

# Hill Country Montessori School Parent Handbook

Revised: October 2022



Hill Country Montessori School, Inc. does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its policies and procedures.



# Table of Contents

Who We Are.....	1
Mission Statement.....	1
Our Values.....	1
School Structure.....	1
Accreditation Information .....	1
Governmental Licensing .....	1
Minimum Standards.....	2
Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect .....	2
Annual Enrollment Requirements .....	2
Classroom Placement.....	3
Tuition Policy.....	3
Parent Policies and Procedures .....	3
Parental Commitment .....	3
Communication.....	4
Volunteer Opportunities.....	4
Campus Visits .....	5
Observations .....	5
Drop-in Visits.....	5
Confidentiality.....	5
Campus Code of Conduct.....	5
Swearing/Cursing.....	6
Threats to Employees, Students, Other Parents, or Adults .....	6
Physical/Verbal Punishment of a Child .....	6
Confrontational Interactions with Employees, Other Parents, or Associates .....	6
Smoking of E-Cigarettes, Vaporizers, or Tobacco Products.....	6
Violations of Campus Code of Conduct .....	6
Student Policies and Procedures .....	7
School Hours .....	7
Extended Care Programs.....	7
Attendance.....	7
Excused Absences .....	8
Middle School Attendance for Credit .....	8
Withdrawal for Non-Attendance .....	8

Attendance Records.....	8
Arrival.....	8
Tardiness.....	9
Departure.....	9
Release Authorization.....	9
Travel During the School Year.....	9
Transfer of Records.....	9
Snacks.....	10
Lunch.....	10
School Celebrations.....	10
Parent-Teacher Conferences.....	10
Pledge of Allegiance.....	10
Field Trips.....	11
Uniform Policy.....	11
Extra Clothing Policy.....	11
Diaper Policy.....	11
Blanket Policy.....	11
Backpack Policy.....	12
School Equipment.....	12
Biting Policy.....	12
Discipline Policy.....	13
Discipline Reports/Suspension/Expulsion.....	14
Policy Changes.....	14
Notifications of Changes in Operational Policies.....	14
Challenged Material Policy.....	14
Health and Safety Policies.....	15
Promotion of Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity.....	15
Incident/Accident Reports.....	15
Immunization Requirements.....	15
Tuberculosis (TB) Testing.....	16
Vision, Hearing, and Spinal Screenings.....	16
Illness.....	16
Communicable Diseases.....	17
Employee Vaccine-Preventable Diseases.....	17

Universal Disease Precautions .....	17
Medication Dispensing.....	18
Emergency Care .....	18
Inclement Weather .....	18
Fire Drills and Emergency Evacuation.....	19
Emergency Preparedness Plan.....	19
Severe Allergies.....	19
Water Safety Requirements.....	19
Animals.....	19
Firearms and Weapons .....	20
Gang-Free Zone.....	20
APPENDIX A: APPLICATION PRODURES.....	21
Enrollment Policy .....	21
APPENDIX B: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE .....	23
Need Based Financial Assistance .....	23
Applying for Financial Assistance.....	23
APPENDIX C: UNIFORM POLICY.....	24
HCMS Uniform Guidelines .....	24
<i>Toddler Level</i> .....	24
<i>Primary, Elementary, and Middle School Level Tops</i> .....	24
<i>Bottoms</i> .....	24
<i>Dresses/Jumpers</i> .....	24
<i>Socks/Tights</i> .....	24
<i>Shoes</i> .....	24
<i>Outerwear</i> .....	24
<i>Accessories</i> .....	25
<i>Field Trips</i> .....	25
<i>Physical Education (P.E.)/Athletics</i> .....	25
<i>Tops</i> .....	25
<i>Bottoms</i> .....	25
<i>Shoes</i> .....	25
<i>Free Dress</i> .....	25
<i>How to Purchase</i> .....	25



## Who We Are

### Mission Statement

“To foster children’s natural love of learning by providing an excellent Montessori education through the collaboration of teachers, parents, and students.”

### Our Values

We strive to ignite the spark in EACH child by:

- Valuing the individual
- Cultivating mindful leaders
- Providing a safe environment for exploration and joyful learning
- Fostering a community for student-led learning
- Promoting environmental stewardship

### School Structure

Hill Country Montessori School, Inc. (HCMS) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt, educational corporation incorporated on April 26, 1990. It is the successor organization to St. Helena’s Montessori School that was founded in 1981. We provide Montessori education to students ages 18 months through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

HCMS functions within the structure of a Board of Trustees and Head of School. The Board of Trustees, whose members volunteer their time, governs HCMS. The Head of School is an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees and conducts the daily administrative and academic functions of the school. HCMS is a non-membership corporation consisting of between five and thirteen Trustees. A majority of the Board of Trustees consists of Parent Trustees, that is, Trustees who are parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the school.

### Accreditation Information

HCMS is accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS) and Cognia.

#### **American Montessori Society (AMS)**

116 East 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10003-2163  
Phone: 212-358-1250  
Fax: 212-358-1256  
[www.amshq.org](http://www.amshq.org)

#### **Cognia**

9115 Westside Parkway  
Alpharetta, GA 30009  
Phone: 888-413-3669  
[www.cognia.org](http://www.cognia.org)

### Governmental Licensing

The HCMS Toddler classroom is licensed through Texas Health and Human Services (HHS). This requires the school to follow the regulations concerning childcare and health policies as set forth by this entity. Contact information for this agency is:

Texas Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing:

**San Antonio Office**

3635 S.E. Military Drive  
P.O. Box 23990  
San Antonio, TX 78223  
210-337-3399

**Kerrville Office**

819 Water Street  
Kerrville, TX 78028  
830-257-0231

Student Abuse Hotline:  
1-800-252-5400

Website Address:  
<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us>

## Minimum Standards

A copy of Texas Minimum Standards is available to parents in the Toddler Classroom and the Head of School's office. It can also be found on the Texas Health and Human Services website: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/providers/protective-services-providers/child-care-regulation/minimum-standards>.

## Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

Under the Texas Family Code, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Under the law, employees of HCMS are considered mandated reporters. The employees of HCMS are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents/guardians prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the law, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We, at HCMS, take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The law is designed to protect the welfare and best interests of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of HCMS cannot be held liable for reports made in accordance with the law which are later determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith".

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the student's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a student without appropriate student restraints (i.e., car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside

## Annual Enrollment Requirements

Each student is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be returned to the school office prior to the student's first day of attendance.

All students are required by the Texas Department of Public Health to have a complete up-to-date immunization record on file. Exemptions from immunization requirements are determined by Texas law. More information on immunization requirements and exemptions can be found at <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/school-requirements.aspx>.

All students are required to have a physical examination form (Student Health Form) completed by a licensed medical professional to attend HCMS. This form must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the school office within one week of admission to the program.

All students participating in the extracurricular sports program are required to obtain a preparticipation physical evaluation. This medical evaluation needs to be conducted by a Licensed Physician, a Physician Assistant licensed by a State Board of Physician Assistant Examiners, a Registered Nurse recognized as an Advanced Practice Nurse by the Board of Nurse Examiners, or a Doctor of Chiropractic. The preparticipation physical evaluation form must be on file prior to participation in any practice, scrimmage, or contest before, during, or after school.

## Classroom Placement

The Head of School and Admission Director make the classroom placement decision. The priority is to establish an optimal developmental peer group and balanced age/gender group within each classroom. The Head of School collaborates with the staff to ensure that the full range of physical, social, emotional, and intellectual factors are taken into account.

## Tuition Policy

HCMS commits to School Year expenses based on enrollment. All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign an Enrollment Contract prior to admission of their child to the school. Please refer to the Enrollment Contract for additional details on the HCMS Tuition Policy.

Additional policies relating to tuition include:

- HCMS may turn over unpaid accounts to a collection agency.
- If tuition becomes 60 days delinquent, the student may not return to school unless other arrangements are made.
- No allowances will be made for illness, vacations, or withdrawals, except as stated in the Enrollment Contract. Similarly, school closure due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances beyond the school's control does not constitute a reduction in tuition.

## Parent Policies and Procedures

### Parental Commitment

By enrolling your child or children at HCMS, you are committing to support the school's mission. In order to do this, parents are expected to:

- Support the school in its fulfillment of its purposes, commitments, and principles.
- Accept their responsibility for the education of their students by:
  - Ensuring that their students arrive and are picked up on time.
  - Ensuring that when their students arrive, they are properly prepared for the day with appropriate meals, proper attire, and necessary supplies.

- Encouraging students to show respectful attitudes towards other students, parents, and staff members.
- Demonstrate acceptance of personal responsibility by fulfilling their volunteer commitment of ten hours per year per family and attending events including, but not limited to, educational events, student observations, school-wide events, and parent/teacher conferences.
- If necessary, secure additional tutoring testing, or assistance for their students, especially when suggested by the child's teacher and/or administration.
- Always relate to all faculty and staff members with courtesy and respect, including when a conflict or disagreement arises.

At HCMS, we believe that children are most successful when parents and the school work together in a positive and constructive manner. Thus, we reserve the right not to continue enrollment or not to reenroll a student if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent (or guardian) make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible or otherwise seriously interfere with the school's accomplishment of its education purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, chronic tardiness or absenteeism or failure to attend student conferences.

## Communication

Effective communication between parents, teachers, and administrators is very important to us. Effective communication is a shared responsibility. The following details describe appropriate channels of communication:

- **Parent & Teacher:** Parents are encouraged to address concerns regarding the student or classroom issues with the teacher first. If further discussion is necessary, please schedule an appointment with the Head of School through the office.
- **Parent & Head of School:** The Head of School receives concerns about administrative procedures or policies and program concerns. Please schedule appointments through the office.
- **Parent & Board of Trustees:** Parents may communicate with the Board of Trustees in writing. Sealed envelopes may be turned in to the school office or mailed to the school, attention to the Board of Trustees.
- **Newsletters:** These contain a variety of information about school events and items of interest.
- **Notices:** Notices will be sent home with your child via the "travel folder". These can include field trip information, class programs, meeting announcements, and other information. Please check your child's travel folder daily.
- **Correspondence:** This will include updates in policies and procedures and important information from the Head of School and/or Board of Trustees.

## Volunteer Opportunities

HCMS welcomes and encourages families to participate by volunteering to help with campus and classroom needs. Below is a list of possible volunteer opportunities, but this list is not all inclusive. Parents are welcome to work with their teacher to help assist in other ways that will support the classroom and/or HCMS campus.

- Assisting with classroom activities (reading, educational/cultural presentations, cooking, gardening, etc.)
- Participating in field trips through driving or chaperoning

- Assisting with preparation of school functions
- Assisting with fundraising and fundraising event preparation

## Campus Visits

HCMS has an open-door policy. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the campus at any time during the day. These visits are welcome, but of course, care must be taken not to disrupt the learning process.

### Observations

- Schedule classroom observations with your teacher
- Proceed to the office upon arrival to sign-in
- One observer at a time per classroom
- Guidelines for observing will be provided to you when you arrive in the classroom
- Observation time should be spent quietly observing your child in his/her environment. Please refrain from interacting with your student.
- Limit time to one hour or less
- Sign out at the office upon leaving

### Drop-in Visits

Unscheduled visits are welcome. We limit observers to one at a time to minimize classroom disruption so parents/guardians may be asked to return at a different time if another observer is already in the classroom. Please ensure you check in at the office before proceeding to your child's classroom.

## Confidentiality

Within HCMS, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of the school who have a "need to know" to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents, and/or students will not be shared with parents. HCMS strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with HCMS.

Outside of HCMS, confidential and sensitive information about a student will only be shared when the parent of the student has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law.

You may be curious or concerned about another student. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every student's privacy. Employees of HCMS are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another student with you. All student records are confidential. Records are maintained in the school office in a locked cabinet. The only people permitted to view a student's record are the parents or identified legal custodians, the student's teacher, and administrative staff.

