

Family Handbook and Partnership Agreement

2025-2026 School Year

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School

Rozita Nasirikhajani, Founder

Rozita Nasirikhajani, Head of School

This Family Handbook is not intended to create a contract. The school reserves the right to change at any time any of the policies described or privileges granted.

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Dear Families,

Welcome to Happy Flower Montessori. It is with great joy that I welcome you and your child to our school community for the upcoming school year.

By choosing a Montessori education, you have made a meaningful commitment to your child's growth and future. At Happy Flower Montessori, we are dedicated to nurturing the whole child—academically, socially, emotionally, and physically. Through purposeful work and thoughtfully prepared environments, children are guided to develop independence, self-confidence, self-discipline, curiosity, and a genuine love of learning. These foundational skills support not only academic success but lifelong well-being.

A successful Montessori experience is built on a strong partnership between families and the school. Open, respectful, and ongoing communication is essential. We encourage families to become familiar with Montessori principles and to support them consistently at home. This partnership is strengthened through classroom observations, family engagement opportunities, and conferences with your child's teacher. Together, we create an environment in which children can thrive.

By signing your child's enrollment or re-enrollment agreement, you acknowledge and agree to the policies and guidelines outlined in the Family Handbook. I encourage you to review it carefully, as it provides important information about our school's policies, expectations, and community values. The Family Handbook is a living document and may be updated as needed to remain aligned with our mission and vision.

If you have any questions or need support at any time, please do not hesitate to reach out. It is truly an honor to partner with you in your child's educational journey, and I look forward to a wonderful year of growth and discovery together.

**Warm regards,
Rozita Nasirikhajani
Owner & Director
Happy Flower Montessori**

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School

Mission Statement

The mission of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is to guide each child toward the full realization of their unique and evolving potential. We nurture independence, curiosity, responsibility, and compassion within a thoughtfully prepared academic and social environment. Our program honors the individuality of each child while fostering a strong sense of belonging and respect for the broader community. Through Montessori principles, we cultivate a love of learning, self-discipline, and a deep appreciation for the natural and interconnected world.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School

Objectives and Program Structure

At Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, we are committed to preserving the integrity of childhood while supporting each child's intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development. Through ongoing collaboration with families and continuous professional growth among staff, we strive to create a balanced, inclusive, and supportive learning community.

Our objectives are:

- To support each child in developing their individuality, confidence, and sense of purpose, empowering them to strive toward their full and evolving potential.
- To provide a learning environment that respects diverse temperaments, abilities, learning styles, and developmental rates without labeling or pathologizing the natural variations of childhood.
- To guide children in building a respectful and cooperative social community in which individual needs and group responsibilities complement one another.
- To foster independence, self-regulation, critical thinking, and intrinsic motivation through hands-on, developmentally appropriate Montessori instruction.
- To nurture a sense of responsibility, empathy, and respect for others, supporting the child's growth as both a capable individual and a conscientious member of society.
- To encourage an understanding of the natural world and humanity's place within it, cultivating curiosity, stewardship, and reverence for life.
- To contribute to the broader Montessori vision of peace through education by supporting the development of thoughtful, compassionate, and socially responsible individuals.

The school's grade configuration is continuous and contiguous from age 3 through Grade 2. Although some classrooms are mixed age in alignment with Montessori philosophy, academic instruction, assessment, and student placement are documented by grade level to ensure compliance with TAAPS standards.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School Partnership Agreement

Through our work with families, we have found that children benefit most from their educational experience when the school and families work together in true partnership. A partnership is defined as a relationship built on mutual respect, shared values, and clearly defined rights and responsibilities. This agreement is intended to clarify those roles and support a consistent and nurturing experience for each child.

In the spirit of partnership, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School has cultivated a school culture in which families and staff share common attitudes, goals, and educational practices. This shared commitment creates consistency between home and school environments, allowing children to grow academically, socially, emotionally, and developmentally to their fullest potential. The expectations of this partnership are outlined below.

The Guide (Teacher)

What parents can reasonably expect from their child's Guide:

Professional Conduct and Preparation

Parents can expect that Guides are Montessori-trained and engage in ongoing professional development to ensure the delivery of high-quality, developmentally appropriate Montessori instruction. Guides implement curriculum and instructional practices in alignment with Montessori philosophy and educational standards, in collaboration with school leadership.

Curriculum and Instruction

Guides thoughtfully prepare the classroom environment, observe students closely, and guide instruction based on each child's developmental needs and readiness. Academic decisions are made with careful consideration of Montessori principles, individual progress, and grade-level expectations.

Professional Standards and Accountability

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School maintains compliance with the Texas Alliance of Accredited Private Schools (TAAPS) standards, which promote excellence in education across the state of Texas. Guides uphold these standards while supporting the school's mission, policies, and commitment to continuous improvement.

Communication and Collaboration

Guides communicate respectfully and professionally with families, sharing information about student progress, classroom expectations, and developmental growth. Families are encouraged to partner with Guides through conferences, observations, and open communication.

Parent Responsibilities

At Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, families play an essential role in supporting a child's success. Parents are expected to engage as active, respectful partners in their child's education and to uphold the values and expectations of the school community.

Communication and Collaboration

Parents are expected to communicate openly, respectfully, and promptly with Guides and school leadership. Concerns should be addressed directly with the appropriate staff member in a collaborative manner, with the shared goal of supporting the child's well-being and development. Parents agree to maintain professionalism and discretion in all communications.

Support of Montessori Principles

Parents are encouraged to develop an understanding of Montessori philosophy and to support these principles consistently at home. This includes fostering independence, responsibility, respect for others, and age-appropriate self-regulation. Consistency between home and school strengthens the child's sense of security and confidence.

Adherence to School Policies

Parents agree to read, understand, and make a good faith effort to follow all policies outlined in the Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School Family Handbook. These policies include, but are not limited to, health and safety guidelines, nutrition requirements, attendance expectations, media and technology use, and community conduct standards.

Attendance and Preparedness

Parents are responsible for ensuring regular attendance, punctual arrival, and timely pick-up. Children should arrive prepared for the school day, dressed appropriately, and ready to engage fully in classroom activities.

Respect for the School Community

Parents are expected to model respectful behavior toward staff, students, and other families. Disagreements or concerns should be handled privately and constructively. Public criticism, gossip, or conduct that undermines the school community is inconsistent with the values of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School.

Commitment to the Child's Growth

Parents acknowledge that growth occurs at an individual pace. They agree to support the school's developmental approach and to work collaboratively with Guides and leadership when additional support, evaluation, or intervention is recommended.

Shared Commitment

By enrolling a child at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, families affirm their commitment to this partnership and acknowledge that a child's success is best supported through mutual trust, respect, and shared responsibility between home and school.

Engagement and Participation

Parents are expected to make a good faith effort to participate in parent gatherings, conferences, and other family engagement opportunities offered by the school. Families are asked to follow the school calendar, daily schedule, and established procedures for arrival and departure. When appropriate and as needed, parents may be invited to contribute to the life of the classroom community through volunteering, sharing skills, supporting classroom activities, or participating in school events.

Home Environment and Consistency

Parents are encouraged to create a safe, predictable, and supportive home environment where routines, expectations, and limits complement the school's Montessori philosophy. Families are expected to support their child's development in ways recommended by the Guide and school leadership, maintaining consistency between home and school whenever possible. Ongoing collaboration between parents and Guides helps ensure that all areas of the child's development academic, social, emotional, and physical are supported holistically.

Communication and Responsiveness

Parents are responsible for reading and responding promptly to communications from their child's Guide and the school. Families are expected to regularly review school communications to stay informed about classroom activities, school events, and requests.

Parents are expected to attend scheduled parent teacher conferences and to communicate proactively with their child's Guide regarding questions, concerns, or matters related to school policies, classroom expectations, or Montessori philosophy. Any concerns should be addressed promptly, respectfully, and directly with the Guide or appropriate school leadership to support timely resolution and the best interests of the child.

What Expectations Can a Parent Reasonably Have of Their Child's Classroom Community?

Conduct

Parents can expect a classroom community that reflects the mission, vision, and objectives of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School. The classroom culture values respect, inclusion, and appreciation for the diversity of families within the community and promotes positive, respectful interactions among students, staff, and families.

Environment

Parents can expect a thoughtfully prepared Montessori environment that supports collaboration, mutual respect, independence, appropriate risk-taking, and gratitude. The classroom atmosphere is designed to support academic growth, social development, and emotional well-being. Families may have opportunities to observe the classroom community at designated times throughout the year and to contribute to the classroom community in ways that align with their individual strengths, interests, and availability.

Communication

Parents can expect regular updates about classroom activities, learning themes, and community life through school communication channels such as email, newsletters, and other school-approved platforms. The school provides appropriate avenues for families within the classroom community to connect with one another while respecting privacy and school guidelines.

What Expectations Can a Child's Classroom Community Reasonably Have of Parents?**Conduct**

Parents are expected to make a good faith effort to support their child's Guide and the school's mission, as outlined in the Partnership Agreement and Family Handbook. Families are encouraged, as able, to contribute to the classroom community through time, resources, or participation in classroom and school-wide activities, such as volunteering, supporting special events, providing classroom materials, or chaperoning outings when applicable.

Parents are also encouraged to actively engage in the life of the school community and to deepen their understanding of Montessori philosophy by attending family engagement events, workshops, and community gatherings.

Environment

Parents are expected to contribute to a supportive and respectful atmosphere among families by adhering to school policies and guidelines. Families share responsibility for helping create a cohesive, intentional school community that supports children's growth and well-being.

Communication

Parents are expected to maintain appropriate boundaries with one another, particularly regarding the sharing of personal or sensitive information about children and families. When parents become aware of concerns or issues that may impact the classroom community, they are expected to communicate directly with the Guide or appropriate school leadership rather than discussing such matters with other families.

Whole School

What Expectations Can a Parent Reasonably Have of the Whole School?

Conduct

Parents can expect a culture of professionalism in which faculty and staff uphold high ethical standards and follow developmentally appropriate Montessori best practices. Interactions with children, families, and colleagues are conducted with warmth, respect, collaboration, and patience, creating a positive and supportive school climate.

Environment

Parents can expect a physically and emotionally safe, thoughtfully prepared environment that supports the education of the whole child—academically, socially, emotionally, and physically—in alignment with the mission, vision, and objectives of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School. The school provides meaningful opportunities for family engagement and community-building that strengthen relationships and foster a sense of belonging.

Communication

Parents can expect communication from the school to be clear, accurate, timely, and respectful. Information is shared through school-approved communication channels, including email, newsletters, and, when appropriate, phone calls or in-person meetings. The school strives to respond promptly to parent inquiries and maintains consistent communication across staff, ensuring alignment in messaging, tone, expectations, and professional boundaries at all levels of the organization.

Whole School

What Expectations Can the Whole School Reasonably Have of Parents?

Conduct

Parents are expected to make a good faith effort to support their child's Guide and to support the classroom community of the child(ren) enrolled at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, as outlined in the Family Handbook and Partnership Agreement. Families are expected to engage respectfully with staff, students, and other families and to uphold the values and expectations of the school community.

Environment

Parents are expected to contribute positively to the well-being of the school community by speaking of all members students, families, faculty, and staff with appreciation, professionalism, and mutual respect. Conduct that undermines trust, community cohesion, or the school's values is inconsistent with the expectations of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School.

Communication

Parents are expected to bring questions, concerns, or feedback regarding school policies, guidelines, or their child's experience to the attention of the appropriate staff member or school leadership in a timely and respectful manner. In cases of disagreement, parents are expected to address the individual(s) involved directly and professionally. If resolution cannot be reached, families are expected to follow the established chain of communication and conflict resolution procedures outlined in the Family Handbook.

Parents are also expected, when appropriate, to represent and uphold the mission, vision, and objectives of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School within the broader community.

School Overview

School Governance

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is privately owned and operated and is led by the Owner and Director, who is responsible for the school's educational vision, financial stewardship, policy implementation, and daily operations. School leadership works collaboratively with administrative staff, faculty, and families to ensure that all programs and practices align with the mission, vision, and objectives of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School.

The Owner and Director ensures compliance with all applicable state licensing requirements and accreditation standards and supports continuous improvement across all school programs and campuses.

School Accreditation and Licensing

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) and operates in accordance with all state regulations. The school is pursuing and/or maintains accreditation through the Texas Alliance of Accredited Private Schools (TAAPS), an accrediting member of the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC), the state-recognized governing body for private school accreditation associations.

This accreditation reflects the school's commitment to academic excellence, accountability, and ongoing professional growth.

School Campuses and Administrative Offices

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School

Administrative Office / McKinney Campus

3801 Alma Road
McKinney, TX 75070

Phone: 682-351-9492

Email: info@hfmontessori.org

Website: www.hfmontessori.com

Plano Campus

913 Lexington Dr
Plano, TX 75075

Office Hours

The administrative office of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is staffed from **8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday**, during the traditional school year. School offices are closed on designated school holidays.

