



Immaculate Heart College

Through Mary to Jesus: "The Way, the Truth and the Life"
John 14:6



INTRODUCTION:

Hello everyone. **WELCOME** to our Kindergarten!

Our Kindergarten programme at Immaculate Heart College endeavours to provide a warm and friendly environment for the nurturing and development of all the children entrusted into our care. It is generally a flexible programme, planned around experiences and environmental influences that are appropriate and relevant to your young child. We aim to foster your child's spirituality, natural curiosity and creativity. The Kindergarten year will see your child develop skills in spiritual, social, emotional, physical, linguistic, and intellectual areas. Most of all, our programme is interactive, where children talk and play together, make choices, overcome difficulties, experience success, and manipulate materials happily.

I look forward to getting to know you and your child this year. I am sure that we will all have a wonderful time working in partnership together to provide an atmosphere of love, peace and learning for your child.

Mrs Cathy Byrne
Kindergarten Teacher
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GENERAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The main aim of Kindergarten is to teach young children basic life skills in a fun but structured environment. It is, essentially, an introduction to schooling. In planning and learning through a play environment, we will take into account the developmental stages of individual children in the following domains:

1. **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT** - Once a week, the children participate in a Religious Education lesson with one of the Religious Sisters. The children also develop their spirituality through everyday experiences, being made aware of God's great love for them and, in turn, develop a loving relationship with Him.
2. **SOCIAL SKILLS** - These include sharing, playing together, taking turns, learning to listen to others, working together to learn, becoming independent and responsible for their own wellbeing, and expressing their own thoughts and ideas.
3. **LITERACY AND NUMERACY DEVELOPMENT** - Through various direct and indirect learning experiences, your child's pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills will develop and grow.
4. **EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT** - Play provides an outlet for your child's emotions and expressions of feelings in a constructive way. Giving young children the opportunity to play together encourages them to develop their feelings appropriately.
5. **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT** - As much as possible, your children will be given activities and situations to develop movement, control and co-ordination, and to encourage an awareness of their body and to use the space around them.
6. **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT** - Through the mediums of art/craft, music, dance, drama and media, children learn to express their own ideas using a variety of concepts and materials.

In order to achieve these aims and objectives, it is necessary to provide many different activities. All of these activities are intended to provide a greater opportunity for independence, social learning and concentration on language experiences through a variety of informal integrated Learning Centres, direct teaching time, group and individual experiences. All planning for activities is based on the *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*.

PLEASE REMEMBER: THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOUR CHILDREN LEARN TODAY MAY NOT GO HOME IN THEIR BAG, BUT STAY EMBEDDED IN THEIR MINDS ALWAYS!!



OUR KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMME

Our programme is formed around a play-based curriculum.

"Play enables children to enjoy simply being. When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each others' thinking and build new understandings. Play provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Play can expand children's thinking and enhance their desire to know and learn" (*Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, 2009*).

Our play environment is created around the following Learning Centres:

1. ART AND CRAFT:

Most days, a particular time is allocated for art and craft activities. These may consist of printing, painting, drawing, modelling, collage (2D) and construction (3D). These activities offer your child an opportunity to express and experiment with a variety of different materials. We encourage your child to attempt to make many different things but we will not necessarily always encourage each child to make the same things, (e.g., a class set of green crocodiles, etc.). When your child engages in self-chosen art and craft activities, or on self-determined tasks, he/she is experiencing motivation from within him/herself.



Art and craft activities encourage your child to develop many skills including manipulation, observation, problem solving, imagination, fine motor skills (e.g., learning to correctly manipulate materials such as pencils, scissors with ease and success), conceptual development (understanding of shape, size, colour), hand/eye co-ordination, self expression, self confidence, applying memory, appreciation and sensitivity to art and beauty.

2. CONSTRUCTION AREA:

Our Construction Corner consists of a variety of interlocking bricks and construction kits. Through the various media, your child has the opportunity to build and create, using various problem solving techniques. Your child will learn to deal with space, with closures (inside and outside), position in space (on top, beneath), verticals and horizontals, and directionality.



The Construction Corner also provides a place for your child to pretend he/she is constructing a skyscraper or farmyard, or roadway. It also provides an important avenue of play to develop mathematical skills.

3. MATHS AND SCIENCE AREA:

The Maths and Science Area is equipped with materials that will foster the development of mathematical skills and encourage curiosity for our natural environment. This area includes equipment such as scales, counters, magnifying glasses, mirrors, torches, non-fiction books, and natural materials such as cones, rocks, shells and leaves. We also regularly set up science experiments for observation in this area.



