culture where students will be successful.

1.4 Role of Parents

“Since parents have conferred life on their children, they have a most solemn obligation to educate their offspring. Hence, parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is so decisive that scarcely anything can compensate for their failure in it. It is particularly in the Christian family, enriched by the grace and sacrament of matrimony that from their earliest years children should be taught, according to the faith received in baptism, to have a knowledge of God, to worship Him, and to love their neighbor. While belonging primarily to the family, the task of imparting education requires the help of society as a whole. As for Catholic parents, the Council calls to mind their duty to entrust their children to Catholic schools, when and where this is possible, to support such schools to the extent of their ability, and to work along with them for the welfare of their children.”

Declaration of Christian Education, VATICAN COUNCIL II

1.6 Parent-Teacher Programs

The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) meets at least two times each school year. Parents of children in school are automatically members. Dues of \$15 per family are included in tuition. We urge your active support and participation. The PTO provides volunteers for special needs, projects, and school activities. Please try to attend the PTO functions during the year, and volunteer to help wherever you can.

1.7 School Unity Program

Our Unity Program is a program of pledging your time to Karnawal and other school related activities. Since all proceeds from Karnawal go directly to the school to supplement all students' tuition, parents are required to sign up to volunteer at Karnawal for 5 hours per custodial parent and at least one school activity.

1.8 School Board

Immaculate Heart of Mary has a consultative School Board consisting of representatives from the school and/or parish community. Each school board member serves a three-year term. The School Board works as an advisory group to the Principal and Pastor, as it pertains to school matters. The School Board follows the guidelines established by the Manual of Policies and Regulations for Elementary and Secondary Catholic Schools of Arkansas, Diocese of Little Rock (www.dolr.org)

1.9 Accreditation

Immaculate Heart of Mary School is fully accredited by the Arkansas Nonpublic School Accreditation Association (ANSAA) and is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA). The staff consists of state-certified teachers and qualified personnel.

Section 2 - Admission Policy

2.1 Admissions

Enrollment at Immaculate Heart of Mary School is a privilege. Immaculate Heart of Mary School offers a scholastic program from Pre-K through Grade 8. Pre-registration for the coming year is held in the spring for currently enrolled students. Based on availability in each class, new students may also register at this time. To enter any grade, evidence of satisfactory achievement, promotion, and behavior from the school last attended must be provided. Admitted students are on probation for nine weeks. At the end of the nine weeks, the Principal, in consultation with the Pastor, reserves the right to determine if the student is to remain at the school.

2.2 Non-discriminatory Practices

Other than the admission priorities established due to the number of available slots at a particular grade level, Immaculate Heart of Mary School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, handicap, or national or ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, athletic programs, or other school administered programs or activities.

2.3 Admission Priorities

1. Catholic parishioner families with a child currently enrolled.
2. Non-Catholic families with a child currently enrolled.
3. Catholic parishioner families without a child currently enrolled.
4. Non-Catholic families without a child currently enrolled.

2.4 Transfer Students

Immaculate Heart of Mary School will accept transfer students who have met the following guidelines:

- Complete and submit application.
- Interview with the Principal with parents and student(s).
- Copies of the past or current year report cards and previous standardized test scores must be presented at the interview.
- Proof of being in good financial, academic and behavior standing when transferring from a parochial or private school must be presented from the previous school.

2.5 Enrollment Requirements

The eligible enrollment age of Pre-K and Kindergarten students will be determined by the policy of the Diocese of Little Rock and the State of Arkansas for the current school year. A birth certificate is required for initial enrollment of new students. If a child is a Catholic, a baptismal certificate must also be presented at the time of registration.

2.6 Immunizations

All students attending Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Little Rock are subject to the immunization laws of the State of Arkansas:

- The requirement for entry into school, irrespective of grade, are at least three doses of Acellular Diphtheria/Tetanus/Pertussis (DTP), Diphtheria/Tetanus (DT pediatric), or Tetanus/Diphtheria (TD Adult), at least three doses of polio vaccine; two doses of Rubeola (measles) vaccine, one dose of Rubella (German measles) vaccine and one dose of mumps vaccine. Additionally, three doses of Hepatitis B vaccine and one dose of Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine are required before entering kindergarten. Three doses of Hepatitis B are required for transfer students and students entering the seventh grade. No student may begin school without appropriate and up-to-date immunizations.
- A child, who has had any of the above diseases, as documented by an attending physician should not be required to have the vaccine for the disease.
- An exemption to the immunization law may be made only by a certificate issued by the Director of the Arkansas Department of Health stating that the vaccine would be detrimental to the health of the child.
- Students who transfer from another school either within the state or from out of state will be admitted conditionally. Only a maximum of thirty (30) calendar days shall be given for the student to produce documentation of immunization or be excluded.

2.7 Student Contact Information

It is extremely important that student enrollment information in the office be kept up-to-date at all times. If any information changes – name, address, telephone number, emergency contact, parents' home or work numbers, medication information, method of transportation, authorizations for pickup, etc, contact the office as soon as possible. **We must have a current emergency contact number at all times.**

2.8 Records

According to the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act of 1988, student's records are confidential and will be open only to members of the professional staff and to the parents.

Section 3 - Financial Obligations

3.1 Financial Obligations

Registration fee and tuition dues are mandatory financial obligations for all families. Annual amounts for tuition, fees are established and recommended by the Principal to the School Board and approved by the Pastor. Parents bear the responsibility of being aware of the status of their financial account. If a family is unable to meet their financial obligation, the parents must make an appointment with the Principal and Pastor to discuss financial arrangements. We do not wish to deny any Catholic child a Catholic education. Limited financial assistance may be available to qualifying families. Any family that is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church or Non-Parish families approved by the Pastor will be considered for tuition aid.