## Campus Code of Conduct

HCMS promotes respect for individuals and for self; this value of respect carries throughout our campus, into our classrooms, and into our administrative office. Should an issue arise that requires private communication, we ask that an appointment be made with the Head of School or your child's teacher. HCMS will not tolerate inappropriate disruption during the school day. We request that all communication is conducted in a productive and respectful manner. In accordance with the Enrollment Contract, students may be involuntarily withdrawn from HCMS for repeated and serious violations of HCMS rules by students, parents/guardians, or financially responsible person.

## Swearing/Cursing

Swearing/cursing is prohibited on the school campus.

## Threats to Employees, Students, Other Parents, or Adults

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Threats may be reported to the appropriate authorities if deemed of a significant concern.

## Physical/Verbal Punishment of a Child

HCMS neither supports nor condones physical punishment of children and such acts are not permitted on the school campus. Also, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child; doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. No parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher or Head of School.

It is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavioral concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or Head of School's attention. At that point, the teacher or Head of School will address the issue with the other parent.

## Confrontational Interactions with Employees, Other Parents, or Associates

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of HCMS or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner.

Talk to the other person that is most directly responsible to the issue first. If you have not reached a satisfactory solution, follow the chain of command: Go to the teacher or Head of School. Partnering together can make this easier for you and the circumstance.

## Smoking of E-Cigarettes, Vaporizers, or Tobacco Products

For the health of all HCMS employees and students, smoking of any e-cigarettes, vaporizer, or tobacco product is prohibited anywhere on the school campus. Parents are prohibited from smoking any e-cigarette, vaporizer, or tobacco product in a building, on the grounds, or in the parking lot.

## Violations of Campus Code of Conduct

Parents are required to always follow the Campus Code of Conduct when visiting the HCMS campus. These procedures are designed to protect the welfare and best interests of the employees, students, and associates of HCMS. Please be particularly mindful of HCMS arrival/departure and sign-in procedures. We all want to be polite. However, we need to be careful not to allow unauthorized individuals onto the campus. Holding the front gate open for the person following you may be polite, however, that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. *Every* person must call the office prior to entering the campus. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Head of School.

## Student Policies and Procedures

### School Hours

School takes place Monday through Friday unless otherwise noted on the school calendar. Normal school hours are as follows:

Program	Full-Day	Half-Day
Toddler Full Week	8:30 AM – 2:30 PM	8:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Toddler Partial Week	8:30 AM – 2:30 PM	n/a
Primary Full Week	8:30 AM – 2:45 PM	8:30 AM – 11:30 AM
Primary Partial Week*	8:30 AM – 2:45 PM	n/a
Elementary	8:15 AM – 3:00 PM	n/a
Middle School	8:15 AM – 3:00 PM	n/a

\*Please note that this program is NOT available for kindergarten aged students.

### Extended Care Programs

Families who require a flexible schedule may take advantage of our Early Arrival and After School Programs. These programs are provided for HCMS students and allow our students to remain in one environment that provides continuity in their school day. Licensing requirements restrict the number of children allowed into these programs. Therefore, parents must contact the office to reserve a space if your child is not pre-enrolled in the programs.

Early Arrival Program	All Programs:	7:30 AM – 8:00 AM
After School Program	Todder:	2:30 PM – 5:30 PM
	Primary:	2:45 PM – 5:30 PM
	Elementary:	3:00 PM – 5:30 PM
	Middle School:	3:00 PM – 5:30 PM

Extended Care Late Pick-Up Fee: After 5:30pm, a fee of \$20.00 will be charged for the first 15-minute increment and \$1.50 per minute thereafter.

### Attendance

Regular and prompt attendance is vital to a student's success in school. The curriculum is structured to provide routine and consistency in the student's life. We ask parents to establish a routine that promotes timely arrival, i.e., having the student to school no later than 15 minutes prior to starting time so that they have time to put items away and talk with friends before class begins. The benefit is twofold: (1) your child develops responsible practices; and (2) the class in progress is not disrupted.

For safety purposes, it is very important that the flow-of-traffic guidelines are followed. The entrance and exit signs are clearly marked. In addition, the HCMS campus, including our entryway and parking lot, is a "hand-held phone free" campus. Please put your phones away when arriving on campus for the protection and safety of our students.

## Excused Absences

Excused absences include illness and medical appointments. If a child is out of school over three consecutive days, a doctor's excuse must accompany the child on the day they return.

A student who observes a religious holy day, including days of travel to or from a site where the student will observe holy days, is considered an excused absence.

## Middle School Attendance for Credit

To receive credit in a class, a student must attend at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered. A student who attends fewer than 90 percent of the days the class is offered may be referred to the Attendance Review Committee to review the case and determine action. The Head of School's decision is final.

## Withdrawal for Non-Attendance

HCMS may initiate withdrawal of a student under the age of 14 for nonattendance under the following conditions:

- The student has been absent ten consecutive school days; and
- Repeated efforts by the Head of School to locate the student have been unsuccessful; and
- Student has unexcused absences in excess of 10 days
- The school contract will still be in effect

## Attendance Records

HCMS shall maintain records to reflect the average daily attendance of each student. Each classroom teacher is responsible to record student attendance.

## Arrival

- Parents with students who participate in the Early Arrival Program should park their car and escort student to the designated Early Arrival room.
- Staff members are present at the front gate between 8:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. If arriving after 8:30 a.m., you must park your car, proceed to the office, and sign the Late Arrival form. A staff member will escort your child to class.
- Do not leave students before a staff member arrives.
- Have the student seated on the passenger's side (right side) of the car, with lunch box and book bag accessible.
- If you have business in the office or classroom, please park your car in the parking area and accompany your child to a staff member at the front gate before proceeding to the office or classroom.
- Students who arrive between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. will need to be signed in in the office. Once signed in, the child may proceed to class.
- Students may not arrive later than 9 a.m. without a written doctor's excuse or prior approval from the Head of School. If a medical excuse is not provided, parents may be asked to keep their child at home for the remainder of the school day.

## Tardiness

Excessive tardiness will be handled in the following manner:

- Three unexcused tardies will result in one absence.
- Six tardies per semester will require a parental visit with the Head of School.
- Failure to resolve issues may impact your child's enrollment at HCMS.