Office hours may be modified on staff in-service or professional development days when children are not in attendance. During the summer session, office hours are **9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday**, and **9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Fridays**.

School Communities

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is organized into developmentally appropriate learning communities that support Montessori philosophy and the individual needs of each child.

Infant and Toddler Communities

Ages: 6 weeks – 2 years

These communities provide a nurturing, safe, and responsive environment that supports early independence, language development, movement, and social-emotional growth.

Primary (Children's House) Communities

Ages: 3 years – 5 years

Primary communities offer mixed-age classrooms where children engage in hands-on Montessori learning that supports academic foundations, social development, and self-directed exploration.

Elementary Communities

Ages: 6 – 9 years

Elementary communities build upon the Montessori foundation, fostering critical thinking, collaboration, responsibility, and a deeper understanding of academic concepts through integrated and experiential learning.



Programs

Early Childhood: The Youngest Children's Community

Director of Early Childhood Programs Naila Bashir Naila@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Teaching Faculty

Hummingbird Garden - Traditional Year Community

Guide: Sorour Hendi

Sorourh@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214) 592-0885

Butterfly Garden - Traditional Year Community

Guide: Brenda Enciso

BrendaE@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214) 592-0885

Ladybug Garden - Traditional Year Community

Guide: Yolande Kenfack

YolandeK@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214) 592-0885

Arrival and Departure

At Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, arrival and departure times for the Youngest Children's Community are staggered to reduce congestion and to support a calm, welcoming, and developmentally appropriate transition into and out of the school day.

Traditional School Year

Youngest Children's Communities

(Monday–Friday; please refer to the school [calendar](#) for specific dates)

Classroom	Morning Arrival	Mid-Day Departure	End-of-Day Departure
Hummingbird Garden	8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	N/A – All children depart at mid-day
Butterfly Garden	8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:00 – 3:10 p.m.
Ladybug Garden	8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:00 – 3:10 p.m.

Families are asked to adhere strictly to assigned arrival and departure windows to ensure safety, consistency, and a smooth transition for all children. Timely arrival and departure help maintain a peaceful classroom environment and support each child's sense of routine and security.

Year-Round Youngest Children's Community

Dragonfly Garden

(Monday–Friday; please refer to the school calendar for complete year information)

Arrival and Departure Schedule

Early Arrival

6:30 – 7:50 a.m.

Assisted Arrival

8:00 – 8:15 a.m.

End-of-Day Departure

3:15 – 3:25 p.m.

During assisted arrival, a staff member will meet your child in the car, assist with unbuckling from the car seat, and support the child's transition into the classroom. Families are strongly encouraged to arrive on time, as a calm and consistent start to the day plays an important role in a child's overall experience and regulation throughout the day.

Late Arrival

Families arriving outside of designated arrival times should follow the late arrival procedures outlined in their specific community handbook or as communicated by school administration.

Authorized Pick-Up Persons

For the safety of all children, only parents or authorized individuals may pick up a child. If someone other than a parent or regularly designated individual will be picking up a child, advance written notice must be provided to the child's Guide or school administration.

For individuals who will be picking up on an ongoing basis (such as a nanny, grandparent, or family member), parents must add the individual as an authorized pick-up contact in the school's records. Valid photo identification will be required at pick-up.

In the event of an unexpected early pick-up during the school day, families are asked to contact the school's main office at **682-351-9492**.

Attendance Records

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is required to maintain daily attendance records. Children are signed in upon arrival and signed upon departure. When families utilize designated arrival and departure procedures, staff will assist with sign-in and sign-out to ensure accurate records.

Safe Sleep Practices

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School follows all state-required safe sleep practices to ensure the health and safety of infants and young children during rest periods.

Infants (6 Weeks to 18 Months)

Infants are placed on their backs to sleep in an approved crib or designated infant sleep space that meets current safety standards. Cribs are equipped with firm mattresses and fitted sheets only and are kept free of soft bedding, blankets, pillows, toys, positioning devices, or other loose items always. Infants are never placed to sleep on adult beds, couches, or soft surfaces.

Infants are placed to sleep according to each child's individual sleep schedule, as provided by the family and documented by the school. Staff members actively supervise infants during all sleep periods and visually check sleeping infants at regular intervals in accordance with licensing requirements. Any alternate sleep positioning must be documented and accompanied by a written medical authorization.

Youngest Children's Community (18 Months and Older)

Each child is provided with an individual nap mat with an attached blanket, securely fastened to a firm sleeping surface. Children sleep one child per mat and are placed on their backs to rest, either independently or with assistance from staff as needed. Mats are kept free of loose blankets, pillows, toys, or other items to maintain a safe and uncluttered rest environment.

Rest periods are always supervised, and staff ensure that children can move freely, breathe comfortably, and rest in a calm, developmentally appropriate setting.

Breastfeeding Policy

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recognizes the importance and benefits of breastfeeding. Parents of children under 18 months of age enrolled in the Youngest Children's Community have the right to breastfeed their child on-site or to provide expressed breast milk.

Families are encouraged to communicate with their child's Guide and school administration in advance so that appropriate accommodation can be arranged. Accommodation may include access to a private, comfortable space and adult-sized seating to support breastfeeding while on campus.



Early Childhood: The Children's House

Director of Early Childhood Programs Naila Bashir Naila@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214) 592-0885

Teaching Faculty

Pomegranate Cottage - Year-Round Community

Guide: Nohemi Cruz

NohemiC@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214) 592-0885

Persimmon Cottage - Year-Round Community

Guide: Satarupa Kar

SatarupaK@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Laurel Cottage - Traditional Year Community

Guide: Pegah Pouladi

PegakP@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Redbud Cottage - Traditional Year Community

Guide: Massi Babazadeh

MassiB@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Magnolia Cottage - Year-Round Community

Guide: Veronica Mapp

VeronicaM@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Cypress Cottage - Year-Round Community

Guide: Brittany Webb

BrittanyW@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Arrival and Departure

Primary (Children’s House) Communities

Arrival and departure times for each Children’s House community at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are staggered to reduce congestion and to support a calm, non-stimulating transition into and out of the school day.

McKinney / Plano Campuses

(Monday–Friday; please refer to the school calendar for complete year information)

Community	Assisted Arrival	Mid-Day Departure	End-of-Day Departure
Cypress Cottage	8:00 – 8:15 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:15 – 3:30 p.m.
Magnolia Cottage	8:00 – 8:15 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:15 – 3:30 p.m.
Redbud Cottage	8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:05 – 3:15 p.m.
Laurel Cottage	8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:05 – 3:15 p.m.
Persimmon Cottage	8:00 – 8:15 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:15 – 3:30 p.m.
Pomegranate Cottage	8:00 – 8:15 a.m.	12:00 – 12:10 p.m.	3:15 – 3:30 p.m.

Arrival Procedures

During assisted arrival, a staff member will meet your child in the car, assist with unbuckling from the car seat, and support the child’s transition into the classroom. Families are strongly encouraged to arrive within their assigned arrival window, as a calm and consistent start to the day supports emotional regulation and learning readiness.

Children arriving after their designated arrival time must be accompanied by a parent to the main office for check-in before entering the classroom.

Families are encouraged to keep children seated in their car seats during arrival until the Guide or an assistant opens the car door to greet them. Because multiple families often arrive at the same time, parents are asked to help children refrain from calling out to friends during arrival. This supports a calm, orderly, and safe transition for all children and families.

For families participating in carpools, the names of all drivers must be listed as authorized people in the school's records. Parents involved in carpools are encouraged to meet in advance to establish clear expectations and rules for conduct while children are in the vehicle. When possible, families may find it helpful for parents to personally bring their child to school during the first few days to support a smooth transition.

At dismissal, the Guide or assistant will escort and release children directly to their parents or authorized pick-up person at the vehicle. If someone other than a parent or previously authorized individual will be picking up a child, advance written notice must be provided to the Guide or school administration. For individuals who will pick up on an ongoing basis (such as a nanny or grandparent), families must add the individual as an authorized contact in the school's system. Valid photo identification may be required.

In the event of an unexpected early pick-up during the school day, families are asked to contact the school's main office at **682-351-9492**.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is required to maintain daily attendance records. Children are signed in upon arrival and signed upon departure. When families use designated arrival and dismissal procedures, staff will assist with accurate sign-in and sign-out.

Attendance at the Children's House Level

Each child is an essential member of the classroom community, and each day contributes meaningfully to the life of the group. For this reason, families are encouraged to support regular and consistent attendance. If a child is absent, families are asked to notify the school. In cases of extended absence, parents should communicate directly with the child's Guide.

During the Children's House years, children benefit greatly from consistency and predictability. This stage of development is characterized by heightened sensitivity to routine, order, and repetition. A predictable flow of days, a consistent daily schedule, and regular attendance support the child's sense of security, concentration, and developmental growth.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School offers a five-day-per-week program to support continuity of learning and to meet the developmental needs of children at this stage.

Programs and Services – Early Childhood

The programs and services available to students enrolled in the Early Childhood programs at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are outlined below.

Early Arrival

Early Arrival is available to Children's House and Elementary students at both the McKinney and Plano campuses. Early Arrival care is offered from **7:30 a.m. to 7:55 a.m.** in designated supervised areas on each campus.

Families interested in Early Arrival should contact the school's main office for information regarding availability, enrollment, and applicable fees.

Midday Rest Program (Children's House)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School offers a midday rest and nap option for Children's House students under the age of 4½ who require a longer rest period.

- The designated rest and nap period occur after lunch each day.
 - All children are provided with an opportunity to rest or sleep in a calm, supervised environment.
 - Children participating in the midday rest program are provided with an individual nap mat or cot and appropriate bedding.
 - Children enrolled in extended-day programs who remain in their classroom are also provided with a designated rest period following lunch.
 - A trial period may be required to ensure the program is an appropriate fit for the child's developmental needs and group setting.
-

Early Childhood Program Guides

Families are encouraged to refer to the Program Guides specific to their child's level and classroom community for detailed information about curriculum, daily schedules, and expectations within each Early Childhood program.

For safety and developmental appropriateness, field trips are not conducted within the Early Childhood programs. Additionally, children in Early Childhood communities do not handle live animals as part of the program.

Program Guide for the Youngest Children's Communities

Program Guide for the Children's House

The Elementary

Teaching Faculty

Director of Elementary Programs Rozita Nasirikhajani

RozitaN@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (682)351-9492

EARLY ELEMENTARY COMMUNITIES (Ages 6 - 9; equivalent of K- 2nd grade in a traditional setting)

Windsong

Guide: Brittany Webb

BrittanyW@hfmontessori.org

Phone: (214)592-0885

Arrival and Departure

Elementary Communities (Kindergarten–Grade 2)

Arrival and departure times for the Elementary communities at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are staggered to reduce congestion and to support a calm, focused, and developmentally appropriate start and end to the school day.

McKinney / Plano Campuses

(Monday–Friday; please refer to the school calendar for complete year information)

Classroom	Morning Arrival	End-of-Day Departure
Rain song	8:10 – 8:20 a.m.	3:10 – 3:20 p.m.
Heart song .	8:15 – 8:30 a.m	3:10 – 3:20 p.m.
Wind song	8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	3:10 – 3:20 p.m.

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Families participating in carpools are asked to provide the Guide with a list of authorized drivers. Parents involved in carpools are encouraged to meet in advance to establish clear expectations for conduct while children are in the vehicle. When possible, families may find it beneficial to transport their own child during the first few days of school to support a smooth transition.

At dismissal, a staff member will release children directly to their parents or authorized pick-up person. If someone other than a parent or previously authorized individual will be picking up a child, advance written notice must be provided to the Guide. This notice may apply to a single day or to an ongoing arrangement. Individuals who will pick up regularly, such as a nanny or grandparent, must be listed as authorized pick-up contacts in the school's records.

Special after-school plans should be discussed at home rather than during the school day. A brief written note or message should be sent to the Guide to inform them of any changes to the child's normal dismissal routine.

When speaking with your child after school, families are encouraged to show interest in all aspects of the child's day, including social experiences, problem-solving, collaboration, and personal reflections—not solely academic progress.

Attendance

Elementary Program (Kindergarten–Grade 2)

A Montessori Elementary classroom is a dynamic, collaborative learning environment. Each day, children participate in individual work, small-group lessons, and ongoing collaborative projects. These learning experiences often unfold over multiple days and rely on the consistent presence and participation of all students.

Children form work groups, make commitments to one another, and contribute meaningfully to the classroom community. Regular and consistent attendance is essential to a child's academic progress, social development, and sense of responsibility to the group.

Attendance is expected on all days when the school is in session unless the child has an excused absence. Families are asked to notify the school of any absences in advance when possible, or no later than **8:00 a.m.** on the day of an unplanned absence.

Vacations, appointments, and extended absences scheduled during school days disrupt the continuity of learning and the collaborative work of the classroom. Even when absences are unavoidable, children may miss important milestones, group projects, or the culmination of long-term work.