3.2 Tuition

FOR THOSE ON THE ANNUAL, SEMI ANNUAL, AND 10 MONTH PAYMENT PLANS, THE FIRST PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN THE 25TH OF AUGUST.

Current tuition rates may be obtained from the school website or office. Tuition may be paid annually, semi-annually, or on a 10-payment or 12-payment plan. Tuition payments are non-refundable. All tuition and fees are due on or before the 25th day of the month it is due. If tuition and fees are not received when due, a **\$50.00 late fee** for each overdue payment will be imposed, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Principal. Families with delinquent accounts will be notified in writing. **Student(s) will be unable to participate in extracurricular activities until the situation is resolved. Student(s) WILL NOT be allowed to return for the new school year until the previous year's financial obligation has not been paid. The school reserves the right to remove students from school if tuition obligations are not paid throughout the year.** Tuition of an enrolled student who is withdrawn before the end of the year and the tuition of a child who enrolls during the school year will be prorated.

3.2.1 Parishioner Tuition Rates

Parishioner tuition rates are offered when the following requirements are met:

- Your child(ren) must be a baptized Catholic and have a baptismal certificate on file in the school.
- You and your child(ren) must be registered members of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish **FOR AT LEAST SIX (6) MONTHS FROM THE TIME OF REGISTRATION and be practicing Catholics who attend Mass regularly.**
- Make regular contributions to the church through use of your church contribution envelopes.

When you are given the parishioner tuition rate, it is based on the assumption that you are meeting the above requirements. If you are not meeting the above requirements, non-parishioner rates will apply. If at any time during the school year you are not meeting the above requirements, you will be notified in writing by the Pastor. At that time you will need to make an appointment with the Pastor to discuss your situation.

3.3 Lunch Program Fees

All lunch program fees must be paid in a timely manner. Parents whose children's lunch balances exceed \$50 without payment will be contacted by the school office. If no payment is received and the lunch balance reaches \$100, lunch service will be denied until balance is paid in full. If this overdue balance occurs twice within a school calendar year, students will be required to bring their own lunch for the remainder of the year.

3.4 Library

Students are encouraged to make use of the library. However, if a book is lost or damaged beyond repair, the student will be responsible for reimbursing the library the amount needed to replace the book. The cost of replacing the book must be paid by the end of the school year.

Section 4 - School Day

4.1 Daily Schedule

The Immaculate Heart of Mary school day begins at 7:55 am and ends at 3:00 pm. Doors open at 6:45am for Morning Care. There is a charge for morning care. Students arriving early, between 6:45am and 7:30am, will be assessed the morning care fee. Students arriving after 7:30am will not be charged a fee. Regular morning supervision begins at 7:30am. The school assumes no responsibility for students arriving before 7:30am. At dismissal, students need be picked up by 3:15 pm. Students not picked up by 3:15 pm. will be sent to after-school care and the parents will be charged the ASC daily rate.

4.2 Regular Dismissal

Students are dismissed at 3:00 pm. If a child is going home differently than what is normal for that child, parents need to send a note to the teacher or contact the office **before 2:45 p.m.** This includes going home with another Immaculate Heart of Mary student.

4.3 Early Dismissal/Faculty Meeting

The **first Friday** of each month is designated by the Diocese as a faculty in-service meeting day. Students are dismissed at 12:15 pm. Please be sure that students are picked up promptly. After-school care is available on each first Friday (early out days), beginning at 12:15 pm.

4.4 Safety and Security

For the protection of our students, all outside doors are locked. **EVERYONE ENTERING THE BUILDING DURING THE CLASS DAY FOR ANY REASON MUST REPORT TO THE OFFICE AND GET A NAME BADGE.**

4.5 Absenteeism and Tardy Policy

- **Reporting an absence:** If a student is absent, please call the school office before 9:00 a.m. or send a note to the office via a sibling. When calling to report the absence, you may also request homework to be left in the office or sent home with a sibling or friend. **The work may not be picked up in the office until the end of the school day. Upon returning to school, the student is required to bring a note to the classroom teacher stating the reason for the absence. The absentee note will be filed in the office. Failure to bring a note will result in an unexcused absence.**
- **Twenty-five days of absence:** Pupils are required to be in attendance at all times when school is in session unless illness or an emergency prevents attendance. Generally, a pupil who has accumulated 25 days of absence during the school year should repeat the grade or be required to attend summer school. Proof of attendance at summer school must be presented before the opening of school.
- **Tardiness:** Tardiness interferes with a child's progress in school and constitutes a disturbance for all members of the class. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in the classroom when the 8:00 a.m. bell rings. **A tardy student, with their parent, must sign in at the office to receive a pass before going to the classroom.** Students with six tardy slips in one nine-week period will be given a form to be signed and returned stating that an unexcused absence has been incurred.

4.6 Requesting Dismissal from School

- **Planned Reason:** When requesting a student to be dismissed from school for any planned reason, parents are asked to submit a written request in advance to the school office. For the safety of the student, the parent or other authorized person must come to the office to meet the student. Students will not be allowed to leave with anyone other than the parent unless written permission from the parent has been provided. No student will be dismissed during the school day except through the school office. Please come to the office, not the classroom or other locations, to pick up your child.
- **Vacation and Trips:** When parents take children out of school for vacations or trips, the Principal and teacher must be notified in advance. Parents assume responsibility for the education of the child. **Teachers are not required to write out lessons in advance or to make-up tests when the child returns.**
- **Leaving School Premises:** No student may leave the school premises during school hours or absent themselves from school-sponsored functions and events without express permission of the Principal. A student who violates this rule will be subject to disciplinary action at the Principal's discretion.
- **Class Activities Outside of School:** Any class meeting or activity outside of school time is to have the approval of the Principal.

