

Happy Minds Kids Academy



WELCOME!

We are delighted that you have chosen Happy Minds Kids Academy for your child's early education.

Our goal is to provide a safe, happy, loving and nurturing environment geared to providing a variety of stimulating and enriching activities each day. Our daily programs are based on the High/Scope, and Developmental Philosophies enabling your child to develop socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically to the best of their abilities.

This handbook has been prepared especially for you; the parent of the child enrolled in our program. You will find many of our policies and operating procedures explained here. By reading this handbook you will feel more confident in your family's adjustment into our program. Please keep this handbook for reference throughout the year. Do not hesitate to contact us whenever you have questions.

My staff and I thank you for the opportunity to be in partnership with you in the education and care of your child.

I look forward to getting to know both you and your child and sharing a rewarding preschool experience.

Sincerely,

Fashana Afaz
(Founder/Executive Director)

Happy Minds Kids Academy



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The period of Early Childhood is a happy energetic period of life, filled with great diverse learning powers. It is a period of immense learning potential in the entire human development cycle. Happy Minds Kids Academy's program philosophy is based on this principle and draws its inspiration from the High/Scope Approach and the Developmental Philosophy.

We believe that each child is unique and capable, and our program promotes and enhances children's potential while recognizing and supporting families and their cultures.

The Child's inherent love of learning is encouraged by giving them opportunities to engage in spontaneous, meaningful activities under the guidance of a trained adult. Our classrooms provide a prepared environment where children are free to respond to their natural desire to work and learn. Each child is encouraged to explore and learn through hands-on experiences in an environment that affords them the opportunity to explore, discover, and enjoy the learning process.

Our program provides for optimum social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, and physical growth and development of the child, through developmentally appropriate educational apparatus. In keeping with the High/Scope and Developmental philosophies, our preschool's curriculum encompasses activities in the following areas:

- Social/Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development
- Practical Life
- Sensorial
- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Cultural Science
- Art and Craft
- Music
- Physical Activities

We strongly believe that parents and teachers should work hand-in-hand to make education effective and enriching, and therefore encourage parent involvement in steering children to reach this goal.

Within this framework, we believe that children progress at their own pace and rhythm, according to their fullest individual potential, during the crucial years of development. It is our ultimate goal to ensure that the formative years of childhood are stimulated appropriately to build a strong solid foundation that will carry them successfully, through the rest of their lives.

ADMISSION AND ORIENTATION

ADMISSION POLICY AND PRECEDURE

Happy Minds Kids Academy serves children between the ages of 6 weeks through 6 years of age, and is licensed by California's Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division (CCL). We accept all children regardless of race, sex, creed, color or national origin.

Children with special needs shall be accepted if it is determined that the child can interact positively with the other children in the center, that the child will benefit from the program, and that the staff is able to meet the special needs of the child along with the needs of the other children in a group setting at the center. Each child will be evaluated on an individual basis. We will work with the parents to determine if the child will be successful in our program.

Upon enrollment, CCL requires that parents complete a comprehensive Enrollment Packet to provide our program information necessary to assure your child's safety and appropriate care and education. They include:

- Enrollment Form
- Identification and Emergency Information Card
- Child's Pre-admission History Record
- Physician's Report
- Medical Authorization and Release including Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment.
- Parent's Rights Form
- Parent Directory Checklist
- Parent Contract
- Personal Rights
- Registration Agreement
- Receipt of Parent Handbook
- Child's Social and Family History
- Infant/Toddler Service Plan (if applicable)
- Individual Infant Sleeping Plan (if applicable)
- Toddler Option Statement

It is important that our facility maintains current and accurate records on each child's Emergency Information Form, so that parents can be contacted in the event of an emergency. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO NOTIFY US OF ANY CHANGES within Five (5) days.**

Happy Minds Kids Academy reserves the right to refuse registration to any family, if such enrollment does not adhere to our core values and general expectations or compromises the quality of our program.

ORIENTATION

Parents are required to attend an orientation with the Director. The Director will discuss the philosophy, curriculum, and policies with the parents. Parents and children are invited to tour the center and explore the environment.

