

**In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful**



# **Student Parent Handbook**

**Academic Year 2023-24**

**Courtesy • Commitment • Collaboration**

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# **Houston Peace Academy Motto, Mission, Vision, Philosophy and Goals**

## **Houston Peace Academy Motto**

Courtesy, Commitment, Collaboration

## **Houston Peace Academy Mission Statement**

Houston Peace Academy promotes Islamic values, academic excellence and respect for all creation in a positive, safe environment, to produce confident contributing members of society.

## **Houston Peace Academy Vision**

Houston Peace Academy will work towards establishing an exemplary Islamic institute that produces graduates who will go on to be model citizens working for the betterment of society.

## **Houston Peace Academy Philosophy**

At Houston Peace Academy we believe that education is a process. Classroom instruction as well as the experiences students encounter in their school both contribute to a child's educational development. Students also learn from the behavior and actions of those around them. As such, when planning for Houston Peace Academy we strive to ensure that all staff members at the school are qualified educators who embody Islamic values and promote the best of principles. It is fruitless to ask children to adhere to ideals unless role models exist for them to learn from and emulate. At Houston Peace Academy we believe that being a Muslim is synonymous with striving for excellence in everything we do.



## **Houston Peace Academy Goals**

### **Students will develop love and reverence for Allah and prophet**

#### **Mohammed (saw) exemplified by:**

- A solid Muslim identity that reflects pride in being a Muslim and a clear sense of mission
- Understanding the teachings of Islam through Quran and Sunnah and their application in the daily life of an American Muslim
- Character, values and morals that are aligned with the teachings of Islam
- Being a positive role model and ambassador for Islam by striving for excellence and promoting good for all

#### **Students will be academically distinguished by:**

- Being high achievers who meet and exceed state educational objectives
- Developing good study skills, being organized and efficient in their use of time
- Being serious learners of the Arabic language
- Becoming self-directed learners
- Being able researchers who gather information and use critical thinking skills to analyze and present results
- Having an introductory knowledge of other religions and cultures
- Being skilled in their use of technology to meet their educational needs
- Exercising their creative abilities to problem solve

#### **Students will develop good character by:**

- Being distinguished in their manners, showing respect for themselves and others according to Islamic teachings
- Mastering communication skills, both verbal and written, as well as being effective listeners
- Being able to work successfully in groups, as both leaders and participants
- Acquiring leadership skills, being open-minded and prepared for future academic and social roles

- Being aware of their social responsibility, becoming active in their school, civic and religious communities, and showing compassion and tolerance for others.

**Students will develop healthy habits demonstrated by:**

- Maintaining personal hygiene according to Islamic standards
- Participating in age-appropriate sports activities
- Performing spiritual duties of prayer, fasting and dhikr
- Displaying modesty in dress and behavior and maintaining good grooming
- Making healthy food choices

## **Important Information**

### **School Contact Information**

#### **School Address**

Houston Peace Academy  
16700 Old Louetta Rd., Building D. Spring, TX 77379

#### **Contact Information**

Telephone: 281-257-8988  
Email: [admin@houstonpeace.org](mailto:admin@houstonpeace.org)  
Website: [www.houstonpeace.org](http://www.houstonpeace.org)  
Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/Houston.Peace.Academy>  
DFPS (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services) -  
<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/>

### **Emergency Contact Information**

Fire Department: 911  
Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222  
Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400 [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)  
DFPS Houston (main office): 713-692-3236  
DFPS Conroe office (area office): 713-756-1551

Parents are welcome to review the DFPS Minimum Standards. A copy of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Minimum Standards and the most recent licensing inspection report are available for parents to review in the school office.

### **Houston Peace Academy Advisory Panel (AP)**

Chair: Arif Amjad

Vice Chair: Yasin Huq

Secretary: TBA

School Principal: Rana Elmamlouk

Treasure: Ayman Alhalabi

PTO President: Asma Ali

Masjid AD: Nadir Tayyab

# **Part I General Information**

## **Introduction**

It is our pleasure to welcome you to Houston Peace Academy (HPA). HPA, started in Fall 2010, is a Private Non-Profit Islamic School, licensed by the Texas DFPS and accredited by Cognia and CISNA. We are dedicated to providing your child with the best possible education in an Islamic environment. Your support of our policies and adherence to our procedures ensures the smooth and effective operation of the school. The cooperation of school and home is an integral to the success of your child.

Our emphasis is on tarbiyya (character education based on the Qur'an and Sunnah), spreading the beauty of Islam and a desire to strive for excellence in everything we do. We encourage love for the exciting process of learning. Our school motto "Courtesy, Commitment, Collaboration" embodies the principles of Islam and makes this institution a very special place.

The content of this handbook includes rules and procedures for our students and parents. Please read it thoroughly, review it with your child, and keep it as a reference throughout the year. After you review the handbook, please sign the Acknowledgment Statement, which must be submitted to the school office. Please review the school calendar, a source of information regarding all holidays, teacher-in-service days and school events. A monthly school calendar and newsletter will be emailed and/or posted on the school website ([www.houstonpeace.org](http://www.houstonpeace.org)) to keep parents updated and informed about school events.

### **Mission Statement and HPA Goals**

Parents should take some time to read and understand the HPA Mission and Goals. These documents are the guiding principles on which HPA policy and procedures are created and implemented. These principles are integrated into many facets of a student's learning experience, including classroom activities, outside play, after school programs, and school-wide events and projects. We are always open to any suggestions for improvement.

## **HPA Promotes a Healthy Learning Environment**

At Houston Peace Academy our educators, using the best pedagogical methods, work hard to provide a learning environment that is both safe and challenging for our students. Keeping in mind that the treatment given to children in the early years of their life can have far-reaching effects, we take great care to provide an environment which caters to their intellectual, moral, emotional and physical growth and wellbeing which are all critical to a student's success. We have a responsibility to inspire confidence in our students, to allow and promote creativity and innovation and to teach life skills based on the example of our beloved Prophet (PBUH). Therefore, we place more emphasis on collaboration over competition. Although competition has its place, too much unhealthy competition would undermine the Islamic environment we have set out to create. Competition “undermines self-esteem, destroys relationships, thwarts productivity, and discourages excellence” (Alfie Kohn). Our religion emphasizes personal excellence and the concept of one nation. Our beloved prophet (PBUH) said: “Be generous, kind and noble to your children and make their habits and manners good and beautiful”. All staff at Houston Peace Academy strive to model and maintain Islamic etiquette (adab) and will encourage all of our students to do the same. In an environment that cultivates the virtues and habits of kindness, courtesy, compassion, and consideration for others, bullying will not be tolerated.

# **Admissions**

## **Admission Policy**

Houston Peace Academy presently offers Montessori Preschool to Kindergarten for ages 3 to 5 years and 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grades. All forms, fees and documents listed below must be submitted to the office by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Students will not be allowed in class until all forms, fees and documents are received. For the Montessori class, all students must be at least 3 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> to enter the Montessori class. Students entering 1<sup>st</sup> grade must be 6 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>. All students must be potty trained. No child preschool and above can be sent to school in diapers and must verbally express the need to use the restroom. If a bowel accident occurs, the parents will be notified and may be asked to pick up the child early.

The school does not discriminate in enrollment on the basis of race, gender, religion, or national origin. Enrollment is open to any child, provided the school can meet the special needs of that child. Presently we do not offer English as a Second Language, GT classes or Special Education services.

## **Application Process**

Submit your online application and pay a non-refundable enrollment fee. Note: the application doesn't roll over and has to be submitted for every academic year. After receiving the application the admission office will contact you for an interview assessment.

## **Early Enrollment for existing students**

Early enrollment is open to existing students January - February. Parents will receive the enrollment application after they submit the mandatory annual family survey. During January - February the enrollment fee for existing students is \$100.

## **Early Enrollment for all students**

Early enrollment is open to all students March - April. During March - April the enrollment fee for all students is \$150.

## Late Enrollment for all students

Enrollment in May or later is considered a late enrollment. Late enrollment fee for all students is \$200.