## Departure

- Staff members will bring the students to the front gate at the specified departure time. Students will remain at the gate for 15 minutes from the departure time and then will be escorted to the Aftercare Program if not picked up before this time expires.
- Parents with students who participate in the Aftercare Program should park their car and pick up their student from the designated After Care room.
- For early dismissal, please sign your student out in the school office. A teacher, assistant, or office personnel will bring the student to the office for dismissal. Please do not go directly to the classroom.

## Release Authorization

The Student Emergency Form must be filled out with the names of alternate persons (other than parents/guardians) who are authorized to pick up your child from school. For a child to be picked up by a person not already listed on the Student Emergency Form, the following steps must be taken.

- A written permission slip is in the Teacher's possession prior to the dismissal of the student. It must contain the following information:
  - The date the note was written and effective dismissal date.
  - The full name and telephone number of the alternative person picking up your child.
  - The relationship to the student.
  - A signature of one parent.
- The alternative person picking up your child will be required to provide identification before the student will be released.

## Travel During the School Year

Parents often plan family trips during the school year. We encourage you to schedule trips during school vacation days; however, we know that is not always possible. Occasional educational/family trips are considered a part of a child's education.

When planning extra travel during the school year, please be sure to consult the school calendar to make sure activities such as our IOWA/CogAT testing week are not in conflict. These exams are scheduled a year in advance and are an important tool in the assessment of each child.

## Transfer of Records

Please note that in the event of a school transfer in which another school requests the education record of an enrolled child, HCMS will forward the child's education records to the requesting school after receiving a written request from the parent. The parent, upon request, may obtain a copy of the record that was disclosed.

## Snacks

- Snacks are provided for Toddler, Primary and Aftercare students. Toddler snack menus are posted in the Toddler classroom.
- Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, and Middle School students are responsible for bringing their own snacks each day.

## Lunch

All full-time students need a prepared daily lunch. Pack types and quantities of food appropriate for your child.

Lunch is part of our Practical Life Program. Practical Life activities encourage the development of independence and foster the student's adaptation to the social context of his or her environment.

It is helpful to the child to send easily opened containers and drinks. Please limit the number of treats and do not send candy, gum, or carbonated beverages to school. Children will be allowed to eat the quantity of food they desire at their meal (Toddler and Primary students will bring leftovers home). Send small amounts of food with variety. The microwave and refrigerator are unavailable for student use.

## School Celebrations

CALENDAR HOLIDAYS may be celebrated at the discretion of the school and in a manner appropriate with the Montessori environment. This method focuses on discussions that originate from within each student and touch on subjects such as geography, history, music, traditions and beliefs. While traditional holidays will be observed and celebrated, a cultural study and celebration of the holiday is stressed. A list of the celebrated school holidays and the associated dates is available upon request from the office.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION: To celebrate your child's birthday in his/her classroom, you may bring individual sized, healthy snacks for the entire classroom. If you wish to be present during the celebration, please schedule the appropriate time with your teacher in advance of the celebration. Please do not bring a meal for the entire room or multi-serving items (e.g., full sized cake).

CELEBRATIONS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL: Please distribute invitations to special events through the mail if you are not inviting the entire class to the celebration. Use discretion while collecting students after school for a special event to protect young children from feeling "left out."

CAMPUS PARTIES: No parental celebrations or gatherings are allowed on school grounds.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held two times per year. The purpose of these meetings is to celebrate the learning that has occurred in the previous semester. The student may be invited to attend these sessions with the parent(s) and teacher(s). Additional meetings may be scheduled at any time during the school year as the need arises.

## Pledge of Allegiance

Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and Texas Pledge of Allegiance will be a part of the daily or weekly class experience. Parents desiring that their child not participate in this for religious or other reasons need to speak with the Head of School and the classroom teacher and put the request in writing. Alternative activities may then be arranged to meet this need.

## Field Trips

Elementary and Middle School classes may schedule field trips when they correspond with a particular unity of study. Volunteers provide transportation to and from the destination. Required procedures for field trips are:

- Permission slips are sent home in advance.
- Parents/guardians who drive must submit a valid driver's license and current proof of insurance to be copied and placed on file in the school office. Drivers and chaperones are required to have a current background check on file with the school.
- All students and chaperones must depart from and return to the HCMS campus. Parents will not be allowed to take his/her student directly to the field trip destination and meet up with the rest of the class.
- Drivers and chaperones are responsible for the students who attend the school. Siblings and non-HCMS students are not permitted to attend field trips.
- Automobiles used for transportation on field trips must provide proper restraint equipment as described by the Department of Public Safety. Students requiring car seats or booster seats, and assigned to a car other than a parent, must leave the seat at the gate to be used in the car in which they will be traveling.
- Teachers assign students, in advance of the trip, to specific cars and chaperones. Last minute changes for social reasons are not allowed. Lists are turned into office in compliance with school policies.
- Parents must discuss responsibilities with the teacher prior to accepting the role of driver or chaperone.
- Students must be five years or older to attend a field trip.

If a parent/guardian does not want their student to attend a particular field trip, please notify the teacher in advance and other arrangements will be made.

## Uniform Policy

Please see the HCMS Uniform Policy Guidelines (Appendix C).

## Extra Clothing Policy

A change of clothes is required for all students in Toddler and Primary classes. Please send extra clothing in a Ziploc bag, marked with your student's name. If your student comes home in the extra clothes, be sure to replace them the next day. In addition, seasonal changes and changes in the student's size must be kept in mind. A complete set of extra clothing should include a shirt, shorts/pants, socks, underwear, and shoes for students aged 18 months through 5 years.

## Diaper Policy

For children in the Toddler classroom, parents are required to provide diapers and diaper cream, if applicable. A diaper cream permission form must be on file in the school office.

## Blanket Policy

Blanket size for nap time (Toddler and Primary students) should measure approximately 36" by 36" or a receiving blanket size. This smaller size blanket is easier for children to fold, promoting independence.

## Backpack Policy

Wheeled backpacks are not permitted due to safety and storage issues. Backpacks must be able to accommodate a standard folder.

## School Equipment

If a student should bring home a piece of school equipment, please return it promptly. A lost piece of equipment may cause an entire piece of equipment to become unusable. Playground material is also part of the school equipment. The playground is open for use during school hours only; the school is not responsible for accidents that occur after hours or while under parental/guardian supervision.