It is important that you and your child feel comfortable in our program. With this in mind, every effort will be made to plan a thoughtful and individualized transition process for your family to become part of the 'Happy Minds' family.

REGISTRATION

An initial Non-Registration fee of \$ 150.00 is charged at the time of enrollment of each child. Thereafter an annual Re-registration fee of \$ 100 is charged at the beginning of each school year. All Registration fees are **non-refundable**. Registration and Re-registration fees is an administration fee and does not get applied to monthly tuition.

SECURITY DEPOSIT – INFANT/TODDLER ROOMS

An additional non-refundable security deposit of \$500 will be required in order to secure and register infants in the Infant/Toddler Rooms in the event the official start date is more than 4 months past the date of registration. This security deposit will be applied towards the first month's tuition.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition Rates and Fees are calculated and revised annually based on Regional Market Rates. The current Tuition /Fee Schedule will be provided at the time of Registration.

Your child's tuition and payment schedule will be calculated based on the Program and Schedule selected. Any changes needed in your child's schedule require a written request at least two (2) weeks in advance and require the Director's approval to be effective. Changes in the Schedule will require a new Registration Agreement prepared and signed.

TUITION IS DUE AND PAYABLE IN ADVANCE. Tuition is due on the first (1st) day of each month and is considered late on the 5th day of the month. Tuition may be paid by Cash, Check, Money Order or Credit/Debit Card. All Credit/Debit Card transactions will be subject to a 2.5% Service Charge, All checks and money orders will be made out to 'Happy Minds Kids Academy'.

In the event tuition is not paid in a timely manner, students will not be allowed to attend until payment is paid in full.

Parents will be notified 30 days in advance of any rate change.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

We offer a 5% discount for families with more than one child enrolled at our center. The discount offered is 5% on the lower of the tuition and **is only applicable when paid on the 1st of the month.**

LATE TUITION PAYMENT FEES

Late Payment Fee of \$ 25.00 will be assessed to any late tuition payment. Tuition payment that is five (5) days late could result in termination of services. Balances that remain unpaid after fifteen (15) days may be referred to a collection agency for payment and you will be responsible for any collection costs.

RETURNED CHECKS

Checks returned from the bank will be subject to a \$25.00 service charge. If a check is returned, once informed, you will be expected to pay by cashiers check or money order. Nonpayment of fees may result in termination.

LATE PICK-UP FEES

A late pick-up fee of \$ 15.00 will be assessed for any tardiness up to fifteen minutes and \$1.00 for each minute thereafter. Repeated tardiness may result in the exclusion of your child from the program.

ABSENCE DUE TO VACATION, ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Tuition guarantees your child's place at the center; therefore, no tuition credits or make-up days will be given for any reason. Parents are required to pay tuition each month their child is enrolled at our facility, regardless of the child's attendance. Please notify the Director by phone or by writing as early as possible regarding your child's absence.

TAKING TIME OFF

Happy Minds Kids Academy cannot hold or guarantee a child's space during any time of absence, for whatever reason, unless that time off is paid for.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Withdrawal of your child from our program requires a **thirty (30) day** written notice in advance of the withdrawal date. Tuition must be paid in full through the approved withdrawal date whether your child attends or not. In the event timely notice is not received, the family leaving is responsible for an additional two-week tuition to account for the neglect of notification.

TERMINATION FROM THE PROGRAM

Happy Minds Kids Academy reserves the right to terminate any child from the program if it is deemed in the best interest of the child, center, and safety of other children and staff. In such an event the parents will receive Two (2) weeks written notice before such termination is to take effect. However, in the instance of immediate danger or threat, Happy Minds Kids Academy reserves the right to terminate a student with immediate effect without giving prior notice. In such instances tuition will not be pro-rated or reimbursed.

EXTRA DAY DROP-IN FEE

Drop-In for extra days (Extended/Full/Half) may be scheduled in advance with the Director and are subject to availability of space. Please refer to the current Tuition Schedule for rates.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Your child's schedule may be changed - if space is available - on the 1st of any month with payment of \$25.00 processing fee. Please email the director to inform us of your request to change the schedule.