4.7 Inclement Weather

When inclement weather necessitates the closing of school, Immaculate Heart of Mary School is guided by the decision made by the Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Little Rock, which is announced by radio and television media. If the school remains open and the weather is threatening, it is up to each family to decide whether or not to send their child(ren) to school. If school is in session and the weather conditions

deteriorate, listen for news of early dismissal. Provide arrangements to have your child(ren) picked up. No child(ren) may leave the classroom without being checked out through the school office.

Section 5 - Academics/Curriculum

5.1 Curriculum

Subjects in the curriculum:

- Religion - Creed, Sacraments, Scripture, Commandments, Prayers
- Language Arts - Reading, Spelling, Handwriting, Vocabulary, Phonics, Literature, Creative Writing
- Mathematics - General Math, Pre-Algebra & Geometry
- Science - General Science, Earth/Physical Science, Life Science
- Social Studies - History, Geography, Economics, Arkansas History, Current Events
- Art - Appreciation, Drawing, Painting
- Music – Appreciation, History, Instrumental, Vocal
- Physical Education - Health, Fitness, Games & Sports
- Foreign Language – Spanish
- Computers - Keyboarding; Integrated Software in Math, Language & Reading

5.2 Homework

Homework is a necessary part of each student's educational program. Therefore, it is imperative that students do the assigned work. Full credit cannot be given to students who do not turn in assignments.

5.3 Make-up Work

Make-up work is the responsibility of the student. Parents and students need to go to www.renweb.com to access all lesson plans and homework missed while away. Arrangements may be made upon return to make up missed tests. A grade of zero will be given for any test or assignment not complete within the date given by the teacher. Missed class work must be done at recess or at home.

5.4 Grading

Grades are determined by a number of factors—daily work, test scores, projects, and class participation. Grading for 1st through 8th grades is as follows:

A	Superior Work	93%-100%
B	Above Average	85%-92%
C	Average	77%-84%
D	Passing	70%-76%
F	Failure	Below 70%

Grading for Pre-K, Kindergarten and some specials is as follows:

O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement

5.5 Learning Differences

A diagnosed learning disability or handicap is a condition that has been evaluated by a psychologist and/or psychological examiner and determined severe enough to prevent a child from learning through traditional classroom instruction. Copies of test results and suggestions for educational modifications must be filed in the school office. A modified grading scale may be used in the student's area(s) of disability. In areas of academics not affected by the particular disability, standards for non-disabled students will apply.

5.6 Conduct Grades

Each teacher will give an individual conduct grade. For students in 2nd through 8th grade, an overall conduct grade will be given based on the number of marks a student has received in one nine-week period. Conduct grading for 2nd through 8th grades will be on a 4.0 system as follows:

4.0	=	“A” Superior Conduct
3.0	=	“B” Average Conduct
2.0	=	“C” Conduct Needs Improvement
1.0	=	“D” Poor Conduct

Conduct grading for Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1st grade is as follows:

O	Outstanding
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement

5.7 Report Cards

The student’s grades are used to report individual progress and should not be used as a comparison to others. All report cards/interims require the signature of the parents before they are returned to the teacher. There is a cost to replace a lost or destroyed report card. Report cards/interims must to be returned within one week of the distribution

September	Interim	October	Report Card
November	Interim	January	Report Card
February	Interim	March	Report Card
April	Interim	May	Report Card

5.8 Promotion

Promotion to the next grade will be based on the passing mark of seventy percent (70%) and parent/teacher consensus. Two subject failures constitute a grade failure unless the subjects are made up during approved summer classes or by working with a tutor approved by the Principal. Proof of passing marks in summer school must be presented to the Principal before the child is promoted. Any student who fails one subject must attend an approved summer class in that subject or work with an approved tutor on the material that was not mastered.

Eighth grade students who fail two or more subjects may not repeat eighth grade at Immaculate Heart of Mary School. They need to transfer to another Catholic school or a public school

5.9 Parent-Teacher Conferences

A **mandatory** parent-teacher conference for grades Pre-K through 8th grades is required in October. Arrangements will be made with each family to schedule a conference time. The second parent-teacher conference is scheduled in March.

Section 6 - Dress Code

6.1 General Regulations

Students are defined by who they are and not by what they wear. In order to encourage an environment of unity and school pride, it is the policy of Immaculate Heart of Mary that all students wear a school uniform. Each day, students are expected to be clean, well groomed, and uniforms are to be in good condition. Parents will be notified of any changes in the uniform code. **The following dress code is mandatory and will be enforced with no exceptions:**

6.2 School Uniform-Boys and Girls

- Grades **Pre-K through 5th** - Light blue knit shirts with school insignia.
 - Navy blue uniform pants - no cargo pants, corduroy, side zippers/pockets or decorations.
 - Navy blue walking shorts/skirts in August, September, October, March, April and May.
 - Grades 6th – 8th - Navy knit shirts with school insignia.
 - Khaki uniform pants - no cargo pants, corduroy, side zippers/pockets or decorations.
 - Khaki uniform walking shorts/skirts in August, September, October, March, April and May.
 - IHM emblem sweatshirts or **PLAIN** navy blue, **NO HOODIES**
 - Navy cardigan sweaters
 - IHM t-shirts may be worn on days when student has Physical Education class.
 - **Plain** navy blue or IHM emblem navy blue fleece jacket.
 - Navy blue, black or brown **belt** for 3rd through 8th.
 - Plain white or black socks.
- Shirts are to be tucked in at all times.**

School Uniform-Girls Only

- Grades **Pre-K through 5th** - Navy blue jumper - knee length
- Navy blue skort, no more than 2 inches above the knee
- Navy blue skirt, no more than 2 inches above the knee
- Shorts (any color) must be worn under jumper/skirt
- White or navy blue knee socks (**No other color allowed**)
- If a girl chooses to wear a skirt in the months of November, December, January, and February then solid white or navy blue tights or leggings must be worn. Matching knee socks must be worn if leggings are worn.