## Biting Policy

HCMS recognizes that biting is a developmental stage for students in the Toddler classroom. Parents with children in this classroom should be aware that their children may be bitten or may bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmental stage and that the staff works to identify situations which provoke or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish or harshly discipline students for biting behavior; they will instead speak calmly, but firmly, to the child reminding them that "biting hurts" and then redirect the students involved in the incident to different activities in separate areas of the classroom.

Students older than 3 years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For students in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the student to determine what provokes or elicits this behavior.

When a biting incident occurs, the incident will be documented. The parents of the students involved in the incident will be notified by an incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other student involved in the incident. This information is confidential and cannot be disclosed. It is recommended that any student involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

In the event a student continues biting, the following steps will be taken:

- The child will shadow (be kept near) a staff member to help prevent additional biting incidents.
- The child will be observed by the classroom staff to determine what is causing the child to bite (teething, communication, frustration, etc.). The Director or Head of School may also observe the child if the classroom staff is unable to determine the cause.
- The child will be given positive attention and approval for positive behavior.
- The child may be provided with a teething ring or other appropriate teething toy.
- The Director or Head of School will ensure the teacher has adequate resources and training necessary to keep the children active and engaged in supervised activities.
- The Director or Head of School will schedule a conference with the parents of the child who is biting to develop a plan for home and school to stop this behavior.
- Reading materials may be provided to the parents that include suggestions for dealing with biting that is age appropriate and can be immediately implemented at home.

- An emphasis will be placed on teaching empathy through role playing and age-appropriate books and stories. Additionally, opportunities for developing respect and a stronger friendship between the involved children, such as collaborative art projects and nature activities, will be presented, helping them see their commonalities rather than their differences.

If a child bites three times in a day, parents will be called to pick up their child immediately from school to prevent further incidents and to calm the biter. In addition, chronic biting may require that a child be suspended from enrollment. Parents may be required to talk to their child's pediatrician for additional resources and recommendations such as "play therapy". A child who has been suspended may return to school with permission from the Head of School. If the child returns to school, continues to bite, and is endangering the other children, the child may be withdrawn from the school.

## Discipline Policy

The Montessori program nurtures self-discipline, which develops over a period of many years. The basis of discipline is respect: respect for oneself, for others, and for the environment.

As the classroom is a community, if a student has difficulty following the rules of the community, the response will be age appropriate. Personal attention, redirection, substitution, and/or removal from the situation are typical approaches. Many instances resolve themselves as the student, within the bounds of safety and common sense, experiences the logical consequence of his/her actions (i.e., wiping the floor after throwing can of paint).

If the student disregards the rules of the classroom community, the Teacher seeks to identify the underlying cause in order to help the student understand the inappropriateness of his/her actions and to find a constructive alternative. If such behavior occurs repeatedly, the Teacher may request the Head of School or fellow teacher to observe and offer consultation before the parents are contacted for their support and cooperation.

The following are some general guidelines of Montessori discipline that parents may seek to apply at home as well as at School:

- Hold the child to a standard; she/he will rise to expectations
- Make reward internal, not external
- To maintain strong, effective discipline, seek consistency and clarity
- State expected behavior
- Have child observe others that are role modeling the desired behavior
- Role play situations
- Catch child "doing something right"
- Engage, interest the child
- Involve, stimulate the child
- Redirect the child from destructive, negative behavior
- Be respectful and maintain unconditional love
- Use humor to support and defuse
- Let natural consequences flow from the inappropriate behavior

## Discipline Reports/Suspension/Expulsion

A discipline report may be filed in a situation in which the student is causing physical harm (biting, kicking, hitting) to another student or teacher, or if the student uses inappropriate language. Parents may be called to come and speak with the teacher and/or Head of School. Students may be required to leave school for the remainder of the school day or longer. In accordance with the Enrollment Contract, students may be involuntarily withdrawn from HCMS for harmful or unacceptable student behavior and for repeated or serious violations of HCMS rules.

## Policy Changes

### Notifications of Changes in Operational Policies

HCMS will notify parents/guardians of any changes to our operational and enrollment policies. The following procedures will be followed:

- Written notification will be sent home in the student's travel folder or by mail or email.
- At least one signed and dated acknowledgement of receipt for each family must be maintained in the student file.
- The effective date of the policy will be thirty (30) days from the date of distribution. For example, if a policy amendment is distributed on January 1, then its effective date will be 30 days from January 1, i.e., January 31.

### Challenged Material Policy

At HCMS we value diversity and believe that an excellent education is one in which intellectual ideas are explored free from fear of retribution. Our goal is to help our students understand and tolerate differences in thought. However, objections to educational materials may still arise.

If materials are challenged, the following procedures must be followed:

Step 1: Submit a concise one-page opinion explaining why you challenge the material to the Head of School and the HCMS Board of Trustees Chair.

Step 2: Upon receipt of the written argument, a Material Evaluation Committee will be formed composed of the following:

- An HCMS parent
- The Head of School
- An HCMS teacher
- An HCMS Board of Trustees Member

**No materials will be removed until the Material Evaluation Committee has made a final decision.**

Step 3: Within 30 days, the committee will:

- Review the challenged material in relation to HCMS' mission as a Montessori school.
- Check the general acceptance of the materials by determining if the Boerne Independent School District and other area independent schools allow the material in their curriculum.
- Meet, discuss, and prepare a report to the HCMS Board of Trustees.

Step 4: The decision of the HCMS Board of Trustees is final.

## Health and Safety Policies

### Promotion of Indoor and Outdoor Physical Activity

HCMS strongly believes and supports the need for physical activity each day. Regular physical activity builds healthy bones and muscles, improves muscular strength and endurance, reduces the risk for developing chronic disease risk factors, improves self-esteem, and reduces stress and anxiety. Beyond these known health effects, physical activity may also have beneficial influences on academic performance.

HCMS promotes daily active play, and all students will have ample opportunities to participate in moderate to vigorous activities, such as running, climbing, dancing, skipping, and jumping, to the extent of their abilities.