Families are encouraged to schedule trips and family plans during school holidays and staff in-service days as listed on the school calendar. Appointments should be scheduled outside of core work periods whenever possible. Interruptions during the work cycle affect not only the individual child but the classroom community.

The final portion of each school day is dedicated to reflection, care of the environment, and closure of the community's work. Consistent attendance through the full school day supports responsibility, independence, and respect for the shared learning environment.

Remaining for the full school day allows children to complete their responsibilities, participate in end-of-day gatherings, and experience a sense of cohesion and completion within the classroom community. Families are asked to avoid scheduling after-school activities or lessons that require early dismissal and prevent children from participating in this important closing portion of the day.

Excused Absences

Excuse absences include illness, injury, or family emergency. A planned family trip occurring during the school year may be excused on an occasional basis. Families are asked to discuss Planned absences with the child's Guide as soon as possible so that expectations can be clarified and missed responsibilities addressed.

If a child is absent, families must notify the school office by **8:00 a.m.** on the day of the absence. When absences are known in advance, parents should also notify the child's Guide via email.

Unexcused Absences

Absences for reasons other than those listed above are considered unexcused. Families of Elementary students who accumulate more than **seven unexcused absences** during the school year may be asked to meet with school administration to review attendance expectations and support the child's success.

Regardless of classification, absences exceeding **ten total school days** (excused or unexcused) in a school year are considered disruptive to a child's learning and participation in the classroom community.

Late Arrival

Families are strongly encouraged to ensure timely arrival, as the way a child begins the school day significantly affects focus, engagement, and emotional regulation. Children arriving after their designated arrival time must report to the main office with a parent before proceeding to the classroom.

Late Pick-Up Fees (Extended-Day Program)

The Extended-Day Program concludes promptly at **5:30 p.m.** Timely pick-up is essential to ensure the safety of children and to respect staff responsibilities.

If a child is not picked up by **5:30 p.m.**, the following late pick-up fees will apply:

- **\$15 for the first 5 minutes**, or any portion thereof
- **\$5 for each additional minute** thereafter

Late pick-up fees are charged per child and are billed to the family's account. Repeated late pick-ups may result in administrative review and could affect continued enrollment in the Extended-Day Program.

In the event of a late pick-up, parents and authorized pick-up people will be contacted until communication is established. Families arriving after 5:30 p.m. must report to the main office to retrieve their child.

Programs and Services – Elementary Level

Kindergarten through Grade 2

The programs and services available to students enrolled in the Elementary level at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are outlined below.

Early Arrival (Elementary)

Early Arrival care is available to Elementary students from **7:30 a.m. to 8:15 a.m.** in designated supervised areas on campus. Early Arrival provides a calm and structured transition into the school day.

Families interested in Early Arrival should contact the school's main office for information regarding availability, enrollment, and applicable fees.

Extended-Day Program (After School)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School offers an Extended-Day Program for Elementary students from **3:10 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday** (please refer to the school calendar for specific dates).

The Extended-Day Program provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities, which may include:

- Indoor and outdoor games
- Arts and crafts
- Physical movement and recreational activities
- Practical life activities, such as simple cooking projects
- Soccer
- Music/Piano
- Spanish/Farsi/Hendi/Arabic

For safety and developmental appropriateness, field trips are not part of the Elementary Extended-Day Program. Children do not handle live animals during the program.

Activities are demonstrated and supervised by Extended-Day staff. Children are encouraged to choose activities independently and work individually or in small groups. Seasonal outdoor activities, such as supervised water play using sprinklers and water-play equipment (no pools), may be offered toward the end of the school year.

Pick-Up Procedures for Extended-Day Program

There is no set pick-up time during the Extended-Day Program; however, all children must be picked up **no later than 6:00 p.m.** Families are asked to complete pick-up within **5–10 minutes** to support smooth transitions and supervision.

Brief questions may be addressed at pick-up. Longer conversations, concerns, or requests should be scheduled separately with the Extended-Day staff or school administration.

Attendance and Sign-Out Procedures

The Extended-Day Program maintains daily attendance records. Children are signed upon arrival to the program. Parents or authorized pick-up people are required to **sign children out** at pick-up each day using the designated sign-in/sign-out system.

Accurate sign-out is essential and is used during emergency procedures and evacuation drills to ensure that all children are safely accounted for.

Community Expectations

In keeping with the culture and values of Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, the Extended-Day Program upholds the same expectations for respect, responsibility, independence, and care of the environment as practiced during the school day.

Joy in Motion

Joy in Motion is the movement, physical development, and wellness program at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School. This program supports the healthy growth of the whole child through purposeful movement, physical literacy, and engagement with the natural world.

The Joy in Motion program includes:

- Cultivating healthy development through physical literacy and fundamental movement skills in Early Childhood and Elementary programs
- Structured physical activity and age-appropriate sports experiences for Elementary students
- Opportunities for movement, outdoor exploration, and connection with nature
- Building foundations for balance, coordination, strength, and body awareness in the Children's House communities
- Promoting health and wellness practices that support students, staff, and families

At the Elementary level, each classroom participates in at least one Joy in Motion session per week. Additional opportunities for physical enrichment may be offered through after-school activities or special programs, as available.

Music Program

In addition to music experiences integrated into classroom life, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School may offer on-site music lessons for interested families, subject to availability. Information regarding enrollment, instructors, lesson schedules, and associated fees is available through the school office.

Music lessons are arranged directly between families and the music instructors. Participation is optional and intended to enrich the child's overall educational experience.

Elementary Read-Aloud Book Club

The **Elementary Read-Aloud Book Club** is designed to support literacy development by providing families with access to a curated collection of high-quality books suitable for reading aloud at home. Participation in the program is optional.

Many of the selected books include vocabulary and themes that may extend beyond a child's independent reading level but are well within their listening comprehension. Reading aloud and discussing books together helps children expand language, deepen understanding, and build strong connections between ideas and lived experience.

Reading aloud with your child helps to:

- Strengthening listening and comprehension skills
- Expand vocabulary and language development
- Encourage meaningful discussions about characters, settings, and story events
- Build knowledge across a wide range of topics
- Explore social, emotional, and moral themes
- Foster motivation and confidence as independent readers
- Help children discover favorite authors and styles of writing
- Strengthening family connections through shared experiences
- Cultivate a lifelong love of reading

Information regarding enrollment, book lists, and any applicable fees is available through the school office.

School Policies and Procedures

Start of the School Year – Phase-In Process

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

To support a smooth, developmentally appropriate transition into the new school year, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School uses a **phase-in process** rather than bringing all students back on the same day.

Returning students who are continuing within their existing Elementary community typically begin first, followed by students transitioning into the community, with new students starting last. This intentional approach allows classroom routines to be re-established, supports continuity of learning, and encourages leadership, responsibility, and mentorship among returning students.

For students who are new to Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School or transitioning into a new classroom community, **pre-visit sessions** are scheduled prior to the first full day of school. These visits allow children to become familiar with the Guide, environment, expectations, and daily rhythm, reducing anxiety and supporting confidence and independence. Families will receive detailed information about pre-visits, including timing and expectations, from their child's Guide before the start of the school year.

This phase-in process aligns with Montessori principles of respect for the individual child and supports TAAPS expectations for thoughtful student transition and program continuity.

Children and Movement

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Movement is an essential component of learning and development, particularly in the Elementary years. At Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, movement is intentionally integrated into both the indoor and outdoor learning environment to support physical development, concentration, and cognitive growth.

Within the classroom, children are encouraged to move freely and purposefully as they engage in their work. Montessori materials and activities promote coordination, balance, fine-motor control, and gross-motor development. Children choose work, move independently through the environment, collaborate with peers, and care for classroom materials, supporting both physical literacy and executive functioning.

Outdoor activity is a daily and essential part of the Elementary program. Children participate in outdoor play and movement experiences for **a minimum of 30 minutes**, and longer when attending a full school day. Outdoor environments provide opportunities for running, climbing, balancing, cooperative games, and imaginative play. Age-appropriate equipment is available to support strength, coordination, and safe risk-taking.

In addition to independent movement, children also participate in **adult-guided group movement activities**, which may include structured games, stretching, coordination exercises, and team-building activities. These experiences support social development, cooperation, respect for rules, and awareness of self and others.

This integrated approach to movement supports the whole child—physically, socially, emotionally, and academically—and meets TAAPS expectations for health, physical development, and student well-being in Elementary programs.

Physical Education, Health, and Wellness

(TAAPS Compliance – Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School provides a structured and developmentally appropriate approach to physical education, health, and wellness in alignment with TAAPS standards. Physical activity is intentionally incorporated into the daily schedule and instructional program to support students' physical health, emotional well-being, social development, and academic readiness.

Elementary students participate in regular opportunities for physical movement through a combination of classroom-based activity, outdoor play, and guided movement experiences. These activities support the development of strength, coordination, endurance, balance, spatial awareness, and cooperative skills. Instruction emphasizes safe movement practices, respect for one's body, and consideration for others.

Health and wellness concepts are integrated across the curriculum and daily routines, including personal responsibility, self-regulation, care of the environment, nutrition awareness, and healthy habits. Students are encouraged to develop lifelong skills that promote physical well-being, independence, and resilience.

This comprehensive approach ensures that all Elementary students receive consistent opportunities for physical development and wellness education and meet TAAPS requirements for health, physical education, and student well-being within an accredited private school setting.

Clothing and Footwear for Movement

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Movement is an essential part of the Montessori learning environment, both indoors and outdoors. To support safe, confident, and independent movement, children are expected to wear **closed-toe shoes** that are appropriate for running, jumping, climbing, balancing, and participating in physical activities.

Clothing should be **comfortable, well-fitting, and seasonally appropriate**, allowing children to move freely and engage fully in classroom work, outdoor play, and physical education activities. Clothing that restricts movement or presents safety concerns may limit a child's ability to participate fully in movement-based experiences.

Extreme Weather Conditions and Outdoor Movement

(TAAPS Health & Safety Compliance)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School values daily outdoor activity as an essential component of healthy child development. Outdoor play is offered whenever weather conditions allow; however, student health and safety remain the highest priority. Outdoor activity may be modified or moved indoors based on temperature, heat index, wind chill, precipitation, and individual health considerations.

Hot Weather Guidelines

- The school follows heat index guidance from the **National Weather Service**.
- Outdoor activity duration is shortened as temperatures and heat index increase, and frequent water breaks are provided.
- When the temperature or heat index reaches **unsafe levels**, outdoor activity is moved indoors.
- Additional accommodation may be made for children with medical conditions or who are taking medications that affect heat tolerance.

Cold Weather Guidelines

- The school follows wind chill guidance from the **National Weather Service**.
- When temperatures drop below **40°F**, outdoor activity time may be reduced.
- When temperatures or wind chill fall below **30°F**, outdoor activity is held indoors.
- Appropriate cold-weather clothing (such as jackets, hats, and closed-toe shoes) is required for outdoor participation.
- Rain, ice, or other hazardous conditions may further limit or suspend outdoor activity.

These guidelines ensure that children continue to benefit from movement and outdoor play while maintaining a safe, developmentally appropriate environment in all weather conditions. Indoor movement activities are provided when outdoor play is limited to support physical development and energy regulation.

Food and Nutrition

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Introduction

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recognizes the essential role that nutrition plays in children's physical health, cognitive development, emotional regulation, and overall well-being. This policy provides clear guidance regarding foods that support children's growth and learning during the school day and those that are best enjoyed at home.

Depending on a child's program hours and enrollment, the school **may offer breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and/or dinner** in alignment with licensing requirements and the school's nutrition philosophy. **Families always have the option to participate in school-provided meals or to send meals from home**, according to their preference.

Children often require smaller portions, and the quality of food offered is more important than quantity. Families are encouraged to provide foods that are wholesome, minimally processed, and as close to their natural form as possible. When feasible, organic options are encouraged but not required.

We value and welcome foods that reflect a child's cultural and family traditions. Sharing diverse cuisines helps children feel connected to home while fostering curiosity, respect, and openness within the school community. As children grow, they naturally expand their palate and tolerance for new tastes and textures. Our nutrition guidelines are designed to support this developmental process and help children build a positive, respectful relationship with food.

Our goal is to cultivate a school food culture that empowers children to make thoughtful, healthy choices and to understand that **every bite contributes to their well-being**.

Nutrition Philosophy and National Guidelines

(TAAPS Health & Wellness Alignment)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School follows nutrition principles consistent with recommendations from the **U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)** and the **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)**. These principles guide our approach to food and nutrition education, whether meals are **school-provided or brought from home**:

1. **Support healthy dietary patterns at every stage of life.**
Staff members are encouraged to model healthy food choices during the school day.

2. **Honor cultural preferences and family traditions.**
Nutrient-dense foods reflecting cultural identity and family practices are encouraged and respected.
3. **Prioritize nutrient-dense foods and beverages.**
Meals and snacks should emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats.
4. **Limit foods high in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium.**
Highly processed foods, sugary snacks, and sweetened beverages are discouraged during the school day.

These guidelines support children's ability to focus, regulate energy levels, and engage fully in learning.