ADDITIONAL HOURS

In the event additional hours of childcare services are required, extra hours may be scheduled with the prior approval of the Director. Additional hours are \$20.00 (Infants & Toddlers) and \$15.00 (Two's and Up) per hour or any portion thereof.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

Happy Minds Kids Academy provides a variety of quality programs that meet the need of your family and the community:

Following are the program options that are currently offered:

❖ INFANT & TODDLER PROGRAM – (6 weeks – 24 months)

At Happy Minds Kids Academy, we know that every moment with an infant is precious. Therefore, we strive to provide high quality, affordable care to infants, aged from six weeks to two years. Our infant/toddler program is designed to meet the needs of the children at this important sensory motor period of development.

This is done in a caring and affirming atmosphere in which our staff, provide for the development of the infants' social, emotional, cognitive and physical development. At Happy Minds Kids academy, our childcare philosophy is guided by profound respect for each child, and recognition of the importance of building self-esteem in young children.

Our Infant Center adheres to Staff/Child Ratio of 1:4

INFANT NEEDS, SERVICES AND FEEDING PLANS

Parents and Infant Center caregivers develop specific plans for each child in a collaborative manner. The information you provide in the Infant Needs, Services and Feeding Plan included in your enrollment Packet, will assist our staff in determining your child's specific needs and help them collaborate with you to develop a services plan that is customized to your child.

INFANT SAFE SLEEP POLICY & PROCEDURES

At Happy Minds Kids Academy, your baby's safety is our absolute highest priority. We follow strict California Title 22 licensing regulations and American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) guidelines to ensure a safe, secure environment for your infant during naptime. To prevent sleep-related hazards, we provide specialized, state-approved sleeping environments for each child:

- Every infant is provided their own CPSC-approved crib with a firm flat mattress.
- To ensure proper airflow and safety, cribs are kept completely bare. We do not allow loose blankets, pillows, bumper pads, stuffed animals, positioning devices, or toys in the crib.
- Parents are encouraged to provide sleeveless sleep sacks or wearable blankets if extra warmth is needed. Swaddling is not permitted per licensing regulations.
- Sitting devices such as car seats, swings, and bouncers are never used for routine sleeping. If an infant falls asleep in this equipment, our teachers will transfer them to their crib in a timely manner.

INDIVIDUAL INFANT SLEEPING PLAN (LIC 9227)

Prior to starting in our infant room, parents must complete California State Form LIC 9227 (Individual Infant Sleeping Plan) for any child under 12 months of age. This form tracks your baby's unique sleep habits, including their ability to roll over independently. We will update this

form with you regularly as your child reaches new developmental milestones. All infants are placed to sleep flat on their backs. Any variance from this practice requires a signed medical exemption from your pediatrician on the LIC 9227 form.

ACTIVE SUPERVISION & INFANT NAP LOGS

At Happy Minds, we maintain a continuous, rigorous monitoring routine while your baby naps. This includes a 15-minute check, where teachers physically check on sleeping infants every 15 minutes to visually and audibly confirm they are breathing comfortably and sleeping safely. Teachers then document on the Infant Napping Log. This log records your child's precise sleep/wake times, their sleep position, and a confirmation of their breathing status.

❖ **TODDLER PROGRAM – (18 months – 36 months)**

At Happy Minds Kids academy, our Toddler Component is a unique program catering for those students within the age range of 18 months through 36 months. Children in the toddler component have the option of transitioning to the preschool program at the age of 24 months.

Our Toddler Program adheres to Staff/Child Ratio of 1:6

Our specially designed infant care and toddler rooms are places where babies and toddlers feel safe, secure and happy. Rooms are divided into general interest areas that meet an infant's need to move, explore, express and relax. Personal cribs, separate areas for changing and feeding, and our booties policy, which requires that all shoes be covered when entering an infant classroom, ensure clean playing, eating and sleeping spaces.

DIAPERS & WIPES

Parents are responsible for providing disposable diapers and wet wipes for their child. Providing diapers in bulk will make your task easier. We estimate about 8 – 10 diapers per day. Our Infant Center staff will inform you ahead of time when your child is low on their supplies in order to replenish them. \$ 5:00 will be charged for each diaper provided by the center.