In addition, as required by Health and Human Services Child Care Licensing, students enrolled in the Toddler Classroom will participate in a minimum of 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous active play each day that will include:

- Two occasions of active play outdoors when weather permits
- Two or more structured or teacher-led activities or games that promote movement over the course of the day.
- Continuous opportunities to develop and practice age-appropriate gross motor and movement skills.

Physical activities will take place in the classroom or outside, when weather permits.

When participating in physical activity, children's clothing should protect them from sun exposure and permit easy movement (not too loose and not too tight) that enables full participation in active play. Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Hats may be worn to protect children from sun exposure.

### Incident/Accident Reports

Should a student be involved in an incident/accident during the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be presented to you for signature at pickup.

Parent/Guardian or other eligible person to pick-up the student must sign the Incident/Accident Report, acknowledging they were informed of the incident/accident.

### Immunization Requirements

Students enrolled at HCMS must meet the following immunization requirements:

Each child enrolled or admitted to childcare centers must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services in 25 TAC 97, Subchapter B (relating to Immunization Requirements in Texas Elementary and Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Education). This requirement applies to all children in care from birth through 14 years of age.

Except as otherwise provided in this division, all immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission.

Further information, including requirements for exemption, may be found at [www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize](http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize).

### Tuberculosis (TB) Testing

Requirements for tuberculosis screening and testing vary across the state. The regional Texas Department of Health (TDH) in our area recommends, but does not require, tuberculosis testing for children in our care. If you, or your child, have been exposed to tuberculosis, it is recommended that you contact your physician or the Texas Department of Health for information about testing. Further information can be found at <http://tdh.texas.gov>.

### Vision, Hearing, and Spinal Screenings

HCMS conducts and maintains records in accordance with the Special Senses and Communication Disorders Act, Texas Health and Safety Code, for vision and hearing screenings (Chapter 36) and spinal screenings (Chapter 37). For more information on these requirements, please visit <http://www.dshs.texas.gov/vhs/default.shtm> for vision and hearing screenings and <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/spinal/default.shtm> for spinal screening.

### Illness

For the protection of all students and staff, we require that ill students remain at home for the following reasons:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in school activities, including outdoor play.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care.
- The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the school setting:
  - Oral temperature of above 101 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
  - Tympanic (ear) temperature above 100 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
  - Axillary (armpit) temperature above 100 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness.
  - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
- A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

## Communicable Diseases

When diagnosed with a communicable disease, the student may return to school when medical evaluation determines that the student is no longer contagious and is able to participate in school activities.

Parents are required to pick up an ill student within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the student's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the Student Emergency Contact Form until arrangements can be made for the student to be picked up.

Students will be excluded from participation in school if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to school only when they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Students must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. HCMS reserves the right to refuse to allow a student to return if the Head of School or teacher believes the student to be too ill to participate in the program.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the school. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the school so that the parents of students in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Only the communicable disease information will be shared. HCMS will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. By law, you are not required to disclose this information, and your child's continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

Please keep your child home until he/she has gone 24 hours without a fever, vomiting or diarrhea without medications.

## Employee Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

HCMS does not require immunizations of employees unless specifically required by the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Employees who choose to be immunized may seek assistance through their health care provider, pharmacies, the health department, and public/community health clinics.

## Universal Disease Precautions

The following preventive measures are to be used to reduce the spread of all infectious and contagious diseases:

- Handwashing: Hand washing is the best way to protect both child and adult. Employees must wash hands regularly using the recommended hand washing technique:
  - Use antibacterial liquid soap and scrub hands for 1 minute
  - Scrub tops of hands, palms, between fingers, and under nails
  - Rinse hands under water: palms, between fingers, and under nails
  - Rinse hands under water with hands pointed down

- Dry hands with paper towels
- Turn off the water faucet with a towel before disposing of it
- Disposable Gloves: Wear disposable gloves while handling or cleaning bodily fluids, such as blood, bloody saliva, urine, feces, wiping noses, or vomit, especially if there is a skin rash or open cut on your hands. If skin contact is made with these substances, wash the affected areas with soap under running water.
  - Remove disposable gloves and wash hands immediately after each task to prevent cross-contamination to other children.
  - Throw away disposable gloves after each use in a garbage can or plastic bag.
- Employees with open wounds/injury that inhibit hand washing, such as casts, bandages, or braces, must not prepare food or have close contact with children.
- Wear masks when taking care of children with respiratory symptoms.
- Wear masks when an employee has respiratory symptoms to reduce the spread of droplets to surrounding areas.
- Employee will be excluded from direct care of children when employee has signs of illness.

Employees who fail to follow universal disease precautions will be required to undergo additional training and must demonstrate continued compliance in order to remain in good standing as an employee of HCMS.

### Medication Dispensing

HCMS will not administer non-emergency medication to any student. A student in need of medication should be kept at home or the parent/guardian may personally administer medication to the student on campus. However, if a student requires emergency medication within minutes due to a food allergy, asthma, insect bite, etc., arrangements must be organized through the Head of School upon enrollment, or as soon as the condition presents itself.

### Emergency Care

In the case of non-life-threatening injury, first aid will be given, and parents/guardians may be called or will be notified at pickup. Parents/guardians must sign a written incident report form upon pick up.

In the case of a life-threatening situation, the school will call EMS and the parent/guardians will be called for instructions as to where to take the injured student. If parents/guardians are unable to be contacted, we will follow the contact procedure designated on the Student Emergency Form. It is imperative that parents/guardians provide the school with current telephone numbers where they can be reached.

All staff members have been trained in CPR and First Aid by an authorized training authority.

### Inclement Weather

HCMS will observe the Boerne Independent School District's (BISD) decisions concerning school closures. Local radio and television announcements will advise you of such closures as will the Boerne ISD website, [www.boerneisd.net](http://www.boerneisd.net). Additionally, every attempt will be made to update the school's answering machine message and website with information regarding current conditions that day.

Additionally, there may be times when the Head of School may exercise her/his authority to close school if it is in the best interest and safety of the HCMS students and staff regardless of BISD's decision to

close their campuses. In this event, parents or their representatives will be contacted. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure the HCMS office always has up-to-date emergency contact information on file.