Meals and Snacks: Family Choice

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School respects family choice and recognizes that children's schedules vary. For **breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and dinner (when applicable)**, families may choose one of the following options:

- **School-provided meals**, when offered based on the child's enrollment and schedule
- **Parent-provided meals from home**

Families may choose to use school-provided meals for some or all meals, or to send meals from home. Participation in school-provided meals is optional. Information regarding meal availability, enrollment procedures, menus, fees (if applicable), and dietary accommodations is communicated by the school.

Lunch and Snack Guidelines

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Whether meals are **provided by the school or sent from home**, lunches and snacks should support sustained energy, concentration, and healthy development throughout the school day.

Foods to Include

Meals and snacks should include a balanced combination of:

- Fresh fruits and vegetables (raw or cooked)
- Whole grains (such as whole-grain bread, rice, pasta, tortillas, or crackers)
- Lean proteins (beans, lentils, eggs, yogurt, cheese, fish, poultry, or tofu)
- Healthy fats (avocado, olive oil, seeds, or nut/seed butters where permitted)
- Water as the primary beverage

Foods should be prepared in a way that supports independence, confidence, and self-care.

Foods to Limit or Avoid

The following items are discouraged during the school day:

- Candy, gum, and chocolate
- Sugary snacks and desserts
- Sweetened beverages (including juice, flavored milk, or soda)
- Highly processed foods high in added sugar, sodium, or artificial ingredients
- Fast food items

Special foods may be permitted for school-approved events or celebrations, as communicated in advance.

Food Allergy and Accommodation Policy

(Health & Safety Compliance)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students, including those with food allergies or dietary restrictions. This policy applies to **both school-provided meals and parent-provided meals.**

Allergy Disclosure and Documentation

Parents must notify the school of any food allergies, sensitivities, or dietary restrictions during enrollment and whenever changes occur. Medical documentation may be required for diagnosed allergies that necessitate accommodation.

Allergy Management and Safety

- The school works collaboratively with families to implement reasonable accommodations.
- Individual allergy management plans may be developed when necessary.
- Food sharing is not permitted.
- Staff members are trained to recognize and respond to allergic reactions in accordance with state guidelines.
-

Accommodation and Special Diets

Dietary needs related to allergies, medical conditions, or cultural and religious practices are respected. While reasonable precautions are taken, families acknowledge that the school cannot guarantee a completely allergen-free environment.

Nut-Aware and Allergen-Restricted Classroom Policy

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

When a student has a documented food allergy requiring additional precautions, a classroom may be designated as **nut-aware** or **allergen-restricted**.

In nut-aware classrooms, families are asked to avoid sending peanut or tree nut products whenever possible. In allergen-restricted classrooms, identified allergens must not be included in meals or snacks. Families are notified in writing when specific restrictions apply.

These practices support safety while fostering empathy, responsibility, and respect within the classroom community.

Supporting a Healthy Relationship with Food at Home

(Family Partnership Guidance)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School encourages families to support children in developing a balanced, respectful, and confident relationship with food, whether meals are school-provided or brought from home.

Families are encouraged to:

- Avoid using food as a reward or punishment
- Respect children's hunger and fullness cues
- Prioritize shared family meals
- Maintain a weight-neutral approach that honors natural body diversity

These practices support lifelong well-being and align with the Montessori philosophy of respect for the individual child.

Final Clarifying Statement

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School provides meals only when a family has elected to participate in the school meal option and when meals are offered for the child's scheduled program hours. **Families always retain the right to provide their child's meals from home.**

Meal Options and Family Choice

(Breakfast, Lunch, Afternoon Snack, and Dinner)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recognizes that children's schedules vary based on enrollment type, program hours, and dismissal time. Depending on the length of the child's school day, the school **may offer meals and snacks**, which can include **breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and dinner**, in alignment with licensing requirements and the school's nutrition philosophy.

Families always retain the **right to choose** how their children's meals are provided.

Family Meal Options

Families may select **either of the following options**, based on availability and preference:

Option 1: School-Provided Meals (When Available)

When meals are offered by the school, they are designed to support children's health, development, and learning. School-provided meals follow the school's nutrition guidelines and emphasize balanced, wholesome, and developmentally appropriate foods.

The specific meals offered (breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and/or dinner) depend on the child's daily schedule and program enrollment. Details regarding menus, meal schedules, fees (if applicable), enrollment procedures, and dietary accommodations are communicated separately by the school.

Participation in school-provided meals is **optional** and based on family choice.

Option 2: Parent-Provided Meals

Families may choose to provide some or all of their child's meals from home, including breakfast, lunch, snacks, and dinner, as applicable to the child's schedule. Parent-provided meals must follow the school's nutrition and allergy guidelines and should be packed in a manner that supports the child's independence.

This option allows families to accommodate personal preferences, cultural traditions, dietary needs, and medical considerations.

Shared Expectations for All Meals

Regardless of whether food is provided by the school or from home:

- Meals are treated as a **community experience** grounded in Montessori principles.
- Children eat together with peers and Guides when applicable.
- Grace, courtesy, independence, and responsibility are emphasized.
- Children are encouraged to listen to their hunger and fullness cues and are never forced to eat.

Families are asked to communicate their meal preferences clearly and in advance so the school can plan appropriately and ensure compliance with health and safety requirements.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School provides meals only when a family has enrolled in the school meal option and when such meals are offered for the child's scheduled program hours.

Ideas for Lunches

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

As outlined in the Food and Nutrition policy, the most supportive lunches are those that reflect a family's cultural and culinary traditions while providing balanced, nourishing foods. Leftovers from family meals often make the easiest and most satisfying lunches and allow children to enjoy familiar foods in a school setting.

For families seeking additional inspiration, lunches may include combinations such as:

- Whole grains with vegetables and protein (e.g., rice, quinoa, pasta, flatbreads)
- Soups, stews, or bean dishes packed in insulated containers
- Fresh fruits and vegetables paired with protein and healthy fats
- Simple, minimally processed meals that are easy for children to manage independently

Families are encouraged to rotate foods and explore variety over time, allowing children to experience different flavors, textures, and cultural cuisines.

Guidelines for Lunch Bags and Containers

(Supporting Independence and Sustainability)

To support independence, organization, and environmental responsibility, families are asked to follow these guidelines when selecting lunch bags and containers:

- Lunch bags should have **short straps** and be free of distracting characters, branding, or logos.
- Food should be packed in **containers so that children can open and close independently.**
- Containers should fit comfortably inside the lunch bag without overcrowding.
- All containers must be **reusable**; please avoid plastic wrap, foil, or disposable packaging.
- Small, insulated containers are encouraged to keep food safely warm or cool as needed.

These practices support Montessori principles of self-care, responsibility, and respect for the environment.

References

U.S. Department of Agriculture & U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020–2025 (9th Edition, December 2020).

Sineriz, Melinda. *How Parents Can Help Kids Develop a Positive Relationship with Food.*
Center for Discovery.

Health Policies

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Required Health Documentation

For the safety and well-being of all students, children may not attend school until all required health forms are completed and submitted through **Magnus Health**, the school's secure health record system.

Required forms may include, but are not limited to:

- Vital Health Record
- Medical Consent Form
- Health Care Professional's Statement
- Immunization Record
- Over-the-Counter Medication Authorization Form
- Prescription Medication Authorization Form (as required)
- Action Plans (such as allergy, seizure, or diabetes plans, when applicable)
- Authorization to Release Information (as required)

These records ensure that the school has accurate and up-to-date information to respond promptly and appropriately to any health needs or emergencies involving a child.

Families are responsible for keeping all contact information current in Magnus Health, including phone numbers where parents or guardians can be reached during the school day.

Immunization Policy

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School strongly encourages families to follow immunization recommendations issued by the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**.

In accordance with **Texas state law**, families have the right to request an exemption from immunizations for medical, conscientious, or religious reasons. To claim an exemption, families must follow procedures established by the **Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)** and submit a valid, state-issued affidavit to the school. Exemption affidavits are valid for two years and must be renewed as required by law.

Families are required to always maintain current immunization or exemption records on file with the school. The school is required to submit updated immunization data to the appropriate state health authorities annually.

Tuberculosis (TB) Screening

Tuberculosis screening requirements are determined by state and local health authorities. At this time, TB testing is **not routinely required** unless indicated by a child's health history, exposure risk, or as directed by public health guidance. The school reserves the right to request TB documentation if circumstances require.

Vision and Hearing Screening

In accordance with the **Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 36 (Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act)**, children are required to receive screening or a professional examination for possible vision and hearing concerns prior to entering certain grade levels.

Vision and hearing screening results are required for all children who are **4 years of age or older as of September 1** of the school year. Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School may offer on-site screenings through a qualified provider. Families who choose to obtain screening elsewhere must submit official results to the school at the time of enrollment and annually by **October 31**.

Staff Health Practices

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is committed to maintaining a healthy school environment. Staff members are expected to take responsibility for maintaining their physical and mental well-being. The school encourages staff to keep vaccinations current in accordance with **CDC guidelines** and to follow health and safety protocols established by the school.

Medication Policy

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

Administration of Medication at School

Whenever possible, families are encouraged to work with their child's healthcare provider to schedule medications outside of school hours.

If it is necessary for a child to receive medication during the school day, parents must complete the appropriate **Prescription Medication Authorization Form** in **Magnus Health** before medication can be administered. School staff will not administer any medication—including over-the-counter medications—without written parental authorization on file.

Medication must **never** be sent to school in a child's lunchbox, backpack, or personal belongings. All medications must be delivered **directly to the school office** by a parent or authorized adult.

All medications must:

- Be in the **original container**
- Be clearly labeled with the child's full name
- Include the medication name, dosage, and administration schedule
- Include the prescribing physician's name (for prescription medications)

Medications will be administered **only as directed on the original label** or as amended in writing by the child's physician.

Over-the-Counter Medications

To administer over-the-counter medications, the following guidelines apply:

- The child must fall within the **age range specified on the medication label**, unless a physician's written instructions indicate otherwise.
 - Parents must provide **detailed, written, and signed instructions** for administration.
 - Medications cannot be administered on an "as needed" basis without explicit written authorization.
 - Parents must provide written notification when a child stops taking a medication.
 - Families must supply any required dosing devices or dispensers.
-

Self-Administration of Medication

Students are not permitted to carry or self-administer medication unless:

- A physician provides written documentation requesting self-administration, **and**
- The school grants written approval

This policy applies to all medications, including inhalers and epinephrine auto-injectors (EpiPens).

Medication on School Trips

For school trips or off-campus activities, prescription and non-prescription medications are managed in the same manner as during the regular school day. Parents must follow all medication policies and ensure required documentation is completed prior to the trip.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School may provide sunscreen and/or a non-DEET insect repellent for outdoor activities. Parents must complete an **Over-the-Counter Medication Authorization Form** in Magnus Health to grant permission for application.

Families who prefer a specific brand of sunscreen or insect repellent may send it to school, clearly labeled with the child's name, along with written instructions for use. Items must be provided in their original containers.

Illness Policy

(Kindergarten through Grade 2)

To protect the health and well-being of all children and staff, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School follows Texas state licensing requirements regarding illness and communicable disease.

Exclusion from School Due to Illness

A child will be isolated, and parents or guardians will be notified and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible if any of the following conditions are present:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities, including outdoor play.
- The illness requires a level of care that exceeds what staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, or supervision of other children.
- The child has one or more of the following symptoms:
 - An oral temperature above **100.0°F**, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of illness.
 - Signs of a possible severe illness, including but not limited to:
 - Lethargy or unusual fatigue
 - Abnormal or labored breathing
 - Uncontrolled diarrhea
 - Two or more episodes of vomiting within a 24-hour period
 - Rash accompanied by fever
 - Mouth sores with drooling

- Significant behavior changes or other symptoms indicate that the child may be seriously ill.
- A healthcare professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation indicating they are no longer contagious.

Children must be **free from symptoms for at least 24 hours**, without the use of fever-reducing or symptom-masking medications, before returning to school.

Daily Health Observations

Children are observed upon arrival each day for visible signs of illness. If a child develops symptoms while at school or has an oral or ear temperature of **100.0°F or higher**, parents will be contacted immediately to arrange prompt pick-up.

If a child has mild cold symptoms that do not interfere with participation or comfort, the child may remain in the classroom, and parents will be informed at pick-up.

Families are asked to closely observe their child in the morning before coming to school and to keep the child home if symptoms of illness are present.

