



Immaculate Heart of Mary Disciple Den Handbook

Phone: 616-241-4633, ext. 204

Disciple Den Director: Mrs. Lynda Davis
Google Voice Number (text & voice message): 616-389-0377
ldavis@ihmschoolgr.org (best choice)

Principal: Mrs. Holly Lake
616-241-4633
principal@ihmschoolgr.org

Billing: Mrs. Karen DeChant
616-241-4633
kdechant@ihmschoolgr.org



Table of Contents

[Table of Contents](#)

[Our School Mission Statement](#)

[Our Beliefs](#)

[About IHM Disciple Den](#)

[Hours/Days of Operation](#)

[Fees](#)

[Attendance Policies](#)

[Staff](#)

[Volunteers](#)

[Discipline](#)

[Dress Code](#)

[Emergency Procedures](#)

[Food and Drink](#)

[Material Needs](#)

[Health Practice & Exclusion Policies](#)

[Schedules](#)

[Resources](#)



1951 Plymouth Ave SE | Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546
<https://ihmschoolgr.org>

Our School Mission Statement

Immaculate Heart of Mary School, immersed in the teachings of the Catholic Church, is dedicated to providing excellent spiritual and academic formation in the development of well-rounded individuals centered in Christ.

Our Beliefs

We believe in...

- **Preparing** children to live their Catholic faith by nurturing their love for Christ.
- **Assisting** them in understanding their unique God-given talents and gifts.
- **Encouraging** children to develop their talents and self-esteem based on Catholic values and academic excellence.
- **Nurturing** each child's desire to continue learning beyond the classroom.
- **Cultivating** student's awareness and respect for all members of God's world
- **Developing** collaboration among students, parents, staff and the parish community.
- **Motivating** students to value and participate in Catholic Ministry as a way of life.

About IHM Disciple Den

Purpose and Philosophy

The purpose of Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School's Disciple Den is to provide safe and secure before and after school care for the enrolled children of IHM School.

Attendance schedules vary according to the needs of each child and his/her family. There is a basic daily routine that gives the children a sense of security. At the same time, there is flexibility in order to meet specific needs of children on any particular day.

We believe that each child is a gift from God and should be treated as such. We believe children learn best through a combination of planned and spontaneous experiences with a balance between teacher-led and child-led activities in order to encourage overall development physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and socially.



Activities include but are not limited to literature, large and fine motor activities, language and math games, dramatic play, creative art, crafts, music and movement, sensory exploration, experiments, manipulatives, puzzles, board games, and homework assistance as needed. We believe the outdoors is essential for overall health and development and children and staff spend time outside every day (weather permitting).

Hours/Days of Operation

The Disciple Den is open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. every day that school is in session. When the elementary school is closed, the Disciple Den is closed.

If school is delayed due to inclement weather, the Disciple Den will be closed in the morning only.

Fees

- Annual Registration for an entire family - \$10
- Child rate - \$5 per hour/per child
- Fees are prorated.

Parents will be charged \$10 for every 15 minutes (or fraction thereof) when their child remains at the Disciple Den after 5:30 p.m.

Invoices will be sent home every two weeks via [brightwheel](#), the management software IHM utilizes for billing and student check-in/out. Payment is made directly through each family's **brightwheel** account or sent to the office. A late fee of \$5 will be charged if not paid by the due date.

Billing Options

- Payments can be made directly through [brightwheel](#) using a credit card or bank account.
 - As with all payments processors, there are transaction fees which depend on your payment method:
 - Credit/Debit card fees are 2.9% per transaction.
 - ACH (bank to bank transfers) fees are \$0.90 per transaction.
 - Direct access to brightwheel Support is available:
 - help@mybrightwheel.com
 - [Parent Help Center Articles](#)
- Payments may be given to a Disciple Den staff member during drop off and pick up.
- Payments may be put into a locked box labeled Disciple Den located inside the main entrance of the school, Door A.
- Payments may be mailed to the school office at 1951 Plymouth Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

Attendance Policies

Admissions Policy

Admission to IHM School's before and after school program (a.k.a. Disciple Den) is limited to those students currently enrolled in IHM School preschool through 8th Grade. Every child is expected to be a minimum of 3 years old and toilet trained upon enrollment. Children admitted into the child care program must have the following forms completed and on file with the director prior to enrollment. (Regular school forms and fees must also be complete and up-to-date.) All forms must be updated annually and can be found on the [IHM school website](#).