## Fire Drills and Emergency Evacuation

HCMS meets all fire safety standards under the City of Boerne Fire Code. Monthly fire drills will be practiced with all students.

## Emergency Preparedness Plan

The HCMS Emergency Preparedness Plan is located in the classrooms and in the Main School Office. This is a comprehensive document containing plans for numerous emergency actions such as fire, earthquake, tornado, evacuations, etc. The Emergency Preparedness Plan may be reviewed at any time upon request.

HCMS will use a mustering point, undisclosed to the general public, for emergency evacuations. The mustering point is disclosed to parents/guardians upon request. All students and staff will remain at the location until law enforcement or other emergency personnel states the emergency is over and they clear us to release HCMS students into the care of parents/guardians.

## Severe Allergies

Upon enrollment, or at the time the child is diagnosed, parents will be required to detail any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers on the designated HCMS Medical Emergency Form provided by the school. This form must be completely filled out by the student's physician, parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and must be updated as needed.

Any student with a diagnosed food allergy must have a Food Allergy Emergency Plan on file completed by a licensed Health Care Worker (Toddler Requirement) or parent/guardian (Primary, Elementary, and Middle School requirement).

In addition to these forms, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the student's allergy. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

## Water Safety Requirements

Splashing pools (two feet of water or less) or water toy containers are drained daily, sanitized, and stored so they do not hold water and are out of children's reach when not in use.

Children will not use sprinkler equipment on or near a hard, slippery surface, such as a driveway, sidewalk, or patio. Sprinkler equipment and water hoses will be stored out of children's reach when not in use.

## Animals

Animals are a regular part of the Montessori classroom. They help to teach responsibility. During an extended school vacation, it may be necessary to provide temporary animal care. If your family is available to "animal sit", please let your teacher know. Please inform your teacher promptly if your student has any allergies related to animals.

HCMS also has a small animal area on campus and follows the guidelines of the Texas Department of State Health Services (Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 826). All animals, as required, are vaccinated and wormed on a regular basis. The students will feed, water, and brush the animals as part of the integrated curriculum. If your child is allergic to animal dander, or you do not want your child to participate in these activities, you must provide written notice.

### Firearms and Weapons

At no time is any person to carry any type of firearm, ammunition, and/or weapon on school property for any reason unless they are law enforcement officers. Violation of this policy will result in immediate removal from HCMS.

### Gang-Free Zone

HCMS is a Gang-Free Zone. A Gang-Free Zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas Law. Certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity may not occur within 1000 feet of the HCMS campus. Any activity of this nature is a violation of this law and is subject to increased penalty under state law (This is a state required policy 8/31/2009).

## APPENDIX A: APPLICATION PROCEDURES

### Enrollment Policy

HCMS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or any other protected class in the administration of any of its policies and procedures. Children aged 18 months through 8<sup>th</sup> grade may be considered for admission. Admission Applications may be obtained from the school office at any time. All potential students, including siblings of attending students, must complete the admission process. The following lists specific steps in our admissions process:

#### 1. School Tour

The first step in our admission process is to schedule an informational meeting and tour of the school. This enables parents/guardians to discover “who we are” and to learn more about our values, philosophy, and practices in educating children. A classroom visit allows parents to further observe the Montessori classroom in progress, giving visitors an up-close look at our unique environment. To set up a tour, contact the school office at 830.229.5377.

#### 2. Application

We encourage you to discuss as a family whether Montessori and HCMS are the right fit for your child. If you believe HCMS is a good fit for your child, complete the Admission Application and return it to HCMS with the non-refundable \$75.00 application fee.

In addition to the application, students in grades 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> are required to submit:

- Transcripts
- Letter of Recommendation from the previous school administration and teacher

#### 3. Interview and Observation

Upon receipt of the Admission Application, HCMS will contact you to schedule a student observation, as well as a parent/guardian interview with the Head of School.

#### **Student Observation**

- Toddler (18 months-3 years) and Primary candidates (3-6 years) participate in a thirty minute to one-half day long visit in the applicable classroom.
- Elementary (6-12 years) and Middle School (12-14 years) candidates spend one to two full days in an Elementary or Middle School classroom.

#### **Parent/Guardian Interview**

The parent/guardian interview is a time to meet one-on-one with the Head of School. At the interview, you will spend time getting to know one another, and discuss why you believe a Montessori education is right for your child. Montessori education supports the creative thinking process. We value “process” over the “product” and believe this philosophy leads to even greater academic achievement and fulfillment in life.

#### 4. Application Decision

Following the completed observations, all applicable paperwork is submitted to the HCMS Admissions Committee for the acceptance decision. Admission decisions are based on an evaluation of the child's school visit, school transcripts, letters of recommendation (for students in 2nd – 8th grade), and parent/guardian interview. Admission decisions are communicated via phone or in writing.

#### 5. Financial Assistance

Families may apply for financial assistance after receiving notice of acceptance of their child. Please see our Financial Assistance page for more information.

#### 6. Enrollment

Along with notice of acceptance, the enrollment contract is presented for signature. Upon receipt of the signed contract and non-refundable enrollment deposit, the child is considered enrolled.

## APPENDIX B: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

### Need Based Financial Assistance

Giving your child a Montessori education may be the edge they need to realize their dreams. The aim of Montessori education is to foster competent, responsible, adaptive citizens who are lifelong learners and problem solvers. Choosing to attend an independent school is an important decision and is not without financial impact. Of course, we feel our families ultimately discover that providing their children with a solid foundation leading to a productive and connected life pays dividends beyond their expectations.

At HCMS, we strive to maintain a socio-economically diverse student population. While numerous financing options are available, it is up to each family to determine the option which best meets their needs. HCMS can provide a limited financial assistance pool for families who are unable to meet the full costs of our program. The following guidelines describe our Financial Assistance Program.