Communicable Illness Reporting

Students who show signs of a communicable illness should remain home until they are no longer contagious and meet the return-to-school criteria outlined in the School's *Return-to-School After Illness* guidelines. If your child is diagnosed with any **reportable communicable disease**, please notify the school office **immediately** at info@hfmontessori.org and inform your child's Guide so we can take appropriate precautions to protect other children and staff. Resources for communicable disease information, including the Texas Department of State Health Services *School Communicable Disease Chart*, are available online: <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/idps-home/school-communicable-disease-chart> [Texas Health Services](#)

Families may also consult the local health department for additional guidance on notifiable conditions in Collin County at **Collin County Health Care Services – Epidemiology & Disease Reporting**: <https://www.collincountytx.gov/Services/Health-Care-Services/epidemiology-and-disease-reporting> [Collin County](#)

In the event of a medical emergency while at school, every reasonable effort will be made to contact parents or guardians before seeking treatment. However, if a child's injury or illness clearly warrants immediate medical attention, school staff may seek emergency care without prior parental contact. In all cases, the school will make every effort to follow parental instructions and documented medical authorization while prioritizing the health and safety of the child.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency at school, every effort will be made to contact parents or guardians immediately. However, the school reserves the right to seek emergency medical treatment when injury or illness clearly requires immediate attention.

The school will make every reasonable effort to follow parental instructions and medical authorization on file while prioritizing the child's safety and well-being.

Illness or Symptom	When Child May Return to School
Fever (100.0°F or higher)	After being fever-free for 24 hours without medication
Vomiting	24 hours after the last episode of vomiting
Diarrhea	24 hours after the last loose stool , unless otherwise directed by a healthcare provider
Persistent cough or sore throat	When symptoms have improved and the child can participate comfortably
Rash with fever	After fever resolves and a healthcare provider confirms the child is not contagious
Mouth sores with drooling	When drooling has stopped and sores are healing
Pink eye (conjunctivitis)	After 24 hours of treatment or with medical clearance
Strep throat	After 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and fever-free
Flu	After 24 hours fever-free without medication and symptoms are improving
COVID-19 or other reportable communicable illness	In accordance with current public health guidance and with medical clearance if required
Lice	After appropriate treatment and no evidence of live lice
Any communicable disease	With written documentation from a healthcare provider confirming the child is no longer contagious

An Inclusive Environment

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment that supports children with a wide range of abilities, learning styles, and developmental needs. The school works proactively to identify and implement appropriate supports so that each child can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Regular internal meetings focused on **Inclusion and Student Support** are held to review student progress and determine individualized strategies or accommodations when needed. These meetings allow the school to thoughtfully coordinate support while maintaining respect for each child's dignity and independence.

If a child requires additional classroom support, a member of the **Student Support Team**— which may include the Inclusion and Support Specialist, school counselor, Level Director, and the child's Guide, will communicate with the family to discuss observations, recommendations, and next steps.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School values strong partnerships with families and believes collaboration is essential to effectively support each child's growth and well-being.

Supportive Pause from Community Life

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recognizes that children develop at different rates and that extended time in a group setting may not always be supportive for every child. When a child is unable to participate safely in the classroom or Extended-Day Program, or is temporarily unable to accept guidance from staff, families may be contacted and asked to pick up their child for the remainder of the day or for a brief period of time.

This supportive pause is not punitive. It is intended to protect the well-being of the child and the community while allowing time for regulation, reflection, and planning. Following such an event, the child's Guide and/or Level Director will partner with the family to develop a plan for supportive re-entry into the learning environment.

Transition to a New Learning Environment

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is committed to serving children with a wide range of temperaments, learning styles, and developmental needs. The school believes deeply in the potential of every child and engages in a thoughtful, collaborative process that includes observation, intervention, and ongoing partnership with families.

In rare circumstances, continued enrollment may no longer be in the best interest of the child or the school community. A transition to a different learning environment may be considered when one or more of the following conditions are present:

- The child’s developmental needs exceed the level of support the school is able to provide without fundamentally altering the nature of the Montessori program.
- Excessive or chronic absences significantly interfere with the child’s learning or the continuity of the classroom community.
- The child’s behavior presents an ongoing risk to the physical or emotional safety of the child, peers, or staff.
- There is a sustained lack of alignment or partnership with the family, including repeated refusal to engage in the intervention process, pursue recommended evaluations, or implement agreed-upon support strategies.

Any decision regarding a transition is made with care, documentation, and respect, and only after reasonable efforts have been made to support the child within the program. The school will work collaboratively with families to ensure transitions are handled thoughtfully and with the child’s best interests at heart.

Step-by-Step Intervention and Documentation Process

(Student Support, Behavior, and Safety)

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School uses a structured, supportive, and developmentally appropriate intervention process when a child experiences ongoing difficulty participating safely and successfully in the classroom or Extended-Day Program. The purpose of this process is to support the child, protect the community, and ensure clear communication and documentation in partnership with families.

Step 1: Observation and Immediate Classroom Supports

The Guide and classroom team begin with careful observation to identify patterns and possible triggers (e.g., transitions, fatigue, social conflict, environmental factors, and unmet needs). Montessori-based strategies are implemented, which may include:

- Adjustments to routine, transitions, or pacing
- Redirection and clear, consistent expectations
- Grace and courtesy lessons and social coaching
- Increased adult proximity and support
- Designated calm space or regulation tools
- Individualized work choices to support engagement

Documentation: The Guide records objective observations, including dates, times, context, and strategies used.

Step 2: Parent Communication and Collaboration

If concerns continue, the Guide contacts the family to share observations and to collaborate on consistent strategies between home and school. The school may request information that helps support the child (sleep routine, medical changes, major transitions, etc.).

Documentation: A brief written summary of concerns and agreed strategies is recorded and maintained in the student's file.

Step 3: Student Support Team Review

If the child continues to struggle despite classroom interventions, the case is brought to the Student Support Team, which may include the Level Director, Inclusion and Support Specialist, and other appropriate staff. The team reviews documentation and designs a coordinated support plan.

Documentation: A written intervention plan is created with specific goals, strategies, responsible staff, and a review timeline.

Step 4: Targeted Intervention Plan and Progress Monitoring

The intervention plan is implemented consistently for a defined period. Progress is monitored using objective measures appropriate to the child's age and needs (frequency, duration, intensity, and/or context of behaviors).

Documentation: Staff maintain ongoing records of interventions, communication, and progress notes. Families receive updates at intervals outlined in the plan.

Step 5: Supportive Pause When Needed

If at any time the child is unable to participate safely or is unable to accept guidance from staff, the school may request that a parent pick up the child for the remainder of the day or a brief period of time. This supportive pause is used to protect the child and the community and to support re-regulation.

Documentation: The school records the incident, parent notification, and re-entry planning steps.

Step 6: Request for Outside Evaluation or Additional Support

If progress is limited, the school may recommend that the family seek guidance from a qualified professional (such as a pediatrician, psychologist, occupational therapist, speech therapist, or behavioral specialist) to better understand the child's needs. Families may also choose to provide an outside support plan or therapist recommendations for coordination, as appropriate.

Documentation: Recommendations and family responses are documented. Any medical or professional documentation provided by the family is maintained confidentially.

Step 7: Review Meeting and Decision on Next Steps

The school and family meet to review progress and determine next steps. Outcomes may include:

- Continuation of the current plan with adjustments
- Additional support or accommodation
- A revised timeline for progress monitoring
- Transition planning if the program is no longer an appropriate match

Documentation: A written meeting summary is provided and filed, including decisions, timelines, and responsibilities.

Step 8: Transition to a New Learning Environment (Rare)

If the child's needs exceed the support the school can reasonably provide without fundamentally altering the nature of the program, or if safety risks persist, a transition may be recommended. When possible, the school works with the family to create a respectful and supportive transition plan.

Documentation: The school maintains records of interventions attempted, timelines, communications, and the basis for the transition decision.

Documentation Standards

All documentation is maintained confidentially and includes objective descriptions rather than subjective judgments. Records may include observation notes, incident reports, intervention plans, meeting summaries, and communication logs. Documentation supports continuity, accountability, and clear partnership with families while protecting student privacy.

Screen Media Policy and Guidelines

Purpose and Social Context

The mission of **Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School** is to guide the intellectual, social, emotional, and character development of each child toward their full and evolving potential. Through intentional collaboration with families and ongoing staff education, we strive to cultivate a school culture that **preserves and protects a healthy childhood**.

In recent years, the widespread presence of screen media and digital technology has significantly shaped family life and childhood experiences. Research and observation indicate that excessive or developmentally inappropriate exposure to media can interfere with children's attention, self-regulation, creativity, social development, and overall well-being.

At Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School, we recognize that technology is a part of modern life; however, we believe it must be introduced **thoughtfully, intentionally, and at developmentally appropriate stages**. Consistent with Montessori philosophy, children are first given ample opportunity to build a strong foundation through **hands-on, concrete, and experiential learning** before engaging with abstract or screen-based tools.

Concepts and skills related to technology are introduced only when children are developmentally ready to benefit from them. When technology is used, it is presented as a **purposeful tool and resource**, rather than as entertainment or passive consumption. This approach ensures that children develop independence, critical thinking, creativity, and meaningful engagement with the world before relying on digital media.

Through these guidelines, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School seeks to partner with families in foster balanced, healthy relationships with technology that support children's long-term development and well-being.

Partnership with Parents

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School values the essential role families play in honoring and extending Montessori principles into a child's home life. Developmentally appropriate experiences support healthy growth most effectively when they are present across all aspects of a child's daily environment, not solely within the classroom.

A strong partnership between home and school—rooted in shared values, mutual respect, and consistency—has a meaningful and lasting impact on a child's educational, social, and emotional development. When home and school environments are aligned, children are better able to benefit fully from a Montessori education. Conversely, a lack of alignment may reduce the effectiveness of the approach and create unnecessary challenges for the child.

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School expects families to understand and support the School's **Screen Media Policy and Guidelines** to the best of their ability as part of this partnership. These guidelines are informed by decades of experience working with children, Montessori principles, and ongoing review of research related to screen media and child development.

The Screen Media Policy and Guidelines are designed to **protect, prepare, inform, and empower** students while also providing families with thoughtful guidance as they navigate parenting in a digital age. The following sections outline the School's general orientation toward media and technology use. Additional guidelines are provided by device type and mode of communication to further support families in making developmentally appropriate choices.

Overview of Screen Media Policy and Guidelines

Protect • Prepare • Inform • Empower

Early Childhood: Protect

During the first six years of life, children are actively forming their foundation for thinking, movement, language, and emotional regulation. Dr. Maria Montessori described this stage as the period of the **“absorbent mind,”** during which children take in their environment fully and without discernment. Because of this, early childhood development is deeply influenced by the quality of experiences available to the child.

Children at this stage require **concrete, sensorial, and real-life experiences** in a three-dimensional world. These experiences support the development of functional independence, concentration, coordination, and social connection. They also form the foundation of personality and intellectual growth.

For this reason, the **Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School environments for children ages birth through six years** are intentionally **screen-free**. Classroom environments are carefully prepared to support learning through movement, hands-on exploration, language, and meaningful human interaction. Children are encouraged to engage fully with materials, peers, and adults in ways that support their natural developmental needs.

Home Guidelines for Early Childhood

In partnership with families, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recommends that young children be **protected from screen media exposure at home**, with the exception of **video communication with family members** (such as grandparents or relatives), and only when a parent or caregiver is actively present and participating in the interaction.

This approach supports healthy development, emotional security, and meaningful relationships while honoring the child's developmental stage.

Home Screen Media Guidelines

For detailed guidance by **type of device** and **mode of communication**, please refer to:

Screen Media Guidelines for Home Use

👉 [HFMONTESSORI.ORG](https://www.hfmontessori.org)

<https://www.hfmontessori.com/screen-media-guidelines>

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School

Screen Media and Technology Guidelines

These guidelines reflect a **developmentally appropriate progression** for media and technology use. Expectations increase gradually as children mature, always emphasizing supervision, purpose, and balance.

Guiding Principles

- **Strongly Discouraged** – Not recommended except for rare, intentional exceptions
- **Limited & Monitored** – Allowed with clear limits, adult supervision, and alignment with family values
- **Coached & Monitored** – Allowed with guidance, feedback, and increasing responsibility

Communication

Type of Media	Early Childhood (0–6)	Early Elementary (K–2)	Upper Elementary	Early Adolescence
Video Chat (e.g., FaceTime)	Limited & Monitored (family only, parent present)	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Individual Text Messaging	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Group Text Messaging	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Social Media (e.g., TikTok, Snapchat)	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged
Video Games with Social Interaction	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Email	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored (school-related only)	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored



Information & Entertainment

Type of Media	Early Childhood (0–6)	Early Elementary (K–2)	Upper Elementary	Early Adolescence
Recorded Music / Audiobooks / Podcasts	Limited & Monitored	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Radio / News Audio	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Television	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Movies	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Internet Browsing (with filters)	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
YouTube	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Video Games	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored

Devices

Device Type	Early Childhood (0–6)	Early Elementary (K–2)	Upper Elementary	Early Adolescence
Gaming Console (Internet Access)	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Cellular Phone (Flip Phone)	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Computer (Creative Productivity Tool)	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Tablet (e.g., iPad)	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Smartphone (e.g., iPhone)	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Smart Watch (e.g., Apple Watch)	Strongly Discouraged	Strongly Discouraged	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
Digital Media Player (e.g., iPod)	Limited & Monitored	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored
eReader (e.g., Kindle Paperwhite)	Limited & Monitored	Limited & Monitored	Coached & Monitored	Coached & Monitored

Notes on Implementation

- These guidelines apply **both at school and in partnership with families at home**.
- Technology is introduced as a **tool for learning and creation**, not for passive consumption.
- Screen use at school is **intentional, minimal, and supervised**, and many classrooms remain screen-free.
- Families are encouraged to adapt these guidelines in alignment with their values while honoring developmental readiness.