6.3 Additional Regulations

- **Jumper/Skirt:** Shorts (any color) must be worn under a jumper/skirt.
- **Sweatshirts/sweaters:** May not be worn around the waist.
- **Shoes:** Non-marking athletic shoes. No hiking boots, sandals, clogs, slip-on musical, printed canvas, open-toe, light up, or open-heel shoes are permitted. Shoe laces should always be tied.
- **Jewelry:** Watches, rings, bracelets and necklaces (**limited to religious crosses or medals**) may be worn. Girls may wear post earrings, but no multiple earrings per ear. (Marathon reward necklaces are allowed)
- **Hairstyles:** Hair must appear natural in color and shall be worn in an appropriate manner. Boys are expected to maintain a hairstyle with hair above the ears and above the eyebrows. The hair neckline may not drape over the collar. Girl's hairstyles must be off the face and out of the eyes. The final decision for appropriate hairstyle rests with the Principal.
- **Nail polish/make-up:** Neither is allowed with uniform nor on casual dress days.
- **Casual dress day:** Clothes worn on casual dress days should be in good taste. No spandex, cut-offs, tank tops, or mini-skirts may be worn. **Parents should check designs and logos on apparel before sending students to school. Many advertising logos are not appropriate for a Catholic school.**
- **Jackets** of any color may be worn outside on cold days.

Section 7- Discipline

7.1 Goals of Discipline

The ultimate goal of Immaculate Heart of Mary School's discipline system is to teach students to become effective modifiers of their own behavior. Self-discipline is learned, when students internalize the values, respect, self esteem, and concerns for others.

7.2 Methods of Obtaining Self-Discipline

In order to create independent self-discipline, teachers, parents, administration, and staff help students:

- Express feelings in a controlled productive way
- Think through their actions and understand the consequences—assume responsibility for their actions
- Identify the causes of their misbehavior and change them to more appropriate behavior
- Understand that behavior is shaped and modified by its consequences
- Model desired behavior
- Learn problem-solving skills
- Be consistent

7.3 General Rules of Conduct

- Respect yourself and others
- Contribute to the learning environment
- Follow school and classroom procedures and rules

7.4 Disciplinary Action Policy

It is not possible to list all instances of misconduct that require disciplinary action. Parents, teachers, students and administrators share the responsibility to provide a respectful and conflict-free environment. It is necessary for all parties to trust one another where disciplinary action is concerned. Parents and students are encouraged to discuss the action taken, however, it is important to understand that violation of certain rules and regulations and the willful disrespect of anyone on the campus will bring with it the strictest consequences. The school asks that all be treated as all would like to be treated—a simple but difficult principle to follow. Disciplinary action is at the discretion of the principal and/or the pastor.

7.5 Classroom Order

Each teacher has the right to set rules to promote good order in each classroom. Students are to acquaint themselves with the rules in each classroom. Classroom rules will be clearly posted in all rooms. No student is permitted to touch or take anything from the teacher's desk. Students need to respect the property of other students.

7.6 Minor Infractions

For Pre-K through Third grade students, minor infractions will be disciplined at the discretion of the teacher and/or Principal. For Fourth through Eighth grade students, three (3) minor infractions, or a recurrence of the same infraction in one day may result in an automatic detention.

7.7 Major Infractions

Suspension or expulsion may be given for major infractions. For Pre-K through Fifth grade students, major infractions will be disciplined at the discretion of the teacher/Principal. For Sixth through Eighth grade students, detention, suspension, or expulsion is received for breaking any major infraction. Major infractions include, but are not limited to:

- Threatening another student or staff member: A threat is defined as a verbal or written threat made against the physical or emotional well being of any individual or behavior that may constitute a threat.
- Fighting
- Defiance of school authority
- Willful destruction of school, church, or private property

- Bringing or using alcohol, tobacco, and/or illegal drugs on school grounds
- Bringing pocket knives, firearms, or any weapon on the school grounds
- Profanity, verbal abuse, obscene gestures, language, pictures, or conduct
- Leaving campus or designated area without permission
- Theft of any type
- Cheating as determined by the Principal and teacher
- Inappropriate use of technology/computers
- Harassment/Bullying
- Any activity that is gang/cult related, including mode of dress, use of symbols, gestures and/or pictures
- Public displays of affection

7.8 Detention

Detention will be on Thursday of each week from 3:15 to 4:00 p.m. The detention time will be spent in silence. If the student fails to be on time, another detention will be served. Parents will be notified by Wednesday for that Thursday's detention. Parents will be called and a Discipline Referral Form will be sent home for the parents to sign and send back with the student. The form is to be presented at the time of detention. Students that have detention are to meet by 3:15 pm on Thursday in the assigned room.

7.9 Disciplinary Probation

A student with four detentions in one school year is on disciplinary probation for the remainder of the school year, and is subject to possible probation for the next school year, at the discretion of the Principal and/or Pastor.

7.10 Harassment/Bullying Policy

Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Catholic Diocese of Little Rock do not condone any form of harassment. All individuals are to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form is prohibited. The prohibition against acts of harassment applies to all individuals involved in the school. All teachers and school staff are instructed to stop harassment when they witness it and inform the Principal of all allegations or rumors of harassment.