LABELING PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please ensure all personal items are properly labeled in adhering with licensing requirements. Infant milk bottles must be prepared at home and provided to the Infant Center staff on a daily basis. Any left-over milk needs to be taken home at the end of the day.

Parents need to provide a clean crib sheet and blanket for your child's use. If necessary, a comfort object for rest-time may be provided. **Your child's crib sheet and blanket should be taken home every Friday and washed and returned to the center the following Monday.**

❖ **PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS (2 years – 5 years)**

TWO'S & YOUNG THREE'S PROGRAM (Rainbow Express, Rainbow Room & Sunshine Room)

The main focus of the Two's Program at Happy Minds Kids Academy is to meet the developmental needs of children of this age, particularly in the areas of independence, sense of order, language expansion, refinement of movement, socialization, and toilet learning. These developmental needs are met with always the ultimate goal in mind of assisting the child to become more and more independent.

POTTY TRAINING

The preschool teachers at Happy Minds Kids Academy are happy to help with your child's transition from diapers to the potty. However, we do feel the need to have a policy concerning this transition due to the amount of time it takes to clean up after an accident. After careful consideration, we have decided that children must wear diapers to school until they have used the potty successfully (pee and poop) for one full week at home and at school (excluding nighttime).

We are happy to take your child to the bathroom every two hours and we will remind him/her to go throughout the day. We want to do everything we possibly can to assist in this process. This is an exciting time for you and your children because they are becoming more independent and learning how to make their own way in the big world. We understand that accidents happen and are to be expected.

For the first month of wearing underwear, please send 5 extra underwear and wipes to school for your child due to the fact that we will need to use them if they have two consecutive accidents in a day. Please keep three full changes of clothes in your child's cubby during this period. If you are experiencing some potty-training issues, please hang in there.

OLDER THREE'S PROGRAM (Star Room)

Our main goal for the child, aged three years old, is to help them learn to work independently; to take care of one's needs and develop a good self image. As preschoolers gain more self-esteem, they may feel ready to take on the world. Our preschool program fosters that confidence by providing activities to help children become problem solvers and lifelong learners.

Through independent exploration, structured activities, and hands-on learning, children will work on early literacy, math, science, and social studies concepts

PRE-KINDERGARTEN/ TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM (4+ years)

In our Pre-K class, your child will be exposed to a wide variety of activities to engage your child and prepare him/her for Kindergarten. Our school readiness curriculum helps build the foundation for lifelong learning. We foster and encourage children's inquiry, curiosity and provide a balance of activities that foster child learning, discovery and teacher guidance.

❖ **SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM – (5 Years – 12 Years)**

At Happy Minds Kids Academy Before and After School Program, we provide a safe and fun environment for children ages 5 through 12. This includes students from TK and up.

Our school age program runs from 7:00AM to 8:00AM and 2:00PM to 5:45PM during the public-school year and 7:00AM to 5:45 during school holidays and summer breaks. The children are provided a snack upon pm arrival and given the opportunity to do homework. Happy Minds staff may provide support in completing their tasks.

During full days, our teachers will provide engaging daily activities for the children including arts and crafts, cooking projects, science experiments, dramatic play, cooperative games and outside play. We encourage children to be independent, foster positive relationships with their peers and teachers and most of all have fun.

NAP TIME

Supervised rest periods are provided for all children under 5 years of age who remain at Happy Minds Kids Academy for six or more hours a day, and for all other children who show a need for a rest time. Please provide a clean sheet & blanket for naptime. You may also bring in a special pillow, or stuffed animals if desired. **Your child's sheet and blanket should be taken home every Friday and washed and returned to the center the following Monday.**

❖ SUMMER CAMP

To provide the children enrolled at Happy Minds Kids a fun and exciting summer, we've created summer camps that are fun and filled with adventure.

Summer Camp schedules are planned in advance and will incorporate fun, arts and craft activities, field trips, special guests and loads and loads of FUN!!