- Registration (including \$10 annual fee)
- Child Information Record (for each child)
- Parental Written Statement Regarding the Health & Well Being of Child (for each child)
- Written Information Packet Documentation -- signed after reading the Parent Handbook
- Acknowledgement of IHM Emergency Alerts System
- Sibling Release (optional)

Please Note: If any information changes, the director must be notified prior to your child's next attendance.

Scheduling Policy

The parent/guardian must **contact the Disciple Den Director** regarding any scheduling needs.

- A consistent schedule is preferable.
- Variable schedules with inconsistent days/times may be available on a first come, first served basis.

The IHM Disciple Den is unable to function as a dropoff center. **Never assume there is room for your child on an unscheduled day or time.** When in need of a new or varied schedule or last-minute care, please contact the director to see if space is available. We will do our best to make accommodations. However, in order to maintain a legal teacher to child ratio, that may not always be possible.

Additionally, in order to be thoughtful of others in a tight spot, please let us know if you have a change of plans ASAP. A child's absence may be the available spot someone else needs.

Drop Off & Pick Up Policies

Parents, guardians, and approved pickup persons use the brightwheel app (available in the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#)) to sign the child/ren in and out of the Disciple Den.



Please note that if we do not recognize the pickup person, we will request ID. We will then compare the ID with the list of permitted pickup persons. Children are then brought to the door and released from the Disciple Den.

Notification is requested if anyone other than the normally scheduled person will be picking up the child. We cannot release your child to a new pickup person unless the pickup person is listed on the Child Information Record or we have been notified via a parent email or parent signed note. Please inform this new pickup person that we will require their picture identification before opening the door or releasing the child/ren.

Withdrawal Policy

Parents are free to withdraw from IHM's Disciple Den at any time. An exit interview may be conducted with the withdrawing family to determine where we might improve.

Removal Policy

If a family's Disciple Den account is not kept in good standing, a child's attendance in our before and after school program may be limited or barred. Removing a child from IHM's Disciple Den is enacted by the IHM School administration in consultation with the child care staff and pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. This may occur when there is a repeated, prolonged, and open disregard for center rules or authority or where circumstances of crime, scandal, morality, safety, or disruption necessitates this extreme disciplinary action.

Staff



IHM's before and after school child care program (Disciple Den) is a state-licensed program providing care for enrolled students per the provisions of the Michigan Administrative Code. Our staff is trained in CPR and First Aid.

All staff members are screened with comprehensive background checks (including fingerprinting) by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs before having contact with children in the care of IHM's Disciple Den. No person having been convicted of child abuse/neglect and/or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual will be hired. Screening documentation shall be kept on file. The director has a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. Each staff member has been carefully screened for their love of children and their ability to positively interact with children.

Volunteers

All adult volunteers of IHM's before and after school care program with unsupervised access to children are screened with comprehensive background checks (including fingerprinting) before having contact with children in the care of IHM's before and after School care AKA Disciple Den.

All supervised adult volunteers at Disciple Den shall receive a public sex offender registry (PSOR) clearance before having any contact with a child in care. PSOR clearances shall be renewed annually. All supervised adult volunteers will be kept within eyesight of a staff member at all times while they are interacting with children.

No person having been convicted of child abuse/neglect and/or a felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual will be accepted as a volunteer and is prohibited from having contact with any child in care. Screening documentation shall be kept on file.

Discipline

Children function best in an environment that is loving, supportive, and stable.

The staff employs methods of discipline which encourage self-control, self-direction, and self-esteem. Our staff will keep a consistent daily schedule and an orderly classroom. Simple limits will be set for the child's safety and will be explained and enforced. When a child's behavior becomes unacceptable, he/she will be told why and encouraged to change it. If a child's behavior could hurt someone, damage something in the room, or disrupts the class continually, it may be best to remove him/her in order to think about the behavior displayed. The child is then welcomed back to the group to join in the present activity.

Appropriate parent contact will be initiated by the staff following discipline issues and students may be referred to the principal or other administrator. Students will be reminded that the School Discipline Policy and procedures also apply in the IHM Disciple Den.