7.11 Harassment/Bullying Procedures

- Report the incident to the Principal
- The incident will be investigated and the parents will be notified in writing/phone
- A report of the findings will be made available to all persons involved
- Records of complaints will be kept on file

7.12 Student Threats

Immaculate Heart of Mary School has an obligation to keep our school safe and will take seriously all threats to inflict harm to self or others. This is not an area for practical jokes or offhand comments. Any reference to harm using any kind of object will be taken with serious intent and acted upon. If you become aware of a threatening situation, you should immediately report it to a teacher or the Principal.

7.13 Response to Student Threats

Step One: Initial Response of School to a Student Threat

The Principal or his/her delegate should immediately:

- Keep the student who made the threat in the school office under supervision
- Gather information about the threat (e.g. interview reporting/witnessing parties, gather past history on the student, interview the student who is alleged to have made the threat, interview the parents, etc.)
- Notify the parents of a student who has made the threat
- Carefully document all information on the situation. This documentation may be kept for a period of one year beyond the time the child leaves the school as a result of expulsion, or withdrawal by parents.

Step Two: Preliminary Assessment of Risk of Harm

Based upon the information gathered, the Principal or his/her delegate should assess the potential risk of harm. There are two preliminary assessments of risk of harm:

- Little or no risk of harm: Upon assessment it appears there is insufficient evidence of risk of harm. Situations under this level can include misunderstandings, poor decision-making, insensitive remarks, inappropriate language, false accusations from peers, etc.
- Some potential risk of harm: Upon assessment it is clear or unclear that the student is potentially dangerous to self or others.

Step Three: School Response to Preliminary Assessment

The Principal or his/her delegate should respond as follows to either preliminary assessment of risk of harm:

- Response to little or no risk of harm: The school should take whatever disciplinary action it deems necessary to prevent a recurrence of the problem and allow the student to return to school.
- Response to some potential risk of harm: The Principal or his/her delegate should:
 - Notify the police
 - Keep the student in the school office under supervision until the police arrive
 - Seek the officer's assessment of the risk of harm after he/she has conducted an investigation. Police investigations may entail:
 - ❖ Interviews with reporting/witnessing parties
 - ❖ Interviews with school representatives to gather history on the student
 - ❖ Interviews with the student's parent/guardian
 - ❖ Home search
 - ❖ Arrest and detention of the student

Step Four: School Response after a Police Assessment of Risk of Harm

The Principal or his/her delegate should respond as follows to either preliminary police assessment of risk of harm:

- If the police and school conclude that there is little or no risk of harm: The school should take whatever disciplinary action it deems necessary to prevent a recurrence of the problem and allow the student to return to school.
- If the police and school conclude that there is some potential risk of harm: The school should:
 - Contact the parent/guardian of any students who have been indicated as potential victims
 - Make counseling available to a victim of serious threatening behavior if it is determined that such is warranted or requested
 - Suspend the student and not consider readmission to the school until the conditions in Section 7.14 - Readmission To School - have been met

7.14 Readmission To School

If the parents want a student readmitted after a suspension for threats, they must comply with the following:

- A school appointed psychiatrist or a psychologist with a Ph.D. must conduct a comprehensive mental health evaluation/risk assessment. If a psychiatrist performs the primary evaluation, he/she shall determine the necessity to utilize a Ph.D. psychologist for psychological consultation and/or testing. If a Ph.D. psychologist performs the primary evaluation, he/she shall determine the need for psychiatric consultation. The cost of all evaluation/risk assessments shall be the responsibility of the student's parents.
- The school shall provide the mental health care professional (psychiatrist and/or Ph.D. psychologist) with the written permission of the parents, with all relevant facts, including but not limited to: aggressive behavior, details of the threat as known to the Principal, copies of any drawings or writing, disciplinary history of the student, behavioral concerns, and the names of any known victims or potential victims.
- The mental health care professional, with the written permission of the parents and child, shall provide the Principal a written, comprehensive, detailed evaluation, report, and documented treatment plan stating the basis (factual and risk factors and testing results) upon which the mental health professional determined that the student is not/does not pose a danger to self or others. The report shall also address any other concerns raised by the Principal to the mental health care professional.
- This evaluation and report and all subsequent reports shall be made available to the Principal who will share them with the Pastor, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, and any legal and/or mental health care consultants including the school counselor (if available) assisting the Principal in his/her decision regarding the readmission of the student to school.
- With the concurrence of the Pastor and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the Principal will notify the parents as to whether or not a student will be readmitted to the school. If the student is determined to be a possible danger to self or others, the school may remove the student from the school.
- If a student is readmitted to the school, the mental health care professional shall provide the Principal a follow-up assessment of the student within 30 days of readmission to the school. This follow-up assessment and/or evaluation shall inform the Principal if therapy, counseling, and/or treatment will be needed and/or provided.
- Documentation from the mental health care professionals concerning any student is to be placed in a separate, confidential file and should not be a part of the student's academic or disciplinary file. This documentation may be kept for a period of one year beyond the time the child leaves the school as a result of expulsion, or withdrawal by the parents.

7.15 Suspension

Suspension is defined as a temporary exclusion of a student from a school for disciplinary reasons. Suspension from the school will be the decision of the Principal in consultation with the Pastor.

- Students may be suspended by the Principal for serious reasons for a period of time not to exceed ten (10) days.
- The Principal will notify the student and the parents of the reason for the suspension, the date(s) of the suspension, and the requirements for reinstatement.

7.16 Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as the permanent dismissal of a student from school. Expulsion from school will be the decision of the Principal in consultation with the Pastor.