## Admission Requirements

Documents to submit prior to an assessment:

- A copy of student’s birth certificate or passport
- An updated immunization record
- Physician’s Health Statement with a hearing and vision screening for all children 4 years old and up

## Cost of Tuition and Schedule of Fees

### Tuition

Tuition may be paid by one of three options listed below. As tuition is an annual amount, tuition remains the same regardless of absences or holidays. Tuition is non-refundable regardless of withdrawal and or student vacation leave. Tuition can be paid via auto withdrawal, a check (made payable to Houston Peace Academy), or electronically via a debit/credit card or a bank account number. If tuition payments are made in 10 installments via checks, all 10 checks must be post-dated and submitted to the office in August. Houston Peace Academy reserves the right to withhold school records until all tuition is paid.

Tuition may be paid by one of three options listed below:

	<b>Annual Tuition</b>	Option I Paid one time Yearly (\$200 Discount) Due August 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Option II Paid Twice Bi-yearly (\$100 Discount) 1 <sup>st</sup> Payment is due by August 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Payment is due by Jan 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Option III Paid Monthly Over Ten Months*
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Montessori PS-KG	<b>\$6250</b>	\$6050	\$3,075	\$625
Elementary 1 <sup>st</sup> - 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<b>\$5200</b>	\$5000	\$2,550	\$520
Middle 6 <sup>th</sup> -7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	<b>\$6000</b>	\$5800	\$2,950	\$600

**Discounts**

- Tuition discounts of full payments Option I or II
- Elementary tuition discount for siblings:
  - Second child \$100 discount
  - Third+ child \$200 discount

\*If two or more siblings are enrolled and are in different classes, the discount will only apply to those in Elementary. No sibling discount is offered to Montessori or Middle school students when more than one are attending Montessori or Middle school.

**Annual Fees**

All annual fees, such as Security fees, Instructional Materials and Resources fees, Technology and Enrichment fees are non-refundable, non-prorated and are due with the first tuition payment.

	Instructional Materials and Resources Fee	Technology and Enrichment Fee	Security Fee	<b>Total</b>
Montessori PS-KG	\$200	\$200	\$215	<b>\$615</b>
Elementary 1st-5th Grade	\$200	\$300	\$215	<b>\$715</b>
Middle 6th Grade	\$200	\$300	\$215	<b>\$715</b>



After-school care fee is \$10 per student per day.

Late Payment fee of \$30 will be charged if tuition payments are not received by the 3rd of the month.

Returned Payment fee of \$30 will be charged for any returned payments.

Late Pick up fee is \$10 for every 5 minutes.

School supplies and uniforms will be purchased by parents. An option to purchase from HPA is available while supplies last.

Field Trip fees and Special Programs fees will vary.

# **Class Selection Process**

## **Class designation**

New Montessori & Elementary classes are established through the following process:

1. Student class designation is based on whether a student is returning (and is placed in the same class as the previous year-Montessori only), separation needs in the case of siblings of an existing HPA student and/or child of a staff member (it is our policy that siblings and staff and their child(ren) are not in the same class) and the need to have a good ratio of boys to girls in each class.
2. An admin staff member randomly selects the remaining names of students.
3. We do not cater to any threats, bribes, coercion etc. but at times we are able to take into consideration requests.

## **Cut-off Date for Grade Designation Purposes**

Students must reach the appropriate age by September 1<sup>st</sup> to meet the grade cut off deadline for that grade (e.g. Preschool students need to be 3 years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of that school year and must be fully potty-trained). There is an exception for students in Elementary grades who have completed a grade in another school. In this case admission is dependent on results of the Admission Test and approval of the Principal. It is against HPA policy for any student to skip a grade even with parents demands.

## **Revoke Admission**

Admission is revocable in the first weeks of school for preschool, pre-k and kindergarten based on the following:

1. Behavior issues. These include but are not limited to excessive crying, anger issues and or disturbing behavior.
2. Not potty-trained within 2 weeks of school.
3. A parent's refusal of a teacher's requests for cooperation.
4. A parent's refusal to abide by school policies.

## **Changes to Admission Information**

Parents must certify that the information provided on the admission forms, and all documents submitted are true and correct to the best of their knowledge. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the school immediately if there are any changes to the information provided. These include but are not limited to: change of student's home address, student's health, or custody arrangements. Houston Peace Academy reserves the right to refuse admission if the student or parent/guardian misrepresent the admission in any way or if information is incomplete.

## **Notification Policy:**

Parents will be notified in writing whenever school policies have been changed.

## **Parents Visiting the School**

Houston Peace Academy has an open-door policy. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to visit their child's school after arranging with the front office. All visitors must first make an appointment, then sign in at the office and pick up a visitor tag. This tag is to be handed back to the office when leaving the premises. Class visits are limited to one academic period. When you arrive, please stop at the front desk first to obtain a visitor's pass, which must be worn during your visit. You will then be directed to the class. No parent is allowed to enter the classroom without a Visitor Tag. Siblings will not be allowed during class visits.

# Dress Code & Uniform Policy

All Students must adhere to uniform policy while on school premises

## Montessori Dress Code

Montessori students are not required to wear a uniform; however, parents are requested to ensure their child dresses appropriately in clothing he/she can manage by him/herself. Our dress code for Montessori is as follows:

- Comfortable shirt, or T-shirt.
- Comfortable pants, jeans or shorts that are at least knee length.
- For girls: skirts and dresses that are at least mid-thigh length. Girls are required to wear biker shorts or tights under their skirts/dresses, not by itself under shirts.
- Students must wear socks and closed toe shoes. Please have your child wear slip-on or Velcro shoes unless they know how to tie by themselves, no flip-flops. Students should be able to put on and close their own shoes. Flashy, glittered or lightened shoes are not allowed. No hoop earrings, only studs.
- Hair accessories must be neat.
- No costumes or princess dresses.

## Elementary Uniform Policy

The Elementary Student HPA Uniform Policy is in place to teach Islamic grooming and hygiene, keep the focus on the joy of learning, reduce distractions during the school day, promote unity, and encourage modesty. School uniforms are required and students are expected to be in uniform every day.

### Boys Uniform:

- White, light blue or navy-blue dress shirt or polo shirt with collar
- Solid navy blue or khaki slacks - no sweatpants or jeans
- White, navy blue or black socks
- Black, navy blue or gray closed toe shoes or sneakers
- Navy blue cardigan

- Winter jackets navy or black only
- Belts, if worn must be black
- Navy tie and blazer (optional)

Pants must be clean and in good repair; no holes anywhere. No accessories such as rubber bands may be added to the pants. Hair shall be neatly groomed and trimmed. Hair length should not surpass the ear lobes on the side or fall below the collar on the back. The length of the bangs shall be above the eyebrows. No tails are permitted. Extreme hairstyles or cuts are not acceptable. No headbands, wristbands, hats or caps are to be worn on the playground or indoors.

**Girls Uniform:**

- White, light blue or navy-blue long blouse or dress shirt with collar or polo shirt.
- Solid navy blue or khaki pleated jumper, navy-blue or khaki skirt that is below the knees.
- Navy blue or khaki dress slacks- no jeans, or sweatpants
- Navy blue, black tights or white leggings to be worn under a skirt not by itself under shirts.
- White, black or navy socks.
- Black, navy blue or gray closed toe shoes or sneakers.
- Cardigan – navy blue only.
- Winter jackets –navy blue or black only.
- Hair accessories must be neat, and limited to navy, white or black in color.
- Large solid white or navy salaat cover scarf is required to wear for salaat - no other color or design will be permitted.
- Hijabs are recommended for elementary grades 3rd & 4th, and are required for grades 5 and up, hijab must be navy blue or white.

Abayas are not required for Elementary grades, however if a student wishes to wear an abaya on Friday, it must be navy, white or black.

Girls are expected to have hair neatly groomed. No type of makeup, tattoos, colored nail polish or perfume is permitted during school hours.

Undergarments must not be visible. Excessive use of jewelry is not allowed.

Spirit School shirts are to be worn on Thursdays only (Not Friday).