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Happy Minds Kids Academy maintains a healthful environment for children and staff by meeting and/or exceeding required licensing and Orange County Health Department Standards

- Every child must have a Pre-Admission Health evaluation completed and signed by a licensed physician
- Every child must be current with all required immunizations.
- Parents must complete a Pre-admission History Record

For the well-being of all children, we must limit school attendance to well children only. It is important that established procedures be followed in order to protect everyone from the spread of disease.

It is the parents' responsibility to determine if a child can participate fully in the program activities. Some helpful guidelines to follow are:

SYMPTOM:	CHILD MUST REMAIN HOME UNTIL:
Fever of 100 or above	The temperature has returned to normal for at least 24 hours without medication.
Cold/Flu Symptoms	Discharge is no longer draining from the nose, and the cough has subsided
Diarrhea/Vomiting	Loose stools and vomiting have subsided, and the child is clear of all symptoms for 48 hours and has returned to normal eating without stomach upset.
Earache/Sore Throat	Until child has been seen and treated by a physician and/or symptoms subsided.
Red, Watery Eyes	Eyes return to normal, are no longer red and burning or itching.
Rash	The rash disappears or has been diagnosed by a physician as non-communicable.
Diaper Rash	The rash is under control and there are no open sores.
Thrush	The white coating is being treated by a physician .

Conjunctivitis

24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment and until there is no discharge from the eyes.

Teachers will use their discretion when sending a child home. In some instances, you will be asked to keep your child at home until we have written permission from your doctor saying your child is well enough to return to childcare.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Each child enrolled or admitted at Happy Minds Kids Academy must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the CA. Dept. of Health Services. A copy of an updated immunization record must be submitted prior to first day of enrollment. The Physician's Report duly signed by a physician must be submitted within 30 days of the child's first day of attendance. As per California law, the only exemption from immunization is when a physician recommends against immunization based upon medical reasons.

DAILY HEALTH CHECK

Your child's health and well-being is of major importance to us all. Every child's health status will be checked informally upon arrival each day. Children may not be admitted if showing any sign of illness. Should your child become ill while at school, the parent will be notified. Ill children must be picked up within 30 minutes of the parent being notified. An isolation area is provided for temporary care of ill or injured children.

All parents should make alternative arrangements for care in the event that their child becomes ill.

MEDICATION

Whenever possible, it is preferred that a child receives medication at home. In the event this is not possible, the following procedures must be followed in order for your child to receive medication at our facility:

- A current written prescription from the prescribing doctor, detailing the amount, method, and time schedule by which the medication is to be administered, needs to accompany the medication, in its original container. Please get this from your doctor at the same time he/she is writing the pharmacy prescription.
- Regular or on-going medication treatment must have a note signed by the physician requesting this treatment by center staff.
- The parent has completed **Permission to Administer Medication Form** for each day that the child is to receive medication. Staff will record the time, date and dosage of medication as administered.
- Our staff is not authorized to administer over-the-counter Medications, including aspirin, cough medicine, throat lozenges, etc. Exceptions will be made for topical ointments and gels such as diaper cream and oral gels for teething.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

If your child contracts a communicable disease, please notify the school immediately, as we need to post exposure notices. Your child's identity will not be disclosed. Some of the most common infectious diseases are measles, mumps, whooping cough, chicken pox, strep throat, lice and impetigo.

NUTRITION

At Happy Minds our vision is to provide all children with a foundation for developing a positive attitude toward food, understanding the importance of good nutrition, forming healthy eating habits, and the importance of daily exercise.

Nutritious snacks are provided in the morning and mid-afternoon for students in the Toddler Rooms and up. Children are required to bring lunch from home. Refrigeration and Microwaving facilities are available if needed.

Our teachers introduce nutritional and fun cooking activities into the program that both enhances the curriculum and assists the children in making healthy choices in their daily lives.

FOOD PROGRAM

Happy Minds Kids Academy participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program, served under the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program, which will provide free snacks and free milk to all our students. Our school has a copy of the policy, which may be reviewed by any interested party on request. Meal applications will be sent to all households with a letter informing parents or guardians of the availability of free snacks and free milk. Households may submit an application at any time during the school year.