#### Guidelines

- Applicants must complete the admissions process and be accepted to the school under admission guidelines.
- Eligibility for admission is not based upon a family's financial circumstances.
- All tuition assistant applicants must complete the financial assistance process.
- HCMS will review each application as it is received and dispense funds, as available.
- Awards are based on need and do not reflect academic skills or other talents.
- For families who do qualify for assistance, HCMS can fund up to 60% of the annual tuition fee for a limited number of families.
- Additional programs, such as extended care or after school activities, are not considered for financial assistance.
- Families must reapply each year and the amount awarded may vary from year to year depending on the family's financial circumstances and the school's availability of funds.
- Information and documents related to a family's financial assistance application and award are strictly confidential.

### Applying for Financial Assistance

HCMS uses FAST Financial Aid for Student Tuition to collect basic financial information. To ensure a fair and accurate assessment is made, it is important for applicants to address all financial assistance documents with total disclosure and candor. FAST then prepares a needs analysis from the information provided and suggests the amount a family can contribute for educational costs. Information gathered by FAST establishes a starting point for the HCMS Financial Assistance Committee to

## APPENDIX C: UNIFORM POLICY

The HCMS Uniform Policy regulates student dress so that respect for oneself and pride in our community is shown. The Uniform Policy has been determined based on preserving students' safety and health, understanding appropriate dress in preparation for life situations, and presenting a positive image.

### HCMS Uniform Guidelines

All students are expected to be in uniform. All clothes should be neat, clean, and in good repair.

#### *Toddler Level*

Toddler students are exempt from the color and logo requirements of the uniform policy. Toddler students should dress simply and suitably. Closed-toed, rubber soled shoes without lights or noise making accessories are acceptable (flip-flops, sandals, high-heels, crocs, or open-toed shoes are not allowed).

#### *Primary, Elementary, and Middle School Level Tops*

- Acceptable Colors: Solid navy, light gray, or white with the school logo on upper left corner
- Acceptable Styles: Polo, button down oxford-style, or crew neck shirts/blouses with the school logo.
- Navy blue, light gray, or white long-sleeved shirts may be worn under regular uniform shirts during cold weather.
- Conditions: No sleeveless shirts allowed; Shirts with ruffles or pockets are acceptable.

NOTE: On Fridays or other "spirit" days, students may wear a preprinted HCMS "spirit" shirt (track/cross country, Family Fiesta, or other HCMS spirit shirt) with uniform bottoms.

#### *Bottoms*

- Acceptable Colors: Solid navy, khaki, or denim/jeans (No plaid/patterned bottoms)
- Acceptable Styles: Pants, capris, shorts, skirts/skorts
- Conditions: Shorts/Skirts/Skorts should be no higher than 2" above the knee; no ripped, faded, or acid-washed denim; no low riders; no dragging jeans; no sequins, appliqués, decoration, etc.

#### *Dresses/Jumpers*

- Solid navy, khaki, or light gray dresses with school logo (no plaid/patterned dresses)
- Solid navy, khaki or light gray jumpers with school logo with navy, light gray, or white undershirt (no plaid/patterned jumpers)
- When wearing a skirt, dress, or jumper, shorts or bloomers must be worn underneath.

#### *Socks/Tights*

- Socks may be of any color
- Girls may wear navy blue, light gray, or white tights or leggings underneath their skirt, dress, or jumper. Tights and leggings must be one solid color.

#### *Shoes*

- Must be closed-toed and rubber soled (flip-flops, sandals, high-heels, crocs, or open-toed shoes are not allowed).
- Must be without lights, noise making accessories, or wheels.
- Any brand, material, or style of shoe is acceptable as long as it meets the above criteria.

#### *Outerwear*

- Students may wear sweaters, jackets, or coats of their choice (color and style).

### *Accessories*

- Hats or ball caps are not allowed to be worn in the classroom.
- If shorts/trousers have belt loops, a black or brown belt is required to be worn with the shirt tucked in.
- Makeup may not be worn at school. Hair should be a natural color. Nails should be no longer than “sport” length. Neutral or lightly colored nail polish may be worn (i.e., buff, light pink, clear, etc.), as long as it is not distracting to the classroom environment. Jewelry should be minimal. Earrings must be small or of a “stud” style (long, dangling earrings or large hoops are not allowed for safety reasons). Jewelry that causes a distraction will be held until the end of the day for parents to pick up from the teacher.

### *Field Trips*

- The school will provide an HCMS fieldtrip shirt free of charge. Students are required to wear this shirt with appropriate uniform bottoms on field trips.

### *Physical Education (P.E.)/Athletics*

During P.E. and Athletics (Cross Country/Track practice), students may wear the following:

#### *Tops*

- Preprinted HCMS shirt (i.e., cross country/track, “owl”, or other HCMS spirit shirt)
- Basic crew shirt in navy, light gray, or white with or without the school logo

#### *Bottoms*

- Athletic shorts that are mid-thigh or longer
- Girls may wear leggings under athletic shorts during cooler weather

#### *Shoes*

- Students must wear appropriate athletic shoes for P.E./Athletics

### *Free Dress*

Students are allowed “FREE DRESS” on special occasions which occur at different times during the school year. Students are free to wear casual street clothing of their choice, provided that clothing is weather-appropriate, clean, comfortable, and in good taste, and must not hinder students’ participation in any activity.

### *How to Purchase*

To make purchasing uniforms as affordable and convenient as possible, while offering access to comfortable, durable, excellent quality clothing, HCMS has secured an account with Lands’ End. HCMS will receive a small percentage of any uniform purchases made through Lands’ End. Uniform clothing may also be purchased wherever parents wish as long as they meet guidelines. Shirt logos may be embroidered at Loaded Threads INK & STITCH CO. or CuStumm Design & Tees when purchasing locally.

#### **Lands’ End**

Phone: 1-800-469-2222

[www.landsend.com/school](http://www.landsend.com/school)

School Code: 900117144

#### **Loaded Threads INK & STITCH CO.**

111 Parkway

Boerne, TX 78006

Phone: 830-249-1540

[www.loadedthreads.com](http://www.loadedthreads.com)

#### **CuStumm Design & Tees**

32800 IH-10 West, Suite A

Boerne, TX 78006

830-816-3444

[www.custumm.com](http://www.custumm.com)

**HCMS administration reserves the right to determine appropriate interpretations for dress code issues that may arise throughout the year. HCMS Head of School may modify the dress code throughout the year as needed.**