Dress Code

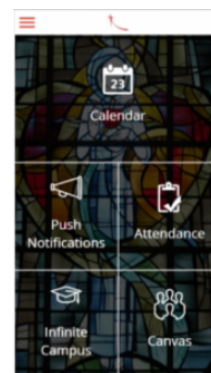


Students in kindergarten through eighth grade are expected to follow the [IHM School Dress Code](#) (listed in the Family Handbook and on the school website). Preschool and Young 5s students are expected to follow their classroom guidelines for dress code. Children may change into play clothes (following school guidelines) after school hours at the discretion of the Disciple Den staff.

Emergency Procedures

Fire, tornado, lock-down and evacuation drills will be practiced throughout the school year. In the event of severe weather, we advise parents not to pick up their children until the severe weather has passed. In the event of an emergency, we ask that you follow these procedures:

- Please do not call the school. Our telephone lines must be kept open to respond to the emergency. Information regarding any change in the time/location of pick-up will be sent through the [IHM App](#). The IHM App will enable parents to receive emergency information involving IHM School, Preschool, and Disciple Den.
- Please note that if there is an emergency or emergency drill, it is possible that parents may not even have access to the school vestibule.



Food and Drink

Drinking Water

Please send a clean spill-proof water bottle each day filled with fresh water.

Snacks

The children enrolled in IHM Disciple Den bring their own afternoon snacks. We encourage natural, healthy snacks (no candy, pop, sugary drinks, gum, or extreme sweets, please).

Material Needs

Extra Clothes for Preschoolers and Y5s

Students should have a change of underwear, pants, a shirt, and socks. *Please label everything!*

Winter Needs

For winter weather, please bring the following snow clothes in a canvas tote bag: boots, snow pants, coat/jacket, hat, mittens. *Please label everything!* Note: Both indoor shoes and outdoor boots are necessary.

Health Practice & Exclusion Policies

Facial Masks

It is recommended that all children and adults wear a mask. Masks are not mandated. However, this may be revised at any time per directives of the Kent County Health Department and the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

Hand Washing

Children attending IHM Disciple Den are taught and reminded of proper hand washing procedures. All children and staff practice washing hands often and for at least 20 seconds at a time. Washing hands is especially important before and after eating, after using the restroom, after messy activities, and after touching one's face.

The following procedures are considered best practice for hand washing:

- Have a clean paper towel available.
- Turn water on to a comfortable temperature (between 60°F to 120°F).
- Moisten hands with water and apply soap.
- Rub hands together until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 20 seconds
- Rub area between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and the back of hands.
- Rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt. Leave the water running while drying hands.
- Dry hands with a clean, disposable paper towel. Turn taps off with the paper towel.
- Dispose of the paper towel in a lined trash container.



Staff of IHM Disciple Den undergo Blood Borne Pathogen Training prior to employment and annually. Latex gloves are available for staff to use in the event of possible exposure to potentially infectious fluids (blood, vomit, nasal discharge, urine, etc.). Should such fluids be present, children will be removed from the area until fluids are cleaned up and the area is disinfected. Soiled clothing and/or personal belongings will be placed in a plastic bag and returned to parents.

Cleaning

- Bathrooms and frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected more than once per day.
- Tables are cleaned between children.
- Floors are to be cleaned by cleaning staff before the start of each day.
- Toys and cots are cleaned and disinfected daily.

Illness Exclusion Policy

We are unable to provide care for sick children. If a child is unwell, please keep him/her at home. If a child becomes ill at the Disciple Den, we will contact parents/guardians to take the child home. If we cannot reach parents/guardians by phone or email, we will contact the emergency pickup person(s) on the Child Information Record. Pickup for the child should be arranged without delay.



Reasons children should remain at home or be taken home may include, but are not limited to:

- COVID-19 symptoms
- Contagious disease/illness
- Fever -- **Please keep child home until 24 hours after the fever has passed (without fever reducing medication)**
- Vomiting/diarrhea for any reason **within the past 24 hours**
- Cough disrupting normal activity
- Shortness of breath/wheezing
- Distracting pain (e.g., stomach ache, headache, sore throat, muscle aches)
- Rash -- contagious or unfamiliar
- Pink eye
- Lice

Please Note: Staff, too, must remain at home or stay home under the same criteria.



Keep Us Informed

If a child is ill, please notify the school office and contact the Disciple Den Director, Mrs. Lynda Davis.