Unacceptable Attire For all students (Montessori & Elementary):

- Shorts, leggings & tights (only allowed under skirt), skinny pants and jeans.
- Pants with hanging pockets or chains, since they may be a safety hazard.
- Baggy pants or athletic pants.
- Large or loop earrings and jewelry.
- Boys are not to wear any jewelry except a watch.
- Shirts with pictures, logos (other than the HPA school logo) or writing on them.
- See-through garments or clothing exposing the torso or upper thighs, or sleeveless shirts.
- Clothing that is not properly fastened.
- Clothing that is torn, has holes, or pants that are frayed.
- Flashy, glittered or lightened shoes.
- Hats or caps except prayer hats for boys.
- Nail polish.
- Sunglasses inside the school building.

### **Items that meet the HPA dress code are available at:**

Please ensure that color and style choices meet the HPA dress code.

Uniform superstore: located in the Greenspoint mall:

<http://www.uniformsuperstore.com/>

French Toast online store: <http://www.frenchtoast.com/>

Parker school uniforms: Spring location Parker School Uniforms, 3425 F M 2920 #700, SPRING, Texas 77388 (281) 528-6203: Customer Phone,

<https://www.parkersu.com/>

Academy Sports and Outdoors: [www.academy.com](http://www.academy.com)

JC Penny: [www.jcpenney.com](http://www.jcpenney.com)

Target: [target.com](http://target.com)

Wal-Mart: [walmart.com](http://walmart.com)

The Children's Place: <https://www.childrensplace.com/us/home>

All students are expected to comply with the uniform policy at all times during school days. The principal has the final decision on whether a child's clothing conforms to the Houston Peace Academy uniform policy. If a child's clothing does not comply with the uniform dress code, a Uniform Reminder Form will be sent home. If repeated non-compliance is observed, parents will be required to pick up the student from school and allowed to return to school only after complete and proper compliance with the school dress code. Exceptions to the uniform policy will be on school-designated days only.

### **Guidelines for No Uniform Days**

Students are expected to dress according to the HPA dress code that mentioned above.

- Pants must be loose fitting.
- Shirts will have no pictures or writing on them. Shirts, blouses, and dresses must have sleeves and be long enough.
- Shorts and tight-fitting pants are not allowed.
- Baggy pants or sweatpants may not be worn. Pants with elastic waists may be worn if the pants are casual dress pants.

### **Grooming Guidelines**

Students must be dressed and groomed in a manner that is clean, neat, and presentable and that will not be a health or safety hazard to themselves or others. This includes, as per the sunnah, brushed teeth, washed face and combed hair. Daily bathing is encouraged. Uniforms are to be clean and mended. Scarves are to be clean, ironed and worn neatly. Fingernails are to be trimmed short and clean.

# **Daily Schedule**

## **Montessori Drop Off**

School hours are 8:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 am to 2:00 pm Friday. All parents are required to bring their children on time. Montessori will be dropped off at the MPH building back entrance. Teacher will receive the student at the door until 8:07 am. Please remember that we will begin our day with a short assembly for recitation of Qur'an and Du'a, which is an important part of the Islamic Studies program, so please bring your child(ren) on time.

## **Montessori Dismissal**

Dismissal begins at 3:00 pm for the Montessori students. If you have to pick up your child earlier please let us know in the form of an email sent to [admin@houstonpeace.org](mailto:admin@houstonpeace.org) by 11:00 AM, so we don't keep you waiting.

Returning students must be signed in at the office. Parents must not go directly into the classroom to pick up or drop off their child.

There will be no early pick up between 2:30 pm and 2:59 pm. For the safety of the students, children will be waiting inside the office building (D) hallway and will be released in an orderly manner. Parents should drive around to the back of the office building to pick up students at 3:00 pm. Parents must wait in their cars for their children. Please follow all directions given by school staff members. Montessori students with siblings in Elementary or Middle school will wait with the elementary students at the main building.

Montessori students picked up 10 or more minutes after the dismissal time will need to be signed out and picked up from the office. A courtesy reminder will be provided the first time, a warning on the second offense and a late pick up fee will be automatically applied on the third or more offense. The late pick up fee is \$10 for every 5 minutes. Please have cash available to pay at the pick up if late. Multiple late pick-ups may result in student suspension.



## **Elementary and Middle School Drop Off**

School hours are 8:00 am to 3:30 pm Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 am to 2:00 pm Friday. All parents are required to bring their children on time. The drop off time is 7:45 am to 8:00 am. Assembly for recitation of Qur'an and Du'a, which is an important part of the Islamic Studies program, begins at 8:00 am. The drop-off area will be closed off at 8:07 am. Students dropped off after 8:07 am must come directly to the office with their parents and get signed in. A staff member will escort the student to class once their parents have signed them in. If a child is dropped either at the office or to their class without a parent signing them in, the student will be taken to the office and the parent will be called back to sign them in before the student will be allowed back in class.

## **Elementary and Middle School Dismissal Procedure**

Dismissal begins at 3:30 pm for the Elementary and Middle school students. If you have to pick up your child earlier please let us know in the form of an email sent to [admin@houstonpeace.org](mailto:admin@houstonpeace.org) by 11:00 AM, so we don't keep you waiting. Returning students must be signed in at the office. Parents must not go directly into the classroom to pick up or drop off their child.

There will be no early pick up between 2:30 pm and 3:29 pm. For the safety of the students, children will be waiting inside the office building (D) hallway and will be released in an orderly manner. Parents should drive around to the back of the office building to pick up students at 3:30 pm. Parents must wait in their cars for their children. Please follow all directions given by school staff members.

Students picked up 10 or more minutes after the dismissal time will need to be signed out and picked up from the office. A courtesy reminder will be provided the first time, a warning on the second offense and a late pick up fee will be automatically applied on the third or more offense. The late pick up fee is \$10 for every 5 minutes. Please have cash available to pay at the pick up if late. Multiple late pick-ups may result in student suspension.

## **Drop Off & Pick Up General Guidelines**

Only those people authorized on the Pick-Up Authorization Form will be allowed to take the child. We cannot accept phone calls for a pick-up authorization. The parent/guardian must send an email to the school office if anyone new will be picking up their child along with a photocopy of the driver's license of the pick-up person. If someone other than the parent/guardian or regular person is to pick up any student, s/he needs to first stop at the school office and provide identification. The school office will then check that the person is listed on the Pick-Up Authorization, and issue a note to allow pick up from the teacher.

Teachers will not be able to conference about your child at the drop off or pick up time. Please schedule an appointment if you need to speak with the teacher.

## **Safety Requirements**

- Please observe the 5mph speed limit in the car pool area.
- The use of cell phones is prohibited during drop off and pick up time: parents using the cell phone during pick up time will be asked to park the car and come in to pick up the child.
- Please do not park in the carpooling areas.
- Students are not allowed in the playground area during dismissal.
- All children have to be buckled and use age appropriate car seats or boosters. We are required by regulations to ensure the safety of all children regardless of their HPA enrollment status.
- When your child leaves/enters your car during the pick up/drop off, please ensure your car is on "park" to avoid injuries.
- Once the child is in the car, pull forward to have them buckled.

## **Friday Early dismissal and Ramadan dismissal procedures**

During Ramadan school will be dismissed at 2:00 pm Monday through Thursday and at 12:30 pm Friday. Refer to the school calendar for school closure days during Ramadan.

## **After School Care**

After school care is offered for an additional charge based on parents request by filling out the proper forms.

# **Attendance Regulations**

## **Absences**

Failure to attend school will be considered an absence. Parents are responsible to notify the school of absence by 9:00 am by email [admin@houstonpeace.org](mailto:admin@houstonpeace.org) and to include the reason for the absence. The school office will contact parents for all absences where the parents have not notified the school.

## **Attendance Records**

All attendance records will be supervised by the Assistant Principal. Monthly records will be kept for every student and will be kept in permanent record at the end of the school year. These records will be retained for two years. Daily logs will be disposed of at the end of the year.