4. HOME CORNER:

The Home Corner provides a place for your child to act out pretend situations such as playing families, shops or hospitals, etc.

The play taking place in the Home Corner might at times be imaginative, and at other times imitative. In imaginative play, your child might imitate a role of a familiar character or person, or maybe manipulate equipment as he/she has seen it used by others. Play clothes will help dramatic play by offering your child props to make the situation more real. In dramatic play, the child takes a few steps away from the self-centred world of babyhood.



5. WRITING TABLE:

The Writing Table provides an opportunity for your child to develop important pre-writing and fine motor skills. The children always have access to paper, colouring in sheets, booklets, scrap books, note books and an assortment of writing tools. When drawing and 'pretend' writing, the children are developing pencil control and are engaging in important imitative writing behaviours.



6. READING CORNER:

Our Reading Corner provides your child with a quiet and relaxing area where he/she can withdraw and look through a variety of



books without interruption. We have a readily available selection of non-fiction books relevant to our current theme. Using our Library Corner is a step towards your child developing a great interest in reading and listening. It also encourages him/her to take care of books and to use them correctly (left to right sequences, front to back, etc.)

7. MUSIC

A variety of songs, games and movement activities are presented throughout our sessions to introduce particular skills such as musical expression, rhythm, beat, pitch, etc.

8. MOVEMENT EDUCATION

This is designed to encourage the development of your child's fundamental movement skills. These include such skills as running, jumping, skipping, throwing and catching. These skills are reinforced and developed through a variety of games and fitness activities.



9. OUTDOOR PLAY

At Immaculate Heart College we are fortunate to have incorporated into our outdoor areas some nature-based play spaces. When children engage with natural elements, they play in more diverse, imaginative and creative ways, and show improved language and collaboration skills.



Our nature-based play areas allow for the children to roll down hills, shift rocks, make mud pies, dam up water, dig in sand, plant seeds, balance on logs, hop on stepping stones, play with loose parts, investigate insects, and engage in other similar play. Every day at Kindergarten, regardless of the weather, the children will spend time exploring, creating and socialising in their natural environment.

"There's no way that we can help children to learn to love and preserve this planet, if we don't give them direct experiences with the miracles and blessings of nature."

Anita Olds

OPENING AND CLOSING TIMES

The Kindergarten door will be opened at 8.45am each morning, providing an opportunity for fruit to be collected, bags to be packed away, and time for a quick cuddle or play with your child. Our class bell will be rung **PROMPTLY** at 9.00am for our morning Mat Session to begin.



Your child needs to be collected **PUNCTUALLY** at 3.10pm as a late collection time can be quite distressing for a little person when he/she is the last one left behind.

IF PARENTS ARE UNABLE TO COLLECT THEIR CHILD FROM KINDERGARTEN, A NOTE MUST BE GIVEN TO THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER IN ADVANCE, OR A PHONE CALL MADE TO THE OFFICE, TO EXPLAIN/IDENTIFY THE ADULT WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTING THE CHILD.

PARENT ROSTER

During the fifth week of term, a duty roster will be posted near our classroom door. If you would like to help us on Parent Roster, please write your name in for the day that you are available.

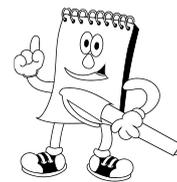
Each day, there is fruit preparation, tidying and washing up to do. Parents are always included in programmed activities and the teacher will explain any specific procedures involved in the Learning Centres. We encourage you to take part in the children's play; e.g., Home Corner, puzzles, blocks, or Playdough Table, etc. At all times, try to be aware of the children with you and those close by, encouraging them positively in their play.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to have siblings in our Kindergarten with parents who are on duty. If you cannot come without a younger sibling, it is best to visit for short periods. Your child would appreciate your visit anytime. Just have a quick word to the teacher and something can be worked out.



YOUR CHILD'S PROGRESS

At Immaculate Heart College, reporting takes many different forms. You will be invited to attend a formal interview during Semester One to discuss your child's progress. However, an informal talk with the teacher regarding your child's progress is encouraged at any time or, alternatively; you can make an appointment with the teacher before or after school. Your child will also bring home a 'Keepsake Journal' at the end of the school year which will include a variety of work samples and activities from the different areas that we have covered throughout the year. This will be a long-term reminder of your child's Kindergarten year. Your child will also receive an End-of-Year Report which will cover the areas of Literacy, Numeracy, Religious Education, Modern Greek, and Social Development over the course of the year.