Elementary: Protect and Prepare

(Ages 6–12)

Between the ages of six and twelve, children experience significant growth in imagination, reasoning, and the ability to abstract ideas from the concrete experiences of early childhood. During this stage, which Dr. Maria Montessori described as the development of the “**reasoning mind**,” children continue to rely on rich, varied, real-world experiences to support intellectual, social, and emotional growth.

At **Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School**, technology is introduced with great care and intention. In the **Early Elementary years (Kindergarten–Grade 2)**, children are **not exposed to screen media or digital technology** as part of the classroom program. Learning is grounded in hands-on materials, collaboration, movement, outdoor exploration, and direct human interaction.

As children mature, limited use of technology may be introduced **only as a purposeful tool for productivity**, such as research, writing, or creative projects, and only after children have demonstrated readiness and responsibility. Technology is never used as entertainment or a replacement for experiential learning.

Home Guidelines for Elementary Families

In partnership with families, Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recommends that screen media be introduced at home **thoughtfully, intentionally, and with clear limits**. Parents are encouraged to monitor both the amount and the purpose of screen use and to ensure that media aligns with the child’s developmental needs and the family’s values.

Helpful resources for families include:

- The **American Academy of Pediatrics Family Media Plan**, which supports intentional and values-based media use
- **Common Sense Media** and **Kids In Mind**, which provide guidance on selecting high-quality, age-appropriate content [Join Common Sense: Raise amazing kids in a digital world | Common Sense Media](#)

Through this balanced and mindful approach, children are protected from premature or excessive screen exposure while being thoughtfully prepared to engage responsibly with technology as they grow.

Resources

The following resources are provided to support families in making informed, developmentally appropriate decisions regarding screen media and technology use. These materials align with Montessori principles, current research on child development, and the School's Screen Media Policy and Guidelines.

Family & Community Initiatives

Wait Until 8th

A national movement supporting families in delaying smartphone use until at least 8th grade.

Website: <https://www.waituntil8th.org/>

Conversation with Wait Until 8th Leadership

A two-part recorded discussion exploring the impact of early smartphone use and strategies for families:

- **Part 1:** Interview with Brooke Shannon, Executive Director of Wait Until 8th
- **Part 2:** Audience Q&A with Brooke Shannon

Password for access: AMS123

(For internal educational use)

Research-Based Organizations

Children's Screen Time Action Network – Resource Library

A comprehensive collection of articles, research, and tools focused on children's media use and digital well-being.

Website: <https://www.screentimenetwork.org/>

Center for Humane Technology

Talk by **Max Stossel**, Head of Education, offering insights and practical guidance for families navigating technology use.

Website: <https://humanetech.com/parents-students/>

Concord Promise

Information and resources focused on delaying smartphone adoption and exploring alternative methods of communication for children.

Website: <https://www.concordpromise.org/why-delay>

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

The American Academy of Pediatrics provides evidence-based guidance on media use and child development. The following publications are recommended:

- **Media and Young Minds – Policy Statement**
- **Media Use in School-Aged Children and Adolescents – Policy Statement**
- **Children, Adolescents, and Digital Media – Technical Report**

Website: <https://www.aap.org/>

Safety Policies

Campus Security

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School prioritizes the safety and security of all students, staff, and families. Except during designated arrival and departure times, **campus perimeter gates and entry points remain locked.**

During school hours, parents, guardians, and visitors must **request access through the main office** and follow established sign-in procedures before entering the campus. Visitor access is monitored to ensure that all individuals on campus are authorized and accounted for.

During the instructional day, **school facilities and grounds are used exclusively for school-related activities** to maintain a secure and focused learning environment.

Gang-Free School Zones

All Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School campuses are located within **Gang-Free School Zones**, as defined by **Texas law**. In accordance with **House Bill 2086** and **Texas Human Resources Code, Chapter 42, Section 42.064**, information regarding Gang-Free School Zones is required to be shared with families of children enrolled in licensed childcare and educational programs.

Gang-Free Zone information is posted visibly on campus and is available to parents or guardians upon request.

Emergency, Fire, and Severe Weather Safety

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School maintains a comprehensive **Emergency Preparedness Plan** designed to protect students and staff in the event of emergencies, including fire, severe weather, or other safety incidents.

The school conducts **regular emergency drills**, including fire evacuation drills and severe weather sheltering procedures, in compliance with state regulations. These drills help ensure that students and staff are familiar with safety procedures and can respond calmly and effectively.

The Emergency Preparedness Plan includes:

- Evacuation routes and designated relocation sites
- Severe weather shelter locations
- Emergency contact procedures

Emergency plans and related information are available to families through the school's communication platforms or upon request.

Reporting Suspected Abuse and/or Neglect

All staff members at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are **mandatory reporters** and are legally required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with **Texas law**.

Reports are made confidentially to the appropriate authorities and are **not subject to public disclosure** under the Texas Open Records Act. Texas law provides immunity from civil or criminal liability for individuals who make reports in good faith, even if the report is later determined to be unfounded. The identity of individuals who report suspected abuse or neglect is kept confidential as required by law.

To further ensure child safety, **background checks are conducted on all staff members prior to employment** and in accordance with state licensing requirements.

All staff members at **Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School** are required to complete a minimum of **three (3) hours of annual training** on the prevention, recognition, response, and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. This training includes identifying warning signs, understanding reporting obligations, and learning prevention strategies. The school provides this specialized training to ensure staff are prepared to act promptly and appropriately.

In addition, the school offers **family engagement opportunities**, such as parent education workshops and guidance sessions, to support healthy relationships, positive discipline practices, and a nurturing environment for children.

Texas law states:

“Any person having cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been or may be adversely affected by abuse or neglect shall report to any local or state law enforcement agency, and in addition, reports shall be made to (1) the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services; or (2) the agency designated by the court to be responsible for the protection of children.”

This legal responsibility applies to all individuals, including school staff and community members.

Family Support and Community Resources

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recognizes that families may experience challenges related to stress, crisis, or difficult circumstances. When concerns arise related to abuse, neglect, or family hardship, the school seeks to support families in a respectful, confidential, and compassionate manner.

Support may include:

- Guidance and consultation with the school's administrative team
- Referral to a school-affiliated counselor, when available
- Connection to appropriate community-based professionals and services

Families may be referred to **local psychologists, therapists, counselors, parent coaches, and community support organizations** within Collin County and surrounding areas. Referrals are provided as resources and do not replace mandated reporting responsibilities.

Families who feel they are experiencing a crisis are encouraged to speak with their child's Guide or a school administrator. The school will offer guidance and support in identifying appropriate next steps and connecting families with resources within the community.

Child Injury at School

All staff members at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are **certified in Basic CPR and First Aid**.

- If a child sustains a **minor injury** that does not involve the head, neck, or hands, staff will administer first aid and provide comfort. Parents will be informed of any visible minor injury.

- If a minor injury involves the **head, neck, or hands**, staff will administer appropriate first aid and contact the parent as soon as possible.
- In the case of a **major injury** (including but not limited to injuries requiring stitches, loss of consciousness, suspected fractures, or other serious conditions), parents will be contacted **immediately**.

An **Incident Report** will be completed and documented in **Magnus Health** for all injuries, regardless of severity.

Medical Emergencies

If an injury or illness is deemed **life-threatening**, emergency medical services (EMS) will be called immediately to transport the child to the nearest emergency facility. Parents will be contacted without delay. If a parent cannot be reached, individuals listed on the child's emergency contact list will be notified. If no emergency contact can be reached, the child's physician will be contacted to determine appropriate next steps.

The health, safety, and well-being of each child remain the school's highest priority at all times.

Custody and Court Order Clarification

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School recognizes that family custody arrangements may vary. The school will comply with **court orders, custody agreements, and legal documents** as they are written and legally enforceable.

Parents or legal guardians are responsible for providing the school with **current, complete, and official copies** of any court orders, custody agreements, restraining orders, or legal documents that affect a child's custody, visitation, or authorized release. Verbal instructions or informal agreements **cannot** be honored without proper legal documentation on file.

In the absence of a court order on record, the school will assume that **both parents/legal guardians have equal rights** regarding access to the child, school records, and authorized pickup, as permitted by law.

The school **cannot mediate custody disputes** or interpret ambiguous legal documents. If there is uncertainty regarding enforcement, the school may seek legal guidance and will act in a manner that prioritizes the child's safety and comply with applicable laws.

If a parent believes that releasing a child to another individual would violate a court order or place the child at risk, the parent must notify the school **in writing** and provide appropriate legal documentation immediately.

The school reserves the right to **delay release of a child** if there is a reasonable concern regarding the validity or enforcement of custody documentation until clarification is received from appropriate authorities.

School Closure Policy for Inclement Weather

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School prioritizes the safety of students, families, and staff during inclement weather or emergency conditions. Decisions regarding **school closures, delayed openings, or early dismissals** are made by the school after careful consideration of local conditions and guidance from **McKinney Independent School District (MISD)** and **Plano Independent School District (PISD)**, as well as local authorities.

When a closure or schedule adjustment is necessary, the school will notify families through the following communication channels:

- The school website
- The parent communication portal
- Email notifications

In situations requiring immediate action, such as early **release**, families will also receive a **direct phone call or automated voice notification**.

Families are encouraged to monitor announcements from **McKinney ISD and Plano ISD**, along with local television, radio, and trusted online news sources, during severe weather events. While Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School considers local district decisions, the school reserves the right to make independent determinations based on campus-specific conditions.

Admissions, Acceptance, and Placement Policy

Enrollment and Re-Enrollment

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School

Admissions and placement procedures at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are administered by the school's administration in accordance with the School's Enrollment Policy. Families seeking initial enrollment should refer to the procedures outlined in that policy.

Student **re-enrollment occurs annually**. Re-enrollment contracts are issued each year and must be returned by the stated deadline. Re-enrollment contracts are offered **by program level**, not by individual classroom, and do not guarantee a specific classroom placement.

If a family does not submit a complete re-enrollment contract by the stated deadline, the contract will expire and the space may be offered to qualified applicants on the waitlist. Extensions are not guaranteed. Families who wish to re-enroll after a contract has expired must contact the school administration. A returning student may be given priority for admission **only if space remains available**.

Transitions Between Levels and Classroom Placement

Multi-age classroom communities are a foundational element of the Montessori approach. Children typically remain in the same learning community for multiple years, allowing them to experience the role of **youngest learner, developing participant, and older leader** within the group.

Guides and Directors **carefully observe each child for indications that they are entering the next plane of developmental** signal that the child may benefit from a new and different prepared environment. These observations include social-emotional growth, independence, concentration, abstract reasoning, leadership readiness, and overall developmental maturity.

Unlike traditional education models that rely primarily on age or grade-level promotion, placement decisions at Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School are guided by **Dr. Maria Montessori's plans of development**, the child's readiness, and the learning environments designed to support each stage of development.

Placement and transition decisions are made thoughtfully by the school in partnership with Guides and families and are designed to support the child's long-term development and well-being.

Elementary Program Scope and Transition Beyond Grade 2

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School currently offers a Montessori Elementary program serving students from **Kindergarten through Grade 2**. Upon completion of Grade 2, families may choose to transition their child to a **public or private school** that best meets their educational goals. The school will support families during this transition by providing appropriate records, documentation, and guidance.

The school is actively evaluating the potential **future expansion of its Elementary program to include Upper Elementary levels**. Any decision regarding expansion will be made with careful consideration of program readiness, staffing, facilities, and accreditation requirements. Families will be informed in advance should additional Elementary levels become available.

Commitment to Thoughtful Placement

Happy Flower Montessori Elementary School is committed to placing children in environments where they can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Placement decisions are made with professional judgment, careful observation, and respect for each child's unique developmental journey while preserving the integrity of the Montessori philosophy.

Program Continuum and Transitions

Youngest Children's Community (Infant & Toddler)

Ages 6 weeks – 3 years

The **Youngest Children's Community (YCC)** serves infants and toddlers from **6 weeks through 3 years of age**, supporting children during a critical period of physical, emotional, and social development. For many children, entry into YCC is their first experience in a group learning environment.

Children may enter the program at various ages within this range, depending on space availability and developmental readiness. While enrollment may begin as early as 6 weeks, the **ideal age for entry into the toddler-level community** is around **18 months**, when children typically demonstrate increasing independence and readiness for group participation.

Children transitioning into the toddler environment must be **confident, independent walkers** to ensure safety and meaningful engagement within the prepared environment. The YCC emphasizes nurturing relationships, predictable routines, movement, language development, and hands-on exploration through developmentally appropriate Montessori practices.