## **Excused Absence**

Examples of excused absences include absence due to illness, quarantine, medical, dental services rendered. Absences which are requested in writing prior to the absence and approved by the Principal such as: funeral services, appearance in court or special circumstances approved at the discretion of the Principal.

## **Unexcused Absence**

Examples of unexcused absences include missing class without an excused or warranted reason, whether the absence is student or parent initiated, absence for family vacations and/or trips, absence for which advanced approval is necessary and approval was not obtained before the absence.

## **Extended Vacation Leave request**

All students planning to go on vacation for more than one week must complete the extended absence request form. Tuition must be paid in full regardless of days off. If tuition is not paid the student will be withdrawn from the school and placed on the waiting list.

## **Consequence of Extended Absence**

If a student is absent from school for more than five consecutive days, parents may be asked to have a meeting with the Principal to discuss any consequences resulting from the absence. A student with an unexcused absence will lose all opportunity to make up work except for exams. All missed coursework and homework assignments are the responsibility of the parents and students. Excessive absences will affect the student's grade and can result in a student repeating the grade level. If a student will be absent for more than 10 days parents will be required to withdraw the student and re-enroll on return (this is a Texas state requirement).

## **Absence at the end of the school year**

Students who leave the school before the last week of school will not receive any special accommodations for early testing. They will receive a zero on all missed assignments and tests, and the trimester grade will be calculated accordingly.

## **Student Withdrawal**

If for any reason you would like to remove your child from Houston Peace Academy, you will need to give the school two weeks' written notice and submit a School Withdrawal Form. A final report card will not be issued once a child is withdrawn before the end of the school year.

## **Tardiness**

Elementary and Middle school students should arrive at school between 7:45 am and 8:00 am every morning. Students who arrive after 8:07 am will be considered tardy. The teachers will specify tardy on the attendance sheet. To excuse a tardy, a parent/guardian needs to send a written note with an acceptable explanation of the reason. The note must contain a reason for being tardy, date, time and parent signature. Reasons for excused tardy include: illness of the student, medical or legal appointment, or family emergencies. Oversleeping, car/traffic problems, etc. are not acceptable excuses for

tardiness. Students dropped off after 8:07 must come directly to the office with their parents to sign in. A staff member will escort the student to class once parents have signed them in. If a child is dropped either at the office or their class without a parent signing them in, the parent will be called back to sign them in before the student is allowed back in class. Four tardies in a 6-week term will be counted as one unexcused absence.

### **Inclement weather days**

Please note that HPA follows Klein ISD in the event of bad weather. Please tune in to your local news station to check for school closures. If Klein ISD is closed then HPA will also close and an email will be sent out to all the parents/guardians. In case of early school closing due to severe conditions such as a storm approaching or predicted flooding, parents will be contacted to pick up their children.

# **Student Health and Safety**

## **Lunch and Snacks**

Students will bring a healthy lunch from home. There is no microwave available for student use; therefore, do not send lunches that need to be heated for consumption.

To nurture healthy habits for our students, HPA encourages parents/guardians to send healthy foods for lunch and for school gatherings. Fresh foods, with minimal sugar, are recommended. The following are examples of healthy snacks:

- Cheese & Crackers
- Fruit (grapes, strawberries, cut apples, cut oranges)
- Baby carrots, sliced cucumbers
- Apple sauce
- Yogurt

The following foods are not permitted during school hours:

- Soda
- Chocolate/Candy/gum
- Ice-cream, popsicles
- Cupcakes/cakes/donuts

## **Student Birthdays**

The only acceptable birthday treats will be books given to other students or donated to the school library.

## **Health Statement**

A Physician's Health Statement and immunization records are required at the time of enrolment. In addition, if a child has allergies or an existing medical condition, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to inform the school and educate them on how to deal with the condition during school hours.

Parents/guardians are required to fill out the student Emergency Contact Information forms for each child enrolled in the school.

For the protection of your child and other students, parents/guardians should not send their child to school if he/she shows any of the following symptoms.

- High Fever
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Evidence of a communicable disease
- Severe headache and/or stomach ache
- Spasm or convulsions
- Any severe accident including cuts or bleeding
- Persistent cough
- Rashes

Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that people with influenza-like illness remain at home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever (100° F [37.8°C]), or signs of a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications. Should any student develop any of these symptoms during school hours, parents will be notified and they need to make arrangements to pick up their child as soon as possible. In some cases, a student will not be allowed to return to school unless the student presents a written medical report from his/her doctor stating that it is permissible for him/her to go back to school.

## **Hearing and Vision Screening**

All students must have the medical form signed by a pediatrician. All students ages 4 and above must have hearing and vision screening done and the results must be provided to the school.

## **Medication**

Parents should fill out a Medical Authorization Form if their child is to take a prescribed medicine at school. Information about the medicine should be submitted along with the Medical Authorization Form. Houston Peace Academy is not responsible for any medicine taken by a student without the knowledge of the school staff. This form is available in the office. Parents should not send any medication in the student's backpack or lunchbox.



## **Insect Repellent**

Please apply insect repellent on your child before they come to school. School staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent.

## **Contagious Conditions**

Parents should report all contagious conditions (e.g. chicken pox, pink eye, influenza, etc.) to the school office.

## **Head Lice**

Students cannot attend school if they have head lice and/or nits in their hair. Once detected, students will be pulled out of class and parents will be called to pick them up immediately. Parents need to treat or have them treated before students can come to school. Parents must bring students to the front office to be checked first. Their hair must be completely free of lice and nits before being allowed back in the classroom.

## **Gang Free Zone**

Houston Peace Academy is designated as a gang-free zone within 1000 feet of the school. The purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties under state law.

## **Child Abuse & Neglect**

Abuse in any form including verbal and physical is taken seriously and will not be tolerated at Houston Peace Academy. All professionals who deal with children are mandated by state law to report suspected child abuse victims. Educators are often in the position to recognize maltreatment. As professional educators, we intend to report suspected physical, sexual and emotional abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. The reporting party will contact the Department of Family and Protective Services who will determine the child's needs at the time and will communicate those to the parents/guardians. We have a common responsibility to prevent these tragedies and to provide our

young people with the opportunity for happy and healthy lives. If parents/guardians have any concerns or need information on child abuse awareness they can go to the Department of Family and Protective Services website at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us)

### **Prohibited Materials (Before, During and After School)**

Students are not allowed to bring the following items to school unless a teacher has requested them and the student brings with them a permission note signed by the parents.

The following items are not allowed (unless permission granted by teacher):

DVD/ CD Player	Toy guns	Firecrackers and
Photo	Roller blades	poppers
camera/camcorder	Skateboards	Make-up, perfume,
iPod/mp3	Scooters	nail polish
Game Consoles	Water guns	Computer games
Playing Cards	Musical instruments	Cell Phones
Water balloons	Heelys/Wheelies	Toys
Music CD's	Pokémon and other	
Chewing gum	trading/game cards	

# Emergency Procedures

## Emergencies

All staff at Houston Peace Academy have CPR and or First Aid training. In case of injury, an incident report will be filled out and given to a parent when they pick up their child. God forbid, in case of serious injury 911 will be called and the child will be transported to the nearest health facility. Parents will be notified immediately following all serious injuries and, in most cases, will make the decision regarding the need for medical intervention.

## Evacuation Drills

Drills will be conducted at least once monthly, recorded in the office, and posted in the classroom.

## Lockdown Drills

Drills will be conducted at least once annually and recorded in the office.

## Emergency Preparedness Plan:

Houston Peace Academy takes the safety of their students and staff very seriously.

Before the school year begins, all smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries are checked to make sure they are in full working order, and all fire extinguishers are inspected monthly. Annual fire inspections and health inspections are done to make sure school facilities are to code. Carbon monoxide and smoke detector tests are conducted monthly and all these checks/inspections are fully documented. There is a security guard on site during school hours.

## Emergency Procedures

1. **FIRE-** In case of fire, the fire alarm system is automatically activated to alert staff and students and to notify the fire department. Students will exit the school building and go to the muster area. Once all students have lined up at the designated safe area, teachers will account for all students. One person will call 911.