FOOD ALLERGY AWARENESS POLICY

We strive to provide a safe environment at our preschool. When a child enrolled in our program has food allergies, parents need to inform the staff about the specifics of the allergy. We will take all precautionary measures to help ensure the safety of the child. We will be selective when planning our snack menu. At times a parent may need to provide an alternative snack to serve to the child with specific allergies.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES/NATURAL DISASTER PLAN

In the event of an emergency or natural disaster, all children will be kept at the center until they are picked up by an authorized person as indicated on the Emergency and Identification form. If you are able to pick up your child during such an emergency, you must notify the staff that you are taking your child home before you leave the site; otherwise, we may believe your child is missing, thus adding additional stress to the situation. Earthquake Survival/Emergency Kits with ample food, water, and first aid supplies are on site to care for all children for up to 72 hours.

Should it be necessary to evacuate children from the center, the location of the emergency shelter will be posted on the main entrance door of the center. Every effort will be made to notify parents of an evacuation.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Practice drills will be conducted for fire safety, earthquake preparedness, evacuation and lock down throughout the year.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

Minor injuries sustained in the program are treated at the site and are reported to parents on an accident report form. One copy is placed in the child's file. The other copy is given to the parent. Parents are called immediately in the event of any serious or questionable injury, including any injury to the head. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached and an emergency exists, the Director will seek medical care as needed and as designated by the parent on the Emergency Information Card.

CONSENT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT

All students enrolled in the program shall sign LIC 627 consenting Happy Minds Kids Academy and its authorized representatives to administer emergency medical treatment.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

SIGN IN AND OUT

It is the requirement of California's Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division and California's Department of Education, Child Development Division, that the person who signs the child in and out shall use his or her **Full Legal Signature** and shall record the time of day. Signatures must be in ink and mistakes should be corrected by striking through with a single line and initialing. The use of whiteout or other correction materials is not permitted. Additional family representatives who are authorized to sign the child in and out must show photo identification at time of pick up.

When arriving, kindly ensure that your child is handed over to his/her respective teacher. Please do not leave your child unattended in the classroom or playground.

Upon arrival, please assist your child in putting their belongings into their cubbies. Upon departure, kindly check your child's cubby and/or mailbox/art file for any correspondence. It is also important that you check your child's cubby regularly for any treasures that are ready to go home. We kindly request parents to clear out cubbies on a weekly basis.

CLOTHING

Children may be involved in activities that require ease of movement and the tendency to get messy. Please send your child to school in comfortable clothes and shoes. Closed toed, closed back shoes are required. Sandals or open toed shoes may not be worn. Having your child dress in layers is advised during cold weather periods. Please label all removable clothing to ensure they are not lost.

A complete set of extra clothes (including underwear and socks) is required for each child. Please place it in large Ziploc bag with name. It is advised to check your child's cubby for any soiled clothing that needs to be replaced.

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Our center is not responsible for any book, toy, jewelry, money or other personal belonging brought to the center. Please have your child leave valuables at home. However, an exception may be made to allow a child to bring a personal/transitional item with them on the first few days of school. Your child's class may have 'Share Days' wherein certain personal items may be brought to school with the prior approval of the teacher.

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS, HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

The children's birthdays have traditionally been celebrated in the classroom with a birthday crown, made by the teacher, and recognition in the circle time. Parents may bring a store brought/homemade birthday treat, and it will be served with the children's regular snack. Parents are also invited to participate in that snack experience.

We at Happy Minds respect and support the beliefs of our staff and families and celebrate cultural diversity in the community. We provide an enriching environment of understanding and awareness of all beliefs, cultures and traditions. In keeping with this, many holidays are

recognized and celebrated at Happy Minds Kids Academy. Parents are invited to participate. Many holidays celebrated by our families may not be familiar to our teaching staff. This gives parents the wonderful opportunity to share their families' traditions with others in their child's class. This is encouraged as a reinforcement of the home-school connection and a validation of the child's personally meaningful experiences at home. Please talk to your child's teacher to make arrangements to share during class time.

PARENT PORTAL

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Open communication is vital to your child's successful experience at our center. Several communication channels have been established; therefore, we encourage you to take advantage of these.