- Notification of the expulsion will be sent to the school board president.
- A written report containing reasons for the expulsion will be sent to the parents and to the Diocesan Superintendent.
- If parents wish to appeal the decision, they will contact the president of the school board within 10 days of receiving notification of expulsion. The School Board president will arrange a hearing with the review committee.

Section 8 - Complaints

8.1 Complaint Procedure

Step One: Contact the Individual

Any person feeling aggrieved concerning any matter connected with the school will contact the individual concerned before discussing it with others.

Step Two: Contact the Teacher

If a person has a complaint about a teacher, the individual will go first to the teacher to seek a solution to the problem.

Step Three: Contact the Principal

If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, the person will contact the Principal for an appointment.

Step Four: Contact the Pastor

If the problem is still not resolved, the person will contact the Pastor to discuss the matter.

Step Five: Contact the Superintendent

If no solution is found to the problem, the matter will be referred to the superintendent.

Section 9 - Medical/Health

9.1 Medication

As stated in Diocesan Policy 2.13, “Medicine, whether prescription or over-the-counter, is **not** to be provided by the school.” If a student needs to take medicine of any kind at school, the parents should complete a Medication Form which can be obtained from the school office. All medication will be kept and administered in the school office. A log containing date/time medication is given, student’s name, name of medication, and amount of medication given will be maintained in the school office.

9.2 Milk Allergies

Milk will be offered at lunch. If a student has an allergy or intolerance to milk, parents must send a doctor’s note to the office stating the student’s allergy treatment. The note will be filed in both the school office and the cafeteria.

9.3 Peanut Allergies

If a student has an allergy to peanuts, the parents must send a doctor’s note to the office stating the student’s allergy treatment. The note will be filed in the school office, cafeteria, and with the homeroom teacher. The parent must provide an EPI-pen for each student with a peanut allergy for each building.

9.4 Illness

A member of the school staff takes care of minor accidents. In the event of a serious injury or accident, the office will contact the parents as soon as possible. If a parent cannot be reached, the school will try the emergency contact on file. If the emergency contact cannot be reached, the injured child will be taken to the hospital immediately. If a child becomes sick at school, the parents will be contacted so that they or a designated adult can pick the child up from school. No student will be allowed to go home alone. Any child running a fever must be picked up from school and should not return until the fever has been gone for at least 24 hours.

9.5 Head Lice

If a student is found to have nits, parents will be notified to pick up their child at that time. The student will not be allowed to return to school until the Principal or designee has determined that the student is “nit free”. Notification will be sent to all students in the affected grade(s). Parents are encouraged to check their children during the next several weeks after the notice is received.

9.6 Child Abuse Reporting

It is mandated by law and the responsibility of every faculty and staff member to report suspected child abuse. Child abuse is defined as any mental or physical injury or injuries inflicted on a child other than by accidental means. When abuse of a child is suspected a report will be made to the Child Abuse Hotline – 1-800-482-5964.

Section 10 - Athletics

10.1 Philosophy

The purpose of the athletic program at Immaculate Heart of Mary is to provide an opportunity for all interested students to learn good sportsmanship, teamwork, and to learn and improve in basic skills of the sport. The athletic department will strive to encourage the active participation and individual effort of each student, regardless of skill level. As a result of participating in the sport, the student athlete should develop a respect for authority (coaches, referees, parents) and a respect for others (teammates and opposing teams). We hope that each individual will develop self-confidence, increase self-esteem, and have fun.

10.2 Policy Statement

The ultimate authority and administration of the athletic program resides with the Principal. The everyday operation of the program is entrusted to the athletic director. Specific information and requirements regarding academic eligibility will be given by the athletic director and explained to the students. **In order to be eligible to participate in any sport, the student must have a current physical on file in the school office.** Any questions or concerns about the athletic program should be directed to the athletic director. Participation in extra-curricular activities is considered a privilege, not a right. Eligibility and participation is based on academics, attendance, participation, and behavior. Immaculate Heart of Mary School strives to promote goodwill and positive relationships with all other schools during all sport and extracurricular activities.

Sportsmanship-like conduct and behavior is expected at all times by players, coaches, parents, supporters, and fans. Anyone exhibiting inappropriate behavior, manner, or language may be prohibited from future events.

10.3 Parochial League Athletic Policy

It is the policy of the parochial league that the academic and religious development of the student is of primary importance at all times. The privilege of athletic participation may be earned only through satisfactory levels of achievement in academics attendance, and behavior.

10.4 Athletic Program

The athletic program may include: Soccer (age 6 and under), Boy's and Girl's Basketball (3rd-4th) Girl's Volleyball (5th-8th); Boy's and Girl's Basketball (5th-8th); Boy's Football (5th-8th); Boy's and Girl's Track (5th-8th); Boy's and Girl's Cross Country (5th-8th); and Boy's and Girl's Golf (5th-8th).

10.5 Academic Eligibility

To participate in a sport or any other extracurricular activity a student must maintain a grade of 77% (C), which results from averaging the grades in these academic subjects: religion, language, spelling, science, math, social studies, and reading/literature. No individual grade in any subject may be below 70% (F). An overall average of 3.0 (B) in conduct must also be maintained, with no conduct grade for any course lower than 2.0 (C).

Quarterly grades (report cards) will be used to place or remove a student on academic or conduct probation. Interim grades may be used to reinstate a student on academic probation. The administration will use no other time frame (i.e. weekly review of academic or conduct grades) to determine eligibility. Fourth quarter academic grades will not affect fall sports eligibility, however, fourth quarter conduct grades will affect fall sports eligibility.