If there is fear the fire will spread, children will be firstly relocated to our secondary location: the furthest side of the prayer hall in the masjid. If this is not safe, the students will be moved to our tertiary location: Zamani located at the intersection of Louetta Rd. and Old Louetta Rd. Parents will be notified once students have arrived at the relocation site.

There will be a surprise fire drill once a month at various times of the day to prepare students and staff in case of a real emergency. All fire drills are timed and documented.

2. **TORNADOES-**Students will be moved away from all windows and doors and told to duck and cover in their designated safe areas. A member of staff will alert 911 as soon as possible.
3. **SEVERE WEATHER/HURRICANE/FLOOD-** Office staff will monitor the media to check for the need for possible evacuation. If so, staff will contact parents and if unable/no need to leave, students and staff will shelter in place. If need be students will be relocated to our secondary or tertiary locations. 911 will be alerted and parents will be notified once students have arrived at the relocation site. There will be a severe weather drill once every three months. All severe weather drills are timed and documented.

4. **POWER OUTAGE**-In an event that there is a power outage, exit signs light up and backup lighting has been placed in each classroom

# Academic Program

## Montessori Curriculum

For the three to five-year olds, Houston Peace Academy strives to provide the best academic curriculum based on the method and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori in Early Childhood Development and Education. Houston Peace Academy implements its own Arabic-Islamic curriculum, based on the BAIE program that uses the Montessori concept to enrich the child’s Islamic personality at an early age. The different instructional areas are: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics, Science and Culture, Qur’an, Arabic, and Islamic Studies.

## Quran

Children will memorize and learn the stories behind the short surahs.

	Surahs	Pre-School	Pre-K	Kindergarten
1	Al-Fatiha	✓	✓	✓
2	An-Nas	✓	✓	✓
3	Al-Falaq	✓	✓	✓
4	Al-Ikhlās	✓	✓	✓
5	Al-Masad	✓	✓	✓
6	An-Nasr	✓	✓	✓
7	Al-Kafirun		✓	✓
8	Al-Kauthar		✓	✓
9	A-Maun		✓	✓
10	Al-Quraish		✓	✓

11	Al-Feel			✓
12	Al-Asr			✓

### Arabic

Alphabet reading all levels	Arabic vocabulary all
Alphabet writing KG	Arabic songs all
Three letter verbs KG	Arabic conversation all
Alphabet with harakat KG	Qur'an reading KG

### Islamic Studies

Basic Beliefs	Other Ibadat
Du'a	Manners and etiquette
Hadith	Seerah
Stories of the prophets	Other stories
Islamic nasheeds	Salat

### Practical Life

These activities make up the foundation of the program and help the child adapt to his/her environment. They help the child develop order and logical thinking skills, as well as attention to detail, concentration, and coordination of movement. This in turn leads to the development of will and self-control. The activities in this area are as follows:

<b>Movement</b>	<b>Care of Self</b>	<b>Care of Environment</b>	<b>Exercises of Grace and Courtesy</b>
Standing	Pouring wet and dry	Crumbing a tray	Greeting
Walking	Spooning	Dusting a table	Handing or offering
Carrying a tray	Sorting	Polishing metal	Polite phrases

Lifting a tray	Folding	Washing a table	Answering the door
Sitting	Sponge squeezing	Caring for indoor plants	Inviting guests in
Carrying a chair	Polishing glass/brass	Gardening	Respecting personal spaces
Rolling rug/place mat	Washing hands		Inside voices
Sitting on chair at the table	Dressing frames: (buttons, buckles, zipper, tie, Velcro)		
Walking in a line	Tonging		
Silence game	Putting on a coat		

## Sensorial

These traditional Montessori didactic materials help the child order, relate, classify, explore and realize the sense impressions the child already has. The materials help the child in his sense discriminations. They form the groundwork for future academic learning. Activities in this area are as follows:

Cylinder Blocks (knobless)	Binomial
Pink Tower	Geometric Solids
Botany Cabinet and Cards	Rectangular Box A & B
Brown Stair	Color Tablets
Constructive Triangles	Small Hexagonal
Triangular Box	Knobless Cylinders
Rough and Smooth Boards	Discrimination of Grains
Fabrics	Mystery Bag Geometric Cabinet and
Sound Boxes	Cards

## Language

Language is woven into all parts of the program. Beginning with conversation, the child is taken through sound analysis to reading, functions of words, and sentence analysis.

Conversation	Sandpaper Letters
Sequencing Patterning	Simple Sentences
Enrichment of vocabulary	Metal Insect
Sound analysis (phonics)	Beginning Sounds
Movable Alphabet	Word construction
Reading analysis	Sentence Construction
Puzzle Envelopes	Ending Sounds
Reading Classification	

## Mathematics

Montessori loved that every human being is endowed with a mathematical mind. The tendencies to investigate, calculate, measure, imagine, and create all lead from abstraction. The mathematics materials are listed below.

Number Rods	SandPaper Numbers-Association
Spindle Boxes	Cards & Counters
Work Charts	Negative Snake Games
Strip Boards	Multiplication Beads
Teens	Decimal System
Linear counting	Tens
Bead Cabinet	Skip Counting
Snake Game-addition	Strip Boards-addition
Golden Bead Addition/Subtraction	

## Science and Culture

Geography	Puzzle Maps	Botany	Biology
Solar System	Continents	Life Cycle of a	External Body Parts
Day and Night	North America	Plant	Senses
Weather	South America	Botany	Hygiene and Care of the body
Seasons	Europe	Cabinet	
Land and Water Forms	Africa	Parts of a Plant	Parts of a Mammals, insects, Fish, Birds, Reptiles
	Asia		
Parts of Earth	Australia		Amphibians



	United States of America		Internal Organs
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In the Montessori system the ultimate goal is mastery of the task, once the child completes the task successfully, and can reproduce the same results, the child advances to the next lesson.

### **Homework Policy**

Homework will be given to PK and KG students only and is consistent with the developmental level of the child. At the Montessori level homework assignments will mainly involve the students practicing writing letters and practicing their reading skills, but parents are encouraged **not to force their children to do it**. The purpose of the homework is to develop independent study habits, reinforce classroom instruction and encourage parent involvement in the child’s academic development. Parents are encouraged to **read** to their children.

#### Report Card/Progress Reports

Student work in the Montessori classroom system is not formally graded, therefore formal report cards will not be issued. Instead, Progress Reports indicating the child’s accomplishments will be issued twice during the school year. Children in the Montessori classroom will not be given letter or number grades. The progress reports will note which tasks the child has mastered as well as general comments about the student’s progress.

### **Elementary Curriculum**

HPA uses the Common Core curriculum and TEKS objectives as a basis for our enquiry/ project-based learning which:

- Integrates Science, Writing, Social Studies, Islamic Studies, Technology and Character Education using thematic instruction, and connects with community issues.
- Encourages the development of habits of mind associated with lifelong learning, civic responsibility, and personal or career success.

- Promotes strategies and techniques that improve listening and comprehension skills through centers, comprehension drills, and use of technology.
- Overcomes the disconnect between knowledge and practical life, helping students to both "know" and "do."
- Assesses performance on content and skills using criteria similar to that used in the real world, thus encouraging accountability, goal setting, and improved performance.
- Engages and motivates bored or indifferent students.
- Supports students in learning and practicing skills in problem solving, communication, and self-management.
- Creates positive communication and collaborative relationships among diverse groups of students.
- Meets the needs of learners with varying skill levels and learning styles.