Please help us maintain our high-quality services by investing in daily, informal communication with our staff. Classroom teachers have a vital interest in your child's health and well-being, so please share with us any changes in your family's health, housing, employment and other conditions- these may have an impact on your child and keeping us informed allows us to be fully supportive and work in partnership with you.

Our staff members are open to your comments and suggestions. We are here for you and your child, so please do not hesitate to communicate with us frequently.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All confidential information disclosed pertaining to the child and his/her family shall be restricted solely to purposes connected with the administration of the program.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is an integral part of our program and presents many rewards for the children, parents and the program. We have an open-door policy and encourage parents to visit the school at any time. Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in our center events.

PARENT INFORMATION BOARD/AREA

This area is used for information such as Program Schedules, Menus, and General Announcements. Please check this area regularly for important notices.

MAILBOXES

Please check your mailboxes in the Parent Information area on a regular basis for any correspondences.

CONFERENCES/PROGRESS REPORTS

Conferences may be scheduled once a year, but if needed, may be scheduled as often as needed to discuss your child's progress. Progress Reports and Conferences provide an opportunity for you, the staff and the Director to share observations and discuss your child's growth, participation and interests.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS/STAFF

Please note that Happy Minds Kids Academy does not encourage parents to hand out their personal contact/cellphone information to staff members. All communication regarding your child and school related matters needs to be communicated directly with Happy Minds Administration, via phone call to the school or email. Happy Minds Kids Academy will not be held liable nor responsible for any staff member or parent misusing this information.

PERSONAL RIGHTS

The following two sections are quoted directly from Community Care Licensing Regulations.

CHILD'S RIGHTS

Each child receiving services from a Happy Minds Kids Academy shall have rights which include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other people.
2. To be accorded safe, healthy and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet his/her needs.
3. To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to: interference with daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
4. To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative, if any, informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the complaint receiving unit of the licensing agency and of information regarding confidentiality.
5. To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of his/her choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside the facility, shall be on a completely voluntary basis. In Child Care Centers, decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual advisors shall be made by the parent(s), or guardian(s) of the child.
6. Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night.
7. Not to be placed in any restraining device, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.

PARENTS' RIGHTS

As a Parent/Authorized Representative, you have the right to:

1. Enter and inspect the childcare center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
2. File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
3. Review, at the childcare center, reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
4. Complain to the licensing office and inspect the childcare center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
5. Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the childcare center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
6. Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office.

Licensing Office Name: Community Care Licensing
Licensing Office Address: 750, The City Drive, Suite 250, Orange, CA 92868

Licensing Office Telephone #: (714)-703-2800

7. Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the childcare center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.
8. Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

NOTE: CALIFORNIA STATE LAW PROVIDES THAT THE LICENSEE MAY DENY ACCESS TO THE CHILD CARE CENTER TO A PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE IF THE BEHAVIOR OF THE PARENT/AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE POSES A RISK TO CHILDREN IN CARE

HOLIDAYS AND CENTER CLOSURE

Our program operates daily, Monday through Friday year-round.

Please see the school calendar for the current list of holidays that the center is closed.

Happy Minds Kids Academy operates on a 20 day per month average. In keeping with this in mind we will ensure that students receive 240 or more school days every calendar year of 12 months starting September and ending August.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Happy Minds Kids Academy practices a very positive form of discipline. Children are never punished, spanked, scolded or treated harshly in any way. It is our belief that children misbehave in an attempt to meet a need in a way that doesn't work. Our job is to help them learn a way that does work.

Toddlers will begin to learn self-control by observing the natural consequences of their behavior. Teachers will quickly intervene if a problem does occur and redirect the child to a more appropriate activity

Preschoolers and School Age students will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self-correcting. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behavior. Teachers will assist in pointing out logical consequences to both positive and negative behavior.

The process for this includes teaching words that describe feelings, needs and desires. Children are aided in identifying their feelings or needs and are taught words and ways in which to get those needs met. Although this process is time consuming, in the long run it is the most successful because children eventually internalize the value of appropriate behavior.