CLOTHING

School uniform is compulsory for Kindergarten children. Please refer to the School Uniform Policy of Immaculate Heart College.

Please note that Kindergarten is an exciting and active place to be so when your child is experimenting with glue, playdough, paint and outdoor play, etc., his/her clothing may get messy. We do everything possible to protect your child's clothing but, unfortunately, messy accidents do happen.

All clothing items (including underwear, socks and shoes) need to be marked with your child's name. A full spare set of clothing, suitable for the current season, is to be left in their bags, in case of 'accidents'.

We also ask that you supply your child with a pair of **Wellington boots** for use during our Environmental Programme. The Wellington boots will be stored in the classroom and must be labelled with your child's name.



PLEASE NOTE: IT IS COMPULSORY FOR YOUR CHILD TO WEAR A HAT AND SUNSCREEN AT ALL TIMES, ALL YEAR ROUND, WHEN OUTDOORS. The College rule is: "No hat? Play in the shade!"

FRUIT AND FOOD

Each child is required to bring one piece of fruit to each session. Fruit is washed and cut by parents on roster or by a staff member and is shared within small groups for a morning snack. Cubed cheese, sultanas,



dried fruit, plain popcorn or crackers, vegetables (e.g., cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, etc.) are all suitable alternatives, particularly in winter when apples, bananas and oranges can get a little repetitive. IHC is a *Crunch&Sip School*, promoting healthy eating at every opportunity!

Children also need to bring a healthy lunch to Kindergarten in a lunch box labelled with their name. Sandwiches, crackers, yoghurt, salad and fruit snacks are a great healthy alternative to cakes, lollies and chips. Please note that we are a nut and other food allergy-aware school (please refer to our *Food Allergy Awareness - Risk Minimisation Policy*). Lunch boxes are kept in the Kindergarten during the day but an ice pack may be required to keep food cool and fresh, especially in the warmer months. Please send your child to Kindergarten with a labelled bottle of **WATER**. This is available for your child at all times should he/she become thirsty.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND JUICE OR SOFT DRINK

AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES

After lunch, the children will have the opportunity for rest and relaxation before the afternoon's activities commence. Children are required to bring a cushion or small pillow labelled with their name for rest time. Due to a limited amount of storage space, we ask that the cushions be no larger than a standard sized lounge cushion.

BIRTHDAYS

Feel free to bring in small cup cakes or small treats for your child's birthday but always make sure there is enough for everyone in Kindergarten (please check with the teacher as to the exact number).

We often have children in the Kindergarten with food allergies, so please check with us first before bringing in any treats.

ALLERGIES

PLEASE tell us if your child is allergic or intolerant of any particular food. This is not only for fruit time as we regularly cook in the Kindergarten and we need to be aware of any potential problems.



ITEMS FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR

It would be appreciated if each family could supply the Kindergarten with the following items to be used and/or shared throughout the year:

- A box of tissues
- 2 x Crème of Tartar
- 1kg plain flour
- Small bag of cooking salt
- 2 x Blu Tac
- 2 x Large glue sticks
- Packet of white board markers.
- An A3 display folder

RECYCLED ITEMS WE ALWAYS NEED AND WOULD LOVE YOU TO SEND:

- Boxes (all shapes/sizes)
- Egg cartons
- Cylinders (e.g., food wrap, kitchen paper; NO toilet rolls please!)
- Any interesting fabric off cuts
- Clean meat trays
- Plastic containers with their lids (e.g., yoghurt, ice cream, sour cream, dip and margarine container)

ILLNESS AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

If your child is suffering from any of the following symptoms, please keep him/her at home until better/treated, or until cleared by a Medical Practitioner:

- Ear/eye discharge
- Severe nasal discharge
- Abnormal temperature
- Infective sores
- Diarrhoea/vomiting
- Head lice
- Any communicable disease
(e.g., Chicken Pox or Measles)



If a child becomes ill or suffers an accident while at Kindergarten, parents will be contacted immediately. You may be asked to take your child home or, in the case of an accident, will be notified of the situation. It is, therefore, **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** that the teacher and office

staff are notified of any changes relating to home or work telephone numbers or emergency contacts.

If your child has been absent from school, it is a legal requirement that you give your teacher a brief note explaining your child's absence, preferably in advance of the pending absence. Please refer to the *Immaculate Heart College Handbook* for all general procedures.