The Elementary curriculum taught at HPA includes:

### **Quran**

Memorization, reading, tajweed and some tafseer

1 <sup>st</sup>	Al-Bayyannah, Al-Qadr, Al-Alaq, At-Teen, Al-Sharh, Adh-dhuha
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Al-Laiyl, Ash-Shams, Al-Balad, Al-Fajr
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Al-Ghashiyah, Al-A'la, At-Tariq, Al-Burooj, Al-Inshiqaq
4 <sup>th</sup>	Al-Mutafifeen, Al-Infitar, At-Takweer
5 <sup>th</sup>	Abasa, An-Nazi'at, Annaba
6 <sup>th</sup>	Al-Mursalat, Al-Insan, Al-Qiyamah
7 <sup>th</sup>	Al-Muddathir, Al-Muzzammil, Al-Jin, Nuh
8 <sup>th</sup>	Al-Ma'arij, Al-Haqqah, Al-qalam, Al-Mulk

### **Arabic**

Reading, writing, speaking, vocabulary and basic grammar.

### **Islamic Studies**

Seerah & Islamic history, Aqeedah & Ibadat and Islamic manners that covers the following areas:

1. Iman
2. Fiqh ul-Ibadat
3. Fiqh ul-mu'amalat
4. Qur'an
5. Hadeeth
6. Seerah
7. Islamic character education
8. The Muslim world

### **Language Arts**

Literature, reading, writing, spelling, listening, comprehension and speaking skills using the Journeys program. The teachers use their training and materials provided by The Writers In The Schools under University of Houston to bring out students' creativity and further develop writing skills.

### **Math**

Concepts, operational skills and problem solving using the Singapore Math/Math in Focus and the related Think Central website. This is supplemented using IXL, an online math practice website that tracks student progress.

### **Science**

Life, Physical and Earth science using Science Fusion (based on TEKS), Stemsopes and Brainpop programs.

### **Social Studies**

History, geography, cultures, civilizations and government based on Social Studies Weekly publication.

## **Physical Education**

## **Computer / Research and Publishing Skills**

## **Library**

## **Art**

## **Homework**

Homework includes all activities in which a student engages in, away from the school, that have correlation to schoolwork and learning. Research shows that students can learn more when they actively engage in a variety of homework activities and that schools in which homework is routinely assigned and graded tend to have higher achieving students. However, research has also proven that homework is more effective when its quality supersedes its quantity, and should challenge the student while sustaining their interest. Thus, homework should be minimal, appropriate to the ability and maturity level of students, is well explained and motivational, and clearly understood by both a student and parents. Homework should be tied to the current subject matter being taught in class, assigned in amounts and levels of difficulty which students can complete successfully, and should be checked quickly, with feedback to students. We do encourage parents to become involved with their child's education by discussing with him/her homework assignments.

Homework can be assigned for any or all of the following purposes:

- To enrich and extend school experiences through home activities.
- To provide essential practice in needed skills.
- To develop good study habits, which lead to increased independence by the student, budgeting of time, self-direction, responsibility and initiative.

We often think of homework as involving pencil and paper type tasks, but homework may also include activities such as:

- Practice assignments to reinforce a recently taught skill
- Continuation of work begun in class
- Reading orally to parents
- Collection and preparation of exhibits

- Writing stories and reports
- Studying for tests
- Creative art activities
- Science projects
- Practicing math facts
- Conducting an interview
- Recreational/pleasure reading
- Rehearsing a speech that is to be given in class
- Reading to gather information for a written report
- Watching and evaluating assigned television programs
- Comparing the cost of a list of items found in various stores
- Visiting a museum, library, art gallery or zoo
- Writing an article for the school newsletter

## **Communication**

### **Civility Policy**

Parents and Guardians of Houston Peace Academy acknowledge and agree that the opportunity to attend Houston Peace Academy is conditional at all times upon both the student and all other members of the family honoring the standards for civility, courtesy and mutual respect toward other students, parents, faculty and staff set forth in the school's Student/Parent Handbook.

### **Communication Channels**

The following methods are utilized to keep parents informed about how their children are progressing in school: (Please refer to the HPA Calendar for specific dates)

- The school website ([www.houstonpeace.org](http://www.houstonpeace.org)) contains important information for parents. We encourage parents to check it regularly for posting of current events
- Report cards after each six-week blocks
- Parents will receive electronic monthly school newsletters

- Parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of first and second semesters and/or by request
- PTO meetings are held periodically
- Parents are encouraged to have open communication with teachers by appointment. To set an appointment with a teacher, send an email or QuickSchools message to the teacher. All teachers' email addresses are available in the Directory on the School website.
- Periodic email from Principal (parent mailing list)
- QuickSchools messages
- WhatsApp group message with important announcements from admin

### **Procedure for Addressing Concerns**

We encourage parents to give feedback and communicate openly with us in order to continually improve the services we provide. Concerns should be addressed to the staff or community members directly involved and we ask that no one speaks critically about others behind their backs in the spirit of the sunnah of Rasulullah (saw) and with the proper adhab. It is the responsibility of the individual bringing the concern to ensure that the concern has been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties and it is recommended that the concern and resolution be stated in writing for the benefit of both parties. The concern and resolution should be addressed in a spirit of kindness and with the awareness that open, direct communication will provide the best opportunity for resolution.

Teachers may request a conference with parents to address academic or behavioral concerns. In the event that the parents ignore or refuse repeated requests they will need to meet with the principal before the student is allowed to return. HPA reserves the right to dismiss or to refuse renewal of registration for students whose parents avoid/reject conferences after repeated requests.

### **Referral Process**

Based on a teacher's recommendation, observations, or results from tests given to all children in a particular grade or if the teacher has observed behavior that may indicate a disorder, disability or special needs for a particular child, he/she

will begin the referral process and suggest in writing to the parents to consult the child's pediatrician. Teacher is to submit the conference report signed by the parents to the office within two days from the meeting. Teacher/staff cannot diagnose a student.

## **Part II General Information**

### **Parents and Visitors**

Parents and visitors must respect the fact that HPA is an Islamic school and they should dress modestly when coming into the school building or playground and while attending school-related functions, field trips, etc.

### **Parent Involvement Policy**

At Houston Peace Academy we recognize that a child's education is a responsibility shared by the school and family. Our strength is our parents who are diverse in culture, language and needs, and all share the school's commitment to excellence in the education and training of their children. In order to support the goal of the school to educate all students effectively, parents must work as knowledgeable partners and active supporters. Every family is expected to volunteer at least 10 hours per school year. A fee of \$300 will be automatically charged if the hours are not met.

### **Field Trips**

At Houston Peace Academy we arrange field trips which augment and enrich the curriculum. Children are able to learn in much greater detail when they not only study a subject in class, but also visit a location that reinforces and enhances the subject matter. Students will be required to submit a permission slip to the school by the deadline. Parents may be requested to help as chaperones. Students must pay all required fees (if any) by the deadline. Children not participating on the field trip will have to stay home that day as staff will not be available to take care of students on campus. Also, students arriving late after the class has left for the field trip will have to be taken home. As field trips are booked in advance and tickets are paid for, all fees paid for the field trip are non-refundable.



## **Chaperones**

All chaperones will be accepted on a first come first served basis and are responsible to pay any entry fees ahead of time. We cannot accept any chaperones joining on the day of the trip or after the deadlines. All chaperones will be given a responsibility/duty for that day.

## **Lost and Found**

Lost articles, clothes and personal items may be claimed outside of the school office. Valuables can be claimed at the front office. It would be helpful to have your child's name marked inside articles of clothing, book bags, lunch boxes, etc. Unclaimed items left after the end of each month will be donated.

## **Leaving School during the School Day**

During the school day, no student is permitted to leave the school grounds without being signed out by a parent, legal guardian or authorized emergency contact at the school office.

## **Parent Orientation**

This is a special event for all parents before the start of the new school year to meet their child's teacher and obtain a better idea of how the school year will progress in the classroom.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

One or more conferences shall be held during each school year between a teacher and the parents/guardians of a student if any of the following circumstances arise:

1. The student is not maintaining passing grades or achieving the expected level of performance.
2. The student demonstrates discipline problems, or presents some other problem to the teacher.
3. Other cases in which the teacher considers it necessary.

## **Use of the School Phone and Cell Phones**

Students may use the office telephone at the school, only in case of emergency. In the event a parent calls the school to relay a message to his/her child, they should expect to leave a message with the office admin to be delivered to the child. Please try to limit phone calls to emergency situations only.