Time out is not used because we view it as punitive. There may be occasions when a child needs to be isolated from the other children, but a teacher will sit with the child during those times.

If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, the center, and safety of other children and staff, administration reserve the right to request a child be picked up immediately from the center, in the event such a child's behaviors are disruptive or harmful. Please be advised that in the event such a child has been requested to leave, no tuition reimbursement will be applied.

BITING POLICY

Children biting other children are one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in group childcare. It can occur without warning, is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers involved.

For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem. Toddlers try it out as a way to get what they want from another toddler. They are in the process of learning what is socially acceptable and what is not. For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or feeling a sense of power.

No matter what the cause, biting in a group situation causes strong feelings in all involved. It does help, however, to be aware of the potential problem before it happens, and to form a plan of action if it does occur. Here, at Happy Minds Kids Academy, our teachers are trained to provide excellent classroom management both in the classroom and outside, and to look for patterns that may occur in each biting incident. We will work with each biting child in an appropriate manner. Every effort will be made to protect potential victims from the biter.

We have developed the following plan of action to be used if and when biting occurs in any of our rooms.

When a child is bitten:

For the biter:

1. The biter is immediately removed with no emotion, using words such as "biting is not okay - it hurts." Avoid any immediate response that reinforces the biting or calls attention to the biter. Caring attention is focused on the victim.
2. The biter is not allowed to return to the play and is talked to on a level that the child can understand.
3. Redirect the child to another play.
4. Write an Incident Report and notify the parents of the biter.

For the injured:

1. Separate the injured from the biter.
2. Comfort the child.
3. Administer first aid.
4. Write an Ouch Report and notify parents of the injured.

If biting continues Happy Minds Kids Academy Staff will:

1. Meet with the Director on a routine basis for advice, support and strategy planning.
2. Chart every occurrence, including attempted bites, and indicate location, time, participants, patterns of behaviors, staff present, and circumstances.
3. "Shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite:
 - Head off biting situations before they occur.
 - Teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior.
 - Adapt the program to better fit the individual child's needs.
4. "Shadow" children who have a tendency to be bitten:
 - Head off biting situations.
 - Teach responses to potential biting situations: "No" or "Don't hurt me!"
5. Work together as partners with the parents of both biting children and frequent victims to keep all informed and develop a joint strategy for change.
6. Hold a conference with the parents of the biting child to develop a written plan of action. Schedule follow-up meetings or telephone conversations as needed. Consider early transition of a child "stuck" in a biting behavior pattern for a change of environment, if developmentally appropriate.
7. Prepare the parents of the biting child for the possibility that the child may have to be removed from the Center and help them to make contingency plans.

If it is deemed in the best interest of the child, center, and safety of other children, the director may temporarily suspend the child from the Center or in the event biting continues (3 or more incidents) terminate the child from the center. Written notice will be given to the parents before this action is taken.

CELLPHONE POLICY

Cell phones provide important functions in our society, especially in cases of emergency. However, they can interfere with parent-child relationships, safety and teacher communication when used at the preschool. Therefore, we request that parents refrain from talking on their phones while delivering or retrieving children, attending a preschool function with your child, or while driving through the parking lot.

FIELD TRIPS

Preschool classes will have field trips occasionally during the school year. Many field trips will be incorporated during summer camp. Transportation for field trips may be by school van/bus, walking, or personal cars. Parents will be notified in writing of any field trips requiring transportation by van, bus or car.

PET POLICY

Due to allergies and the unpredictability of animals, Happy Minds Kids Academy has a no pet policy. Please leave pets in the car when dropping off or picking up your child.

Updated 09/15/2026 - This handbook supersedes all previous Parent Handbooks.

Please sign and return this form to the Happy Minds Kids Academy Office. Thank You

NAME OF STUDENT/S:

Acknowledgment of Receipt of the Parent Handbook.

(The Happy Minds Kids Academy Parent Handbook can be downloaded from the HMKA Website.)

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook for Happy Minds Kids Academy. I confirm that I have reviewed the contents of the handbook and recognize that the policies and information provided are designed with my child's best interests in mind. I agree to adhere to all policies outlined therein.

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent signature: _____ Date: _____