As children approach **3 years of age**, they are prepared for transition into the **Children's House** based on age, developmental readiness, and space availability.

Children's House (Primary Program)

PreK3 – PreK4 | Ages approximately 3–5

The **Children's House** is a mixed-age Montessori Primary environment designed to support independence, concentration, social development, and foundational academic skills. For some children, this is their first formal school experience.

Children entering Children's House must demonstrate **toileting independence (Link)** as outlined in this handbook, supporting their dignity, confidence, and full participation in the classroom community.

For children transitioning from the Youngest Children's Community, movement into Children's House may occur **mid-year** when developmentally appropriate. These mid-year transitions respond to a child's rapidly changing needs and are carefully planned to allow for a gradual and supported adjustment.

Children who enter Children’s House **before the age of three** often benefit from an **additional year** in the Primary community. This extended time allows for deeper development of independence, leadership skills, literacy and mathematics, and engagement with more advanced Montessori materials.

Full-Day Readiness Transition

A second transition during a child’s time in Children’s House may occur when a child who was previously napping demonstrates readiness to remain in the classroom for the **full school day**. This decision is guided by observation of the child’s stamina, emotional regulation, and engagement and is implemented thoughtfully to support success.

Early Elementary

Kindergarten – Second Grade | Ages approximately 5–8

Children typically enter **Early Elementary** at the beginning of the school year when they demonstrate readiness for the next developmental stage, generally around **ages five to six**. The Early Elementary program continues through **Second Grade**.

The transition to Early Elementary ideally occurs after a child has completed the **full Children’s House cycle**, allowing the child time to mature into leadership roles, develop initiative, and build strong academic and social foundations.

Dr. Maria Montessori identified this transition as the passage from the **First Plane of Development** to the **Second Plane of Development**, marked by the emergence of the **reasoning mind**. When determining readiness, Guides and administrators place primary emphasis on **social and emotional development**, along with indicators of intellectual maturity.

Readiness indicators may include, but are not limited to:

- Increased interest in collaborative work with peers
- The ability to sustain concentration for longer periods
- A growing sense of responsibility and moral awareness
- Curiosity expressed through questions beginning with *why* and *how*
- Emerging abstract thinking built upon earlier concrete experiences

The Elementary environment emphasizes hands-on learning, critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and social responsibility. Academic instruction, assessment, and student placement are **documented by grade level** to ensure alignment with **TAAPS standards**, while preserving the benefits of Montessori multi-age learning.

Developmentally Guided Placement and Continuity

Across all levels, **Guides and Directors carefully observe each child** for indications that they are entering a new developmental stage a signal that the child may benefit from a new and different prepared environment. Placement decisions consider social-emotional development, independence, concentration, readiness for increased responsibility, and overall well-being. Families are included as partners in this process to ensure continuity and confidence for the child.

Happy Flower Montessori School's program is **continuous and contiguous from age 3 through Second Grade**. Upon completion of Second Grade, families may choose to transition their child to a public or private school. The School supports families during this transition by providing appropriate records, documentation, and guidance.

The School is also actively evaluating the **future expansion of its Elementary program to include Upper Elementary levels**. Any expansion decisions will be communicated to families in advance and will be based on program readiness, staffing, facilities, and accreditation considerations.

Commitment to the Whole Child

Happy Flower Montessori School is committed to supporting each child's **academic, social, emotional, and physical development** through thoughtfully prepared environments, professional observation, and strong partnerships with families. Each transition is approached with care to ensure the child's continued growth, confidence, and love of learning.

The Parents' Role in Transitions

A strong partnership between families and the School is essential in supporting a child's successful transition to the next level of programming. As a child approaches a transition year, Happy Flower Montessori School invites parents to **observe classrooms at the next level** and attend informational meetings or presentations about the program.

These opportunities are designed to help families deepen their understanding of Montessori philosophy and to learn how each classroom environment is intentionally prepared to align with the child's evolving developmental needs. Ongoing communication between parents and the School helps ensure consistency and confidence during times of transition.

The Placement Process

Montessori education is **child-centered and community-centered**, rather than adult-centered. For this reason, classroom placement at Happy Flower Montessori School is a **multi-dimensional process** that considers the needs of both the individual child and the classroom community as a whole.

Placement decisions are guided by careful observation and professional judgment. Rather than focusing on assignment to a specific Guide, the School seeks to honor the **complementary needs, strengths, and**

dynamics of each child and each learning community. Administrators work to maintain balanced communities that support social, emotional, and academic development for all children.

Because community balance is essential to the success of the Montessori environment, **requests for specific classrooms or Guides cannot be accommodated**. Families who wish to share information they believe may be relevant to the placement process are encouraged to submit this information **in writing** to the appropriate administrator or level director for consideration.

Placement Changes

Classroom placement changes are **rare** and considered only under serious and extenuating circumstances. Once a child has been placed into a classroom community, changes will be made only if there is a shared agreement among the Guide(s), parent(s), and administration that such a change is in the **best interest of the child**.

Delaying a Start Date

If a family has signed an enrollment or re-enrollment contract but is not ready for their child to begin attending school due to personal reasons, the family may elect to **pay tuition to hold the child's space** until the child is ready to attend regularly.

A space held in this manner is reserved exclusively for the enrolled child and **may not be used for drop-in or occasional care**.

Tuition Assistance and Education Savings Accounts (ESA)

Education Savings Accounts (ESA) and School Choice Funding

In addition to need-based tuition assistance, families at **Happy Flower Montessori School** may be eligible to use **Education Savings Accounts (ESA)** or other **school choice funding programs** to help cover tuition costs, if available through state or government-sponsored programs.

An **Education Savings Account (ESA)** allows eligible families to receive public education funds in a controlled account that may be used for approved educational expenses, including **private school tuition**, curriculum, and related services, subject to program guidelines.

ESA programs are administered by **state or government agencies**, not by the School. Program availability, eligibility requirements, and approved expenses are determined by the administering authority and may change over time.

Using ESA or Voucher Funds at Happy Flower Montessori School

If Happy Flower Montessori School is approved as a participating school under an ESA or voucher program, families may apply eligible ESA funds toward tuition, subject to the following:

- ESA funds are applied **only to eligible tuition and approved fees**
- Families are responsible for any tuition balance **not covered** by ESA funding
- ESA participation does **not automatically include financial aid** from the School
- ESA funding and School-based tuition assistance (BBFA) are **separate processes**

Families may apply for **both**:

- **School-based tuition assistance** (via BBFA), *and*
- **ESA or voucher funding**, if eligible

Awards from different sources may be coordinated but **cannot exceed total tuition costs**.

How Parents Apply for ESA Funding

Families interested in using ESA or voucher funding should follow these steps:

1. **Confirm Program Availability and Eligibility**
Families should review current ESA or school choice programs offered in Texas and determine eligibility based on residency, student status, and program requirements.
 2. **Apply Directly Through the State or Administering Agency**
ESA applications are submitted **directly to the administering authority**, not to Happy Flower Montessori School.
 3. **Select Happy Flower Montessori School (if required)**
Some programs require families to designate the participating school during the application or funding process.
 4. **Coordinate with the School Office**
Once approved, families should notify the School office so tuition billing and payment procedures can be coordinated according to program guidelines.
-

Helpful ESA Resources (Texas)

Families may find the following resources helpful when learning about Education Savings Accounts and school choice options in Texas:

- **Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts – Education Savings Accounts**
<https://comptroller.texas.gov/education/>

- **Texas Education Agency (TEA)**
<https://tea.texas.gov/>
- **General School Choice Information (Texas)**
<https://www.texasparents.org/>

(Note: Program availability and requirements are subject to change. Families are encouraged to verify current information directly with the administering agency.)

Important Clarifications for Families

- ESA and voucher programs are **independent of Happy Flower Montessori School**
 - The School does **not control eligibility decisions or funding amounts**
 - Families are responsible for understanding and complying with program rules
 - Failure to meet ESA program requirements may result in loss of funding
 - The School cannot guarantee continued participation in any external funding program
-

School Discretion and Compliance

Happy Flower Montessori School reserves the right to:

- Participate in ESA or voucher programs as permitted by law and accreditation requirements
- Establish internal procedures to ensure compliance with program guidelines
- Modify tuition assistance policies as funding regulations evolve

Families may choose to apply for tuition assistance through the School or use eligible Education Savings Account (ESA) or voucher funding if available. ESA programs are administered by the state, and families apply directly through the appropriate agency. School-based financial aid and ESA funding are separate processes.

Personal Solicitations

While the staff and families of **Happy Flower Montessori School** support and participate in many worthy causes and community initiatives, it is School policy that **personal solicitations are not permitted on school grounds or through school communication channels.**

Personal solicitation is defined as any request for money, donations, signatures, support, or participation for products, services, organizations, groups, or causes **not officially sponsored or approved by the School.** This policy applies to solicitations directed toward families, staff, students, or visitors.

Examples of prohibited solicitations include, but are not limited to:

- Requests for donations or fundraising on behalf of non-profit or charitable organizations
- Petitions or signature-gathering for political, civic, or social causes
- Promotion or endorsement of political candidates or campaigns
- Religious solicitation or proselytizing
- Selling merchandise or services for personal profit or for outside organizations

This policy helps maintain a respectful, inclusive, and distraction-free environment and ensures that families and staff are not placed in uncomfortable or pressured situations.

Requests for School-sponsored fundraising or community initiatives must be reviewed and approved by School administration in advance.

Family Engagement

Parents Association

The **Happy Flower Montessori Parents Association (HFMPA)** exists to foster and strengthen the school community while enriching the educational experience of children and families through meaningful parent involvement and collaboration. The Association supports the School's mission by encouraging connection, communication, and community engagement among families and staff.

The Parents Association hosts a select number of **high-quality, school- and family-centered events** throughout the year and holds regular meetings during the school year. Its annual activities are supported through modest fundraising efforts associated with approved events or merchandise.

In addition, the Parents Association helps coordinate **parent volunteer opportunities**, supporting both whole-school initiatives and classroom-based needs. Families may participate through volunteer service, event support, or committee involvement, based on interest and availability.

School-Wide Events

Happy Flower Montessori School offers a variety of school-wide events designed to strengthen community, encourage parent engagement, and support open communication. Events may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Community Town Hall

This annual meeting provides families with an overview of the "state of the school," including updates from school leadership on program development, operations, and future planning. Time is provided for questions and open discussion.

Coffee with the Director

Held periodically throughout the school year, this informal gathering offers parents the opportunity to connect with the School Director and administrative team to discuss child development, Montessori philosophy, and school-related topics. Level directors or Guides may also participate.

Annual Book Drive

The Annual Book Drive encourages families to donate new or gently used books to support classroom libraries and shared reading spaces. This event promotes literacy, community generosity, and a shared love of reading.

Community Engagement & Special Events

Happy Flower Montessori Families in Nature (HF-FIN)

Families in Nature (FIN) is a school-supported community group that plans activities throughout the year designed to encourage families to **play, learn, explore, and volunteer together in nature**. Activities may include outdoor exploration, service projects, and nature-based learning experiences. Membership is free and open to families with children of all ages.

Outdoor Environment Days

Families and staff are invited to work together during **Outdoor Environment Days**, held at least once each year and sometimes each semester. These days focus on renewing, maintaining, and beautifying school gardens and outdoor learning areas. By working side by side, our community cares for the land that supports our children's growth and learning.

Community Music Night

Held during the fall or spring, this family-friendly event brings the community together through live music, food, and shared activities. Children and families enjoy an evening of connection and celebration in a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere.

Fall Festival

Each fall, Happy Flower Montessori School hosts a **Fall Festival** that brings families together for fun, fellowship, and fundraising. Classroom communities may sponsor activities, games, or cultural presentations, creating a vibrant and inclusive celebration for all ages.

Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Held annually or biennially, this special event welcomes grandparents and special family friends to visit the school and learn more about the Montessori philosophy. Guests enjoy observing classroom environments and seeing children engaged in meaningful work.

Spring Celebration & Fundraiser

Each spring, the school community—past and present—comes together for a festive evening in support of the School's mission. This celebration may include dinner, music, community recognition, and fundraising activities such as raffles or auctions.

Family Education

Happy Flower Montessori School believes that ongoing parent education and engagement are essential to supporting each child's development. The School offers a variety of opportunities throughout the year to help families deepen their understanding of Montessori philosophy, child development, and positive parenting practices.

Community and Level-Specific Gatherings

Each year, Guides host several **adult gatherings** for their classroom communities. In addition, **level-wide gatherings** may be offered and are open to families across the school. These gatherings provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to learn more about classroom practices, developmental milestones, and ways to support their child's growth at home.

Dates and details for these gatherings are shared through the school calendar, parent communication platforms, and school newsletters in advance of each event

The Silent Journey and Discovery

The **Silent Journey and Discovery** is a special parent education experience designed to give adult caregivers insight into the child's perspective in a Montessori environment. During this immersive event, participants experience Montessori lessons as children do—through observation, exploration, and hands-on engagement—guided by trained Montessori educators.