Students may have a cell phone and must keep it off during school hours. They may use them only after school. If cell phones are detected in class by sight or sound (ring or vibrate mode), they will get one warning then it will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day to the parent.

# **Library and Technology**

We recommend our students get a Harris County Library card. We teach the students to access their public libraries to search the catalog. These are valuable information resources that students can access for research projects and homework assistance.

Our Library does not charge fines for past due books. We have adopted this policy because fines discourage some students from checking out books, and because the administration of the fine system takes valuable time away from being with students, helping them choose books they will enjoy. Therefore, we ask that you know your child's library day and help them remember to return their books. Please read the following HPA Library contract with your child and sign the Student Library contract.

## **HPA Student Library Contract**

Grades K-3 have a weekly scheduled library lesson. These lessons are designed to enhance and support the school curriculum. Our goal here at the HPA Library is to help students develop the joy of learning through reading. In order to do this, we would like you to be our partners in making our students avid and capable readers. Please review this contract carefully with your child. The signature portion of this form has to be returned to the library in the students' first library class. No checkouts will be permitted without it.

### **Library Goals**

- To establish library practices designed to promote student success.
- To guide students toward independent study skills through instruction on the use of the library.
- To offer and provide guidance to students in their reading interests and research needs.
- To maintain adequate supplies of high interest reading materials.
- To provide a courteous atmosphere conducive to learning.

### **Library Procedures**

- Students may check out books at any time from the HPA Library.

- Number of books allowed for checkout corresponds with the student's grade; first graders checkout one book, second graders two, and so on. Checkout starts in first grade and first grade students are required to keep their books in their classroom.
- Students may check out books during the last fifteen minutes of their Library lesson.
- The student is responsible for returning the book he/she borrowed. The due date for returning books is 7 days.
- If the book is not returned within a week an overdue notice will be issued to the student.
- Student's parents are responsible to pay for all lost/damaged books, so the library can replace these items. Borrowing privileges will be suspended until the student clears his/her account.
- The student will not be allowed to borrow any more books, even for class research projects, until the overdue book is returned or a payment for a damaged book is received.

#### **Use of Library Computers:**

- Library computers are only for curriculum research. Personal searches, forums, social network sites, chat lines, personal e-mail, games and video clips are prohibited at all times.
- Downloading video games and video clips is not permitted at any time in the HPA library. Students will be suspended from all library privileges if they engage in this activity. Upon a second offense students will be automatically referred to the Principal.

#### **Behavior Expectations:**

- Board games and playing cards are not allowed in the library.
- While in the library the students will respect themselves by having a positive attitude and showing self-control.
- Respect others by cooperating and sharing.
- Respect school equipment by caring for the books and the computers.
- Be a responsible learner by listening, following directions, and participating positively.

### **We recommend that Parents/Guardians:**

- Develop a routine with your student to help them remember Library Day and bring their library books back to school on time.
- Encourage your child to make a special place for keeping their HPA library books at home (i.e., a basket by the bed).
- Read the Library Contract with your child.

### **Overdue, Lost and Damaged Book Policy**

If a student loses or damages a library book:

- Check-out privileges will be temporarily suspended.
- Librarian will verbally remind the student about his/her overdue books.
- In their next library class, students will be issued an overdue notice that will list the titles and costs of the overdue books.
- Parents will receive an e-mail from the librarian informing them about their student's lost/damaged books.
- Students will receive two overdue notices.
- No refunds will be issued to students once they have made a payment for a lost/damaged book.

### **Final Notice**

After the student has received two notifications, we will presume the book to be lost and will send a letter home to the parents with the following options:

- Find the lost item.
- Pay the replacement fee.

Replacement fees can be found on the overdue notice and can be paid in either cash or check. Checks should be made payable to Houston Peace Academy with Library in the memo line. The fee or check should be given to the librarian.

### **Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting thousands of computers and millions of individual subscribers all over the world. Students and staff have access to university and public libraries, museums, information and news from a

wide variety of sources and research institutions, government agencies, electronic mail and much more.

We believe that the Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to students, teachers, and the community. Our goal in providing this service is to promote educational excellence through resource sharing, innovation, and communication. The Internet can enhance curriculum by providing collaborative learning environments, promoting higher-order thinking skills through real world problem solving, and serving as an effective communication tool.

With access to computers and people all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. Houston Peace Academy has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials through filtering software, and every effort will be made to protect students and staff from any misuses or abuses as a result of their experiences with this information service. We firmly believe that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school.

Please read the following guidelines for Internet access carefully. Signatures of the student, teacher, and parent/guardian are required before access to the Internet can be granted.

## **Internet Terms and Conditions**

### **Acceptable Use**

The use of the Internet must be for educational and research activities and be consistent with the educational objectives of HPA. All illegal activities such as transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation are prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening material, or any unacceptable or objectionable information, language, or images.

### **Security**

In order to protect students from misuse of the information service, filtering software that blocks objectionable sites is installed on all computers with Internet access. Activities involving the Internet will have a specific curriculum

objective, and the student will have a clear assignment. Security precautions enhance the quality of instruction for the student, improve student achievement, and protect staff and student interests. Even though HPA has taken precautions to eliminate access to controversial materials, it is impossible to guarantee restriction of all inappropriate materials. It is the user's responsibility to utilize the Internet in an efficient, ethical and legal manner, as well as to immediately report all unacceptable behavior or site violations to HPA faculty or staff.

### **Privileges**

The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of those privileges as well as any school-based disciplinary consequence and/or legal action. The school administrators will deem what is inappropriate use of the Internet, and their decision is final. Also, the administration, faculty, and staff of HPA may request a school administrator to deny, revoke, or suspend Internet privileges. All HPA students and staff are requested to refrain from downloading and installing programs to any school computer without receiving permission from the teacher. This would include such items as music files, software demonstrations, upgrades, patches, plug-ins, etc.

### **Vandalism**

Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy data of another user, Internet, or any other network or agency connected to the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses, changing computer configurations, screensavers, home pages, etc.

### **Network Etiquette**

Students and staff are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite and safe. Do not send or reply to messages that are abusive.
- Use appropriate language.
- Do not reveal your last name, personal address or phone number or those of other students.

- Do not access files that contain objectionable material. Report to the teacher immediately any objectionable site that may be accidentally accessed.
- Do not access another individual's materials, information, or files without their permission.
- Do not violate copyright or otherwise use the intellectual property of another individual or organization without permission.
- Be considerate. Do not use your Internet access in a way that would interfere with others use or access. This includes, but is not limited to failing to log out appropriately, downloading large files at peak times, and printing large amounts of material from the Internet or electronic mail. Users are reminded that electronic mail sent or received is not private. System operators have access to all electronic mail. Files created by students are subject to review by staff.

## **Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is defined as the use of electronic devices and information, such as email, instant messages, text messages, mobile phones, and web sites (MySpace, Facebook, Twitter) to send or post harmful messages or images about an individual or a group. Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Sending hurtful, rude, or mean text messages to others
- Spreading rumors or lies about others by email or on social networks
- Creating websites, videos or social media profiles that embarrass, humiliate, or make fun of others

Any student who participates in such unlawful activity will be subject to appropriate discipline as defined in the school discipline policy.

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks are the property of Houston Peace Academy. Each student will be assigned textbooks for certain subjects. It is the responsibility of the student to protect books by keeping them covered, clean and in good condition at all times. Students must not write in, draw or tear out any pages from the textbooks. If a textbook is lost and returned to the office, students will have to pay a fee of \$2



before they can receive the textbook back. Any damages to a book must be paid for according to the following scale:

- For excessive writing in books: One quarter of the price
- For any missing pages: Full price
- For losing or tearing off the cover: Full price
- For water damage: Full price
- Students must pay full contract or replacement prices for all textbooks lost, regardless of how long the books have been in use.

# **Discipline Procedures and Policies**

## **Purpose**

Houston Peace Academy strives to foster a learning environment, which is safe and free of fear and distractions in order to promote positive learning experiences for all students and develop in them respect for others and their surroundings. In order to maintain an environment conducive to attaining the highest quality of education, HPA has established certain disciplinary policies and procedures that will be enforced fairly, uniformly, and consistently.