10.6 Learning Differences

A diagnosed learning disability or handicap is a condition that has been evaluated by a psychologist and/or psychological examiner and determined severe enough to prevent a child from learning through traditional classroom instruction. A modified grading scale may be used in the student's area(s) of disability. In areas of academics not affected by the particular disability, standards for non-disabled students will apply. A disabled student must fulfill 100% of their modified curriculum in order to be eligible for extracurricular activities.

10.7 Athletic Policies

- Only students eligible and registered for sports or activities may participate in practices, games, meetings, or events. All others (younger and older) will be spectators only and must be accompanied by an adult. Students or adults not authorized by the Principal and Athletic Director may not participate in practices or games in any capacity.
- Students who are absent from school on the day of an event/activity, may not participate in that day's event/activity.
- Students should not arrive more than five (5) minutes before practice and not more than thirty (30) minutes before games.
- Parents of extracurricular participants are required to sign up to help with setup, concessions, and clean up. Please sign up with the Athletic Director when you register the student for sports.

10.8 Transfer Students

Transfer students from non-league schools will serve a probationary time, at the discretion of the Principal, until the next interim report or quarter grading period. Transferring students from league schools will continue any academic or conduct probation when transferring from one league school to another.

10.9 Coaches

Coaches should remember at all times that sports are only games and their actions and behavior should reflect a Christian attitude. The coach should keep in mind his or her position as a leader. Coaches must not physically or emotionally abuse any student who is under his/her supervision. Coaches also must not physically or emotionally abuse any parent or adult. Such action could result in loss of coaching privileges at Immaculate Heart of Mary.

All coaches are required to attend the Diocese of Little Rock Child Abuse Training Program. No one will be allowed to coach in the parochial league until this training is complete. All coaches should be aware of the individual abilities, skills, and attitudes of the students and realize that children are not adult athletes. Each student who is a member of the team should have ample opportunity to play in games on a regular basis.

10.10 Parents

It is very important that parents function as role models for their children. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend all athletic events in which their children are participating, as an expression of parental interest in their child's effort. Parent behavior at all times should exemplify the behavior expected of the child. Belligerent or demeaning comments or actions toward coaches, opposing players, or officials often result in a loss of respect for authority by the child. Parent behavior at all times should reflect positively on the parochial league.

10.11 Unruly or disruptive people at school events

Immaculate Heart of Mary School defines unruly behavior as actions that are, in the opinion of the Principal or his/her designee, "in excess of the ordinary and customary enthusiasm or anger expressed as a normal part of viewing or participating" in any school sponsored event. Anyone ejected or banned from a school event/activity may also be banned from participating or attending other school events/activities for up to one year or longer, at the discretion of the Principal. Ejected players will be given an immediate, one game suspension.

10.12 Procedure for Complaints about Athletics

- Submit in writing to school representative (athletic director)
- If immediate attention is necessary, school administration takes action
- If immediate attention is not required, school representative sends the written complaint to the School Board
- School Board responds in writing within one month

10.13 Guidelines

- All coaches, parents, and students must read and sign the Immaculate Heart of Mary Athletic Philosophy before participating in any sport (This is 10.1 of this Handbook. Signing the “Handbook” form fulfills this requirement.)
- Coaches must agree to abide by the Immaculate Heart of Mary Athletic policies
- Team prayer is encouraged before each game
- Immaculate Heart of Mary teams have priority for gym scheduling during basketball season
- Team parents are responsible for staffing and cleaning up the concession stand during volleyball and basketball season.

Section 11 - Miscellaneous

11.1 Non-Custodial Parents

Immaculate Heart of Mary School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the right of non-custodial parents. Non-custodial parents are not to use the school as a meeting place to visit with their children. In the case of divorced parents, a copy of the court order, stating visiting rights will be required to be on file in the school office. The Principal will allow a non-custodial parent to take the child as specified in the court order. A copy of the child’s report card may be given to the non-custodial parent. It is the responsibility of the custodial parent to keep the school informed about any custodial matters, which may involve the school.

11.2 Field Trips

To participate in these activities, students must have parent permission and pay the appropriate fees. In addition, regular school attendance and behavior must be satisfactory. Parents of students not participating will be notified in advance so that arrangements can be made for the student for that day. All school and class rules and procedures will apply while students are involved in the field trip activity. Field trips are a privilege not a right. Parents who volunteer as chaperones, drivers, or participate in any form, may not bring siblings or other children not involved with the field trip activity. **Parents who volunteer as drivers must have a current *Field Trip Driver Liability Form* on file in the school office. A copy of a valid drivers license and proof of insurance are also required. All adults participating in a field trip must have attended a Protecting of Children Diocesan workshop.**

11.3 Class Interruptions

Every effort is made to avoid class interruptions. Messages will be delivered several times throughout the day. Visitors and guests are asked to call in advance to make appointments if they wish to visit with a teacher or visit a class. Teachers cannot visit with anyone while they are responsible for students.

11.4 Money/Checks/Valuables

Students are discouraged from bringing cash or anything of value to school. Cash for tuition, fees, or other charges should be dropped off in the office by an adult. Checks or money, of any amount, should be in an envelope with the student’s name, the amount, and the purpose clearly labeled on the front. Nothing of monetary or sentimental value should be brought to school. The school is not responsible for personal items lost or damaged.

11.5 Awards/Assemblies

Students are recognized for academics, citizenship and attendance throughout the year. Awards are distributed each quarter.

11.6 Telephone Usage

Students may use the school phone with the teacher’s or principal’s permission. Cell phones may be brought to school, but must be turned off and stored away between 7:45am – 3:15pm. IHM is not responsible for the loss or damage of any electronic device brought by students or parents.