- School Office: 616-241-4633
- Mrs. Davis:
 - Email: ldavis@ihmschoolgr.org
 - Text Message: 616-389-0377

Your child's doctor can fax any information regarding your child's well-being to 616-241-4418.

Medication Policy

Medication is preferably administered at home. However, if medication must be administered to a child during Disciple Den hours, then it must only be given by the lead teacher and only if the **state-required** [authorized medication form](#) has been completed and signed by the child's physician or parent/guardian.

All medication:

- must be sent to school/preschool/Disciple Den in its original container with the child's name on it.
- must have the pharmacy label indicating the child's name, date, doctor's name, medication name and strength, and complete instructions for administration.
- must be given to the school office or lead teacher immediately upon the child's arrival.
- must be stored out of reach of children and according to the original container's instructions.
- shall be returned to the parent or destroyed when the parent determines it is no longer needed or it has expired.
- shall only be given according to the instructions on the original container unless the child's physician gives a written order to do otherwise.

A medication record shall be kept for the child on the [authorized medication form](#) indicating the date, time, amount given, and signature of the lead teacher administering the medication (This form will be permanently kept in the child's files.).

Topical non-prescription medication requires written parental authorization to be updated annually. Please see the authorization form on our [web page](#).

Topical non-prescription medication includes but is not limited to:

- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Diaper rash cream
- Antibiotic ointment
- Rubbing alcohol
- Hydrogen peroxide

Topical non-prescription medication does not include:

- Hand sanitizer
- Hand or body lotion, including petroleum jelly based products such as Vaseline®
- Lip balm

[Let's Keep It Healthy: Policies and Procedures for a Safe and Healthy Environment](#)

Accidents/Incidents

If an accident/incident involving your child occurs at the Disciple Den, first aid will be administered as needed. Parents will be notified. If there is cause for any immediate concern, a phone call will be made. If necessary, all phone numbers provided on the Child Information Record will be called and all email addresses will be sent messages. In case of failure to contact the parent/guardian, the emergency contact person(s) will be contacted.

If a child requires any special medical attention, please alert us on the Child Information Record and verbally.

Minor injuries (including bumps, bruises, scrapes, or shallow cuts) may be cleaned and/or iced. Bandages may be applied. TLC will be offered. A written Ouch Report will be given to the parent, and possibly an email message. When there is a bump to the head, more immediate notice will be given via a phone call and possibly an email.

If a **serious injury**/incident occurs, the following procedure will be followed:

1. **Check** the scene for safety and assess the child
2. **Call** 911 if emergency medical care is needed
3. **CPR**, first aid, ice pack, bandages, TLC
4. **Communication**: An accident/incident report will be written and copied for the parent and school. A written report will be submitted to the state within 72 hours. A phone call(s) and possibly email will be completed as needed.

Note: *Remember to keep emergency information updated to reduce delays in providing emergency care.*

Schedules

Before School Schedule	7:00 a.m.	Greeting, free choice
	7:40 a.m.	K-8 student send off
	7:00-8:00 a.m.	8:00 a.m. Preschool send off
<hr/>		
After School Schedule	3:00 p.m.	Greet enrichment students, wash hands, snack
	3:15 p.m.	Greet K-8 students, wash hands, group prayer
	3:30 p.m.	Snack, homework at designated areas for those with homework; teacher & child-led activities
	5:00 p.m.	Clean-up
	3:00-5:30 p.m.	5:30 p.m. Closing

Resources

We can all use help from time to time. Immaculate Heart of Mary School employs a part-time counselor who is available to all students and their families. Contact school administration if you need to schedule an appointment. Listed below are some groups that can help families.

- Kent County Children’s Protective Services: 616-248-9600
- National Drug Helpline: 1-888-633-3239
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233
- National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or live online chat
- Parent Help Line: 1-855-4APARENT (1-855-427-2736)
- SAMHSA Treatment Referral Helpline: 1-877-726-4727
 - Get general information on mental health and locate treatment services in your area. Speak to a live person, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST.
- WIC (Women Infants and Children): 1-800-26-BIRTH
 - Helps moms get nutritional food for their children under age five.
- Legal Aid of Western Michigan 616-774-0672
 - Provides free legal assistance to low income persons and Seniors in non-criminal, non-fee generating matters.
- Office of Children’s Ombudsman OCO: 1-800-642-4326
 - Investigates complaints about DHS cases.

Phone numbers verified January 2020