By following their own interests and engaging with the materials, participants gain a deeper appreciation for the Montessori approach and leave with increased confidence in their choice of Montessori education for their child.

Positive Discipline Workshop

Happy Flower Montessori School offers **Positive Discipline workshops** for parents, grandparents, and caregivers who seek long-term tools to support respectful, responsible, and cooperative behavior in children.

Positive Discipline is based on **Adlerian theory**, an encouragement-based model that emphasizes kindness and firmness. This approach helps adults understand the underlying reasons for children's behavior and supports healthy emotional development while strengthening family relationships.

This experiential workshop is ideal for caregivers who want to:

- Guide children by teaching skills rather than using punishment
- Balance respect, firmness, and warmth in discipline

- Understand the beliefs and motivations behind behavior
- Learn practical tools for effective family meetings
- Create a home environment that fosters cooperation, communication, connection, accountability, and mutual respect

Communication

Open, timely, and respectful communication is essential to building trust and strong partnerships between home and school. While written communication is important, the most meaningful relationships are built through **in-person connection**. Families are strongly encouraged to participate in the following opportunities throughout the year:

- Classroom adult gatherings and parent education events
- Parent–Guide conferences
- School-wide coffees, meetings, and community events
- Community service days and family engagement activities

These gatherings provide valuable context for families, Guides, and administrators to understand one another, ask questions, and work together in support of each child's growth and development.

Guides work directly with children throughout the school day and are not available to check email or take phone calls during instructional hours. Guides will make every effort to respond to emails and phone messages **within one business day**.

Lines of Communication

To ensure clear, respectful, and effective communication, Happy Flower Montessori School follows defined lines of communication regarding a child's school experience.

Parent to Guide

Parents are encouraged to communicate **directly with their child's Guide** regarding questions, observations, or concerns related to their child. Guides work exclusively with children during school hours and are not available for parent communication during that time. All emails or messages to Guides will be responded to within one business day.

If an urgent matter arises during the school day, families should contact the **school office** directly.

Working directly with the Guide in a spirit of collaboration is the most effective way to resolve concerns and build a strong partnership between home and school. Discussing concerns with

others before speaking with the Guide may feel tempting, but it is not in the best interest of the child, the classroom community, or the Guide.

Parents are their child's primary advocates, and the school shares that role. Each brings valuable perspective regarding what is in the child's best interest. Guides' training and experience allow them to observe patterns over time and respond developmentally. Our goal is to work together—on the same side—to support the child's well-being and success.

Parent to Level Director

Parents may contact the **Level Director or Program Coordinator** regarding matters such as classroom observations, program transitions, referrals to specialists, or level-wide programming and events.

Concerns related to classroom experiences should first be addressed with the Guide, following the communication process outlined above.

Parent and/or Guide to Level Director

At times, either the parent or the Guide may feel that an additional perspective would be helpful. In these situations, a meeting may be arranged that includes the parent, Guide, and Level Director. The School expects that the parent and Guide have made a genuine effort to work collaboratively before involving the Level Director.

When outside specialists—such as speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, psychologists, tutors, or other professionals—are working with a child, the School requests that relevant written reports be shared with the Level Director. When appropriate, the Level Director may also participate in conferences to support coordinated care and consistency.

Parent to School Administration

If a concern cannot be resolved through collaboration among the parent, Guide, and Level Director, the matter may be referred to **School Administration**. This step may be initiated by the parent, Guide, or Level Director and is intended to ensure thoughtful resolution in the best interest of the child and the school community.

Contacting Your Child's Guide (Teacher)

Happy Flower Montessori School values open, respectful, and timely communication between families and Guides in support of each child's growth and well-being. We use a variety of communication methods to stay connected with families, including phone calls, email, newsletters, written notes, conferences, and parent gatherings. Each Guide will share their preferred method of communication with families at the beginning of the school year.

Because Guides work directly with children throughout the school day, they are not available to take phone calls or engage in extended conversations during instructional hours. Families are asked to direct all **urgent or emergency matters** through the **school office**, which will promptly relay the information to the appropriate staff member.

Formal **Parent–Guide conferences** are scheduled twice each year to discuss your child's development, progress, and goals. Additional conferences may be requested by either the Guide or the parent when needed. Parent gatherings and adult education events are also held throughout the year to foster connection and shared understanding of Montessori practices.

Families are encouraged to inform their child's Guide of any significant changes in the home environment that may affect the child's emotional or behavioral well-being. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in family structure (such as a death, divorce, or separation)
- Relocation or changes in living arrangements
- The arrival of a new sibling
- Extended visits by family members or friends
- Changes in caregivers, babysitters, or carpool arrangements
- Shifts in daily routines
- Fears, anxieties, bad dreams, or emotional concerns

Children often reflect changes at home through their behavior or emotions at school. Sharing this information allows the Guide to respond with understanding, sensitivity, and appropriate support to meet the child's needs.

This partnership between home and school is essential to creating a consistent, nurturing, and responsive environment for every child.

Conferences

Parent–Guide conferences are held **twice each school year**, once in the fall and once in the spring. These conferences provide an opportunity to discuss your child's development, progress, strengths, and goals within the Montessori environment.

Conference sign-ups will be shared in advance through parent gatherings and/or online scheduling. Families are asked to make childcare arrangements so that conferences can remain focused and productive.

If additional concerns arise, **parents or Guides may request extra conferences** at any time to ensure timely support for the child.

Classroom Observations

Happy Flower Montessori School values transparency and partnership with families. Parents are invited to **observe their child's classroom once each semester**. Observation times are scheduled in advance with the Guide, who will communicate the preferred scheduling method.

- Observations for the **Youngest Children's Community** take place from a designated observation area or viewing space.
- Observations for **Primary (Children's House) and Elementary** levels take place within the classroom.

On the day of observation, parents are asked to **sign in at the school office**, where a staff member will assist with access to the classroom.

Each observation is scheduled for approximately **30 minutes**. While brief, this time offers valuable insight into the classroom community, learning environment, and daily rhythm.

To ensure a respectful and meaningful experience for all children, families are asked to observe the following guidelines:

- Turn off or silence cell phones before entering the classroom
 - Observe quietly and refrain from taking photographs or videos
 - Bring a pen and paper to note questions or reflections for later discussion
 - A brief greeting to your child is appropriate
 - If a child approaches you, a simple greeting or gentle explanation that you are observing is sufficient
 - Observe the **entire classroom community**, not only your child
 - Recognize that your presence may affect your child's behavior
 - If your child becomes distressed, it may be appropriate to conclude the observation early
-

Visiting the Classroom

We recognize and support parents' desire to see and spend time with their children. However, frequent or unscheduled visits can unintentionally disrupt rest periods, naptime routines, or extended work cycles—especially in Montessori environments where concentration is deeply valued.

For this reason, **scheduled observation times are provided each semester**. Additionally, Happy Flower Montessori School maintains an **open-door philosophy**. Parents wishing to visit the campus or classroom outside of scheduled observation times are asked to notify their child's Guide in advance and check in through the school office upon arrival.

This approach ensures that visits are welcoming, respectful, and supportive of the learning environment for all children.

The Weekly Bulletin

Happy Flower Montessori School publishes a **weekly digital bulletin** for families throughout the school year. The bulletin includes important school announcements, upcoming events, classroom updates from Guides, and information related to Montessori education and community life.

The Weekly Bulletin is distributed **electronically to all families each Tuesday afternoon**. Families are encouraged to review the bulletin regularly to stay informed about school activities, deadlines, and opportunities for engagement.

Contacting School Staff (By Topic of Inquiry)

To support clear, efficient communication, Happy Flower Montessori School has designated points of contact based on the nature of your question or request. Families are encouraged to reach out to the appropriate staff member listed below to ensure timely and accurate support.

Admissions & Prospective Family Inquiries

Contact: Naila Bashir

- School tours
- Admissions applications and enrollment questions
- Early Childhood (0–6+) program inquiries
- Elementary (Kindergarten–Second Grade) program inquiries
- Program philosophy and expectations

- Prospective parent education events
 - Student transfers and records requests
 - Employment inquiries (Early Childhood & Elementary)
 - Observations by outside professionals or consultants
-

Academic Programs, School Operations & Administration

Contact: Dr. Rozita Nasirikhajani – School Director

- Academic curriculum (Early Childhood, Primary, Elementary)
 - Social-emotional curriculum and child development
 - Children’s developmental progress
 - School culture, philosophy, and guidance
 - Community care needs
 - Field trips (“Going Out”) protocols
 - Childcare licensing questions
 - Student teaching requests
 - Elementary library
 - Children’s House lending library
 - Read-Aloud Book Club
 - Annual Book Drive
 - Joy in Motion program
 - After-school enrichment programs
 - Elementary summer camp
 - Community parent gatherings and meetings
 - Parent–Guide conferences
-

School Office, Operations & Family Services

Contact: Michelle Ramirez

- Attendance and absence reporting
- Arrival and departure procedures
- Late arrival or early departure requests
- Departure changes without prior notice
- Campus-specific procedures (McKinney / Plano)
- Student medications and health-related issues
- Magnus Health records and immunization documentation
- [MYHFM](#) account support
- Student medical records

- Emergencies and urgent communications
 - Childcare licensing documentation
 - Building and grounds concerns
 - Communications and marketing inquiries
 - The Weekly Bulletin
 - Event and meeting communications
 - Student and class photos
 - Annual Fund donations and gift acknowledgements
 - Tuition payment, billing, and financial questions
 - Fundraising campaigns and in-kind donations
-

Extended Day & Enrichment Programs

Contact: Michelle Ramirez

- Clubhouse / Extended Day enrollment and schedules
 - After-school program questions
 - Shuttle service registration (if applicable)
 - Late pick-up procedures and fees
-

Health & Safety

Contact: Michelle Ramirez (with administrative oversight as needed)

- Student medications
 - Health action plans
 - Immunization compliance
 - Illness and return-to-school clearance
-

Communication Reminder

For questions about a child's **academic, social, or emotional development**, families should first communicate directly with the **child's Guide**, following the school's communication protocol. Administrative staff are available to support and escalate concerns as appropriate.

General Information

Policy of Non-Discrimination

Happy Flower Montessori School is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by applicable law in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs, or any other school-administered programs.

All members of the school community, students, families, and staff—are expected to treat one another with dignity and respect and to contribute to a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for every child.

Concerns regarding discrimination or harassment should be directed at **School Administration**.

Discipline and Guidance

Happy Flower Montessori School uses **Positive Discipline** and developmentally appropriate guidance practices to support children’s social and emotional growth. Staff members receive training in Positive Discipline techniques prior to working with children.

Corporal punishment is **never permitted**. Harsh, humiliating, or punitive discipline practices are strictly prohibited. Guidance is based on respect, consistency, clear limits, and an understanding of child development.

Child Care Licensing

Happy Flower Montessori School’s Early Childhood programs and Extended Day services are licensed by **Texas Child Care Licensing**, a division of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC).

A copy of the **Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers** and the School’s most recent licensing inspection report are available for review in the school office. Licensing standards are also available online.

Texas Child Care Licensing & Safety Resources

- Local Child Care Licensing Office: **(972) 548-4180** (Collin County)
- Texas Abuse and Neglect Hotline: **(800) 252-5400**

- HHSC Child Care Licensing Website:
<https://www.hhs.texas.gov/services/safety/child-care>

Families have specific rights as parents of children enrolled in a licensed childcare program. Parents are encouraged to review **Parent Rights** as outlined by Texas Child Care Licensing.

Policy Updates and Grievances

General school information, upcoming events, and updates are shared through email and posted as needed on the **MYHFM Portal**. Families will be notified of any changes to school operations, policies, or enrollment agreements.

If you have a question or concern regarding policies or procedures outlined in this Parent Handbook, please contact your child's **Guide, Level Director, Child Care Licensing Director, or School Administration**, either in person, by email, or by phone.

School Software Tools

MYHFM Portal

MYHFM Portal is Happy Flower Montessori School's secure, web-based parent communication and information system. It supports communication between school and home and allows families to manage important information efficiently.

Through the MYHFM Portal, families can:

- View important school dates and events
- Update contact information
- Complete and review enrollment contracts
- Access the school directory
- View classroom and school-wide bulletins
- Access **Magnus Health** to complete required health forms
- Update emergency contacts and authorized pick-up persons

Families can log in to the **MYHFM Portal** through the School's website. For assistance with login credentials or technical support, please contact the **school office**.

School Calendar

Happy Flower Montessori School maintains an **online school calendar** accessible through the school's website and the [MYHFM Portal](#). The calendar includes school holidays, professional development days, and school-wide events.

Classroom-level calendars and internal community events are also available through the MYHFM Portal.

Magnus Health

Magnus Health is the security system used by Happy Flower Montessori School to collect and store essential student health information, including:

- Health history and emergency contacts
- Immunization records or exemptions
- Medication authorization forms
- Allergy, asthma, diabetes, and seizure action plans
- Permissions and release forms

All required health documentation must be completed and kept current in Magnus Health for a child to attend school.