11.7 School Insurance

Accident insurance for all students is strongly encouraged. If your child is not covered under your health insurance, accident insurance may be purchased at a very reasonable rate from a private company. This accident insurance is underwritten by a company approved by the Diocesan School Office. Brochures are available in the school office. This insurance must be purchased at the beginning of school.

11.8 Flowers and Gifts

Flowers, balloons, and gifts may be sent to students at school for birthdays or other special occasions and may be picked up at the end of the day in the school office.

11.9 Class Parties

Class parties, which take place during school time, must be cleared through the Principal. Room parents will coordinate the parties, treats, activities, and time with the teacher. Normal classroom parties are for **All Saints, Christmas, and Valentine Day.**

11.10 Student Birthdays

Birthday parties will not be held during school hours. However, if a student wishes to celebrate the occasion by treating the class to cookies, cupcakes, etc. the parent must confer with the teacher for approval. Birthday party invitations may only be distributed on campus as long as each student receives one or all girls/boys. Invitations to individuals in other classes are not permitted on campus, including in the drop-off and pick-up lines. Students may not exchange individual gifts at school.

11.11 Possessions Brought to School

All items brought to school should be marked with the student's name (sweaters, jacket, raincoats, etc.). If a student loses articles at school, he/she should check the "lost and found box" inside the school office. Electronic devices such as cell phones, radios, tape recorders, CD players, video games, and message devices are not to be brought to school without prior approval of the Principal. If a student needs a cell phone for after school activities written permission from a parent and the Principal are required. Nothing of monetary or sentimental value should be brought to school. The school is not responsible for personal items lost or damaged.

11.12 Forgotten Books, Homework, Etc

Our philosophy of education is teaching children to accept responsibility. This particularly applies when they have forgotten books, homework, etc. Normally we will not give permission to students to make telephone calls for such items.

11.13 Photo/Video Release Policy

Any photographs or videos of Immaculate Heart of Mary School students that are to be released to the public will require a consent form signed by the parents. This may include, but is not limited to: school directories, advertisements, press releases, etc. A Release Form is signed at the beginning of each year.

11.14 Acceptable Telecommunication Policy

Immaculate Heart of Mary School recognizes the need to effectively use computers and the Internet to further enhance educational goals. Faculty, staff and students are expected to use computers and the Internet responsibly. All computing resources must be used in an ethical and lawful manner. All activities while using the computers, or in accessing the Internet in this school must be in support of education and research, and consistent with the educational objectives of Immaculate Heart of Mary School. Use of the computers and the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and is subject to terms and conditions. Users are expected to learn and follow normal standards of polite conduct and responsible behavior. Any offensive or questionable site inadvertently reached by a student must be immediately reported to the teacher in charge.

11.15 Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

Drop Off Procedures – Vehicles are to enter the school grounds from Blue Hill Road closest to the lower building. Students are to be dropped off at each entrance of the building between 7:30 and 7:55 a.m. **Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must be signed in by a parent at the lower school office.** Vehicles are to exit the school grounds by the upper school building. **Do not park in the drop off lane.** If you choose to walk your child to class in the morning, you must park in a designated parking spot and walk through the crosswalks. Parents are to remain in their cars while in the car line. Parents must not be talking on cell phones while in a school zone and vehicle speed should never exceed 5 MPH.

Pick-Up Procedures – As vehicles pull forward to the loading area, teachers will supervise the loading of students. Parents should never call or signal for students to come to a vehicle that is in line or parked. Pre-K through 3rd grades will be picked up at the lower school building, 4th -8th grade students will be picked up at the upper building. Parents choosing to walk and pick up their child(ren) at the end of the day must park in the upper parking lot and walk around the flow of traffic. Parents must not be talking on cell phones while in a school zone and vehicle speed should never exceed 5 MPH.

11.16 Visitors/Volunteers

Volunteers are always welcome in the school to assist the teacher in various academic programs such as oral reading, library assistance, special projects, etc. All volunteers, parents, and visitors must use the entrance by the office in the lower building and sign-in before going anywhere on campus. All volunteers should attend a Diocesan *Safe Environment for Children* training session.

11.17 Lunch Program

IHM offers a hot lunch program which is available for students throughout the school year (except for certain designated days). A menu is available at www.renweb.com for parents.

11.18 Lunchroom

- Students are supervised by teachers in the lunchroom.
- Teachers will accompany students to the cafeteria and monitor their behavior.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves properly during lunch and practice good manners

Parents eating lunch with their children in the school cafeteria are asked to call the office **by 8:30 am.** Parents will sign in the school office and get a visitor pass before going into the cafeteria.

11.19 Fire and Tornado Drills

Fire and tornado drills are conducted frequently for students to become familiar with the appropriate response procedures.

11.20 Search of Property

Principal and teachers may make periodic checks or search desks, lockers and personal property together with their contents. Such action may be taken anytime the Principal or teacher has reason to believe that they contain certain illegal or forbidden substances or other items that would be harmful to others in the school community.

11.21 Recess

Weather permitting, students will be allowed outdoor recess. Due to the varying weather conditions, it is at the Principal/teacher's discretion not to allow students to participate in recess if they are not dressed appropriately (i.e. wearing of coats during cool/cold weather).

Section 12 - School Services

12.1 Health Services

Students in Kindergarten and Grades 1, 3, 5, & 7, are tested for hearing and vision. Permission slips are sent home in advance for the scoliosis testing. Parents will be notified if there is a problem in any of these areas, as they may wish to seek further review by their child's physician.

12.2 Morning and After-school Care

Morning and After-school care is available each day in the morning assembly room from 6:45am – 7:30am and 3:15pm until 6:00pm respectively. Registration forms and rate information is available in the school office.