## **School Discipline Person**

The school discipline person(s) shall be the Principal or her designee. Duties shall include the authority to:

- Evaluate and implement the discipline policy.
- Remove a student from campus for emergency reasons.
- Suspend a student for no more than three consecutive school days per incident.
- Recommend a student for expulsion to the HPA Board.

The HPA Advisory Panel is the only authorized party to expel students after due process.

## **Responsibilities**

HPA shall foster a climate of mutual respect for the rights of others. Each student is expected to respect the rights and privileges of other students, teachers, and all other HPA staff. Students shall exercise their rights responsibly, in compliance with rules established for orderly conduct to facilitate the HPA educational mission. Students who violate the rights of others or who violate HPA rules shall be subject to disciplinary measures. These measures are designed to establish Islamic conduct and exemplary citizenship both in and out of school.

## **Responsibilities of Students**

- Students' responsibilities for achieving a positive learning environment at school or school-related activities shall include:

- Attend all classes, regularly and on time.
- Be prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
- Be appropriately dressed and groomed.
- Show respect toward others.
- Behave Islamically and responsibly
- Refrain from violations of the code of student conduct.
- Obey all school rules, including safety rules.
- Show proper restraint if confronted by other students and report such incidents and violations to any staff member.

### **Responsibilities of Parents**

Throughout this document, "parents" includes single parent, legal guardian, or person who has lawful control of the student. Parents have the responsibility to:

- Provide for the physical needs of the student.
- Help students understand that school rules ensure respect and safety for everyone and must be adhered to at all times.
- Remind students that teachers and staff shall be shown respect during and outside of class.
- Be sure the student attends school regularly and on time; and promptly report and explain absences and tardiness to the school office.
- Encourage and lead the students to develop proper study and behavior habits at home.
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences to discuss the student's progress and welfare.
- Keep informed about school policies and the academic requirements of school programs.
- Read all communication materials coming from school: newsletters, email messages, website announcements.
- Pay required fees and fines.
- Participate in school-related organizations.
- Ensure the student is dressed according to school uniform policy and groomed at school-related activities.
- Discuss report cards and school assignments with the student.

- Alert the school authorities of any learning problem or condition that may relate to the student's education.
- Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information at the school.
- Cooperate with school staff.
- Be sure the student attends school tutorials when required or as the need arises.
- Sign and submit the attached Acknowledgment Statement.
- Exercise appropriate parental control and responsibility, which includes being liable for property damage proximately caused by (a) the negligent conduct of the student if the conduct is reasonably attributable to the failure of the parent to exercise their duty to control and reasonably discipline their child, or (b) the willful or malicious conduct of their child.
- Be respectful to other parents and students and do not intimidate staff, parents or students at any time.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

### **Jurisdiction**

HPA has jurisdiction over its students during the regular school day. HPA's jurisdiction includes any activity during the school day on school grounds, and any school-related activity, regardless of time or location.

### **Vandalism and Damage to School Property**

Students shall not vandalize or otherwise damage any property, including furniture and other equipment, belonging to or utilized by HPA. Parents of students and non-students guilty of damaging school property shall be liable for damages in accordance with the law.

### **Prohibited Activities**

All offenses and acts of misconduct listed under Category I through Category III, as well as other acts of misconduct listed throughout this handbook, are prohibited activities and any student who engages in any of these activities will be subject to appropriate discipline.

## **Harassment**

Students will interact in courteous, respectful ways without bothering others.

## **Responsible Behaviors**

- Students will use appropriate language, (no "put downs"), either written or verbal, toward other people on HPA premises.
- Students will use appropriate materials, gestures and sounds at HPA.
- Students will demonstrate appropriate interaction (physically and verbally) with other students and/or rightful authority figures.
- Students will engage in appropriate behavior and conversations so as not to offend others.
- Students who experience harassment will tell the offender to stop the inappropriate behavior and report the incident to a staff member.

## **Discipline Management**

### **General Guidelines for Assessing Discipline Penalties**

When applying discipline policy, HPA personnel shall adhere to the following guidelines.

The teacher will demonstrate how to behave and what to say in a particular situation. When a child wilfully disobeys, disrupts, injures or destroys, he/she is immediately but gently removed to a place apart from the group, but within the same room when possible. This enables the child to observe other children's positive behavior. The child may have to sit at the "thinking table" for a specific time (usually not more than 5 minutes) to think about his/her behavior. He/she may join the group for activities when he/she feels ready.

Discipline shall be administered when necessary to protect students, school employees, or property and maintain essential safety and order.

Students shall be treated fairly and equally. Discipline shall be based on a careful assessment of the circumstance of each case. Factors to consider shall include:

- Seriousness of the offense
- Student's age
- Frequency of misconduct
- Student's attitude
- Potential effect of the misconduct on the school environment

Generally, academic sanctions shall not be used as discipline. However, when the disciplinary infraction is academically related, such as cheating or plagiarism, academic sanctions determined by the teacher may be imposed.

Students will receive “Happy Note Home” or “Caught Doing Something Good” to reinforce positive behavior.

### **Discipline Management Techniques**

Discipline management techniques are available when assessing penalties for violations of the code of conduct, regardless of the offense. HPA shall apply the disciplinary consequence required by the Discipline Policy and Procedure.

Discipline management techniques may include:

- Verbal correction
- Developing “Grace and Courtesy”, good habits, adhab starting in the Montessori and continuing into Elementary to maintain consistency and develop lasting good habits
- Cooling off/thinking time
- Rewards will be goal based
- Assigned school duties other than class tasks
- Sending the student to the office or other assigned areas
- Withdrawal of privileges, including participation in extracurricular activities and honorary positions
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Confiscation of items that disrupt the educational process
- Detention
- Behavioral contracts
- Counseling by teachers, or administrative personnel
- Suspension
- School defined and imposed probation
- Expulsion

### **Record Keeping and Tracking**

The Principal or his/her designee will compile all student records and review them for conformance with this policy.

## Minor Offenses

Minor offenses are those, which are not deemed serious in nature but may disrupt the educational atmosphere of the school. Any violation of the Code of Conduct that is listed below as a Category I offense is considered a minor offense.

## Persistent Offenses

HPA defines "persistent" to be two or more violations of the Code of Conduct in general or recorded repeated occurrences of the same category violation.

## Serious Offenses

Any offense that is Category II or above, or is listed as prohibited conduct in the Code of Conduct, is considered a serious offense.

## Records

Category I offenses are to be recorded by the teacher in writing including date and description of offense.

Category II and III offenses will result in a meeting with the homeroom teacher and the Vice Principal to agree on a Plan of Action.

## Classification of Offenses

The following offenses and consequential disciplinary options are listed in order of severity, with Category I being the least severe and Category III being the most severe. Any offense committed by a student, which is not listed below shall be classified at the discretion of the Vice Principal.

Category I Offenses	Category II Offenses	Category III Offenses
Running or making excessive noise in the hallways, classroom, or building Excessive talking	Persistent offenses from Category I or acts of misconduct for which the student has been warned	Persistent offenses from Category II (more severe and disruptive misbehavior)

<p>Failing to follow classroom rules Failing to participate in classroom activities 1st and 2nd offense for uniform violation</p> <p><b>Consequences</b></p> <p><b>Options</b></p> <p>Change seat assignment Verbal reprimand/ Warning Time out in the classroom (5-10 minutes) Special assignments or duties Behavioral contracts Withdrawal of privilege(s)</p>	<p>Possession of prohibited items Possessing and/or using nuisance items Put-downs and other forms of disrespect to fellow students Pushing, shoving, or other forms of horseplay Throwing objects with intent to cause bodily injury or damage to property. Bullying fellow students Lying Misuse of food during lunch Misuse of restroom &amp; school property Not listening to instruction during emergency drill 3rd offense for uniform violation</p> <p><b>Consequences Options</b></p> <p>Issue of yellow slip and call to parents Temporary removal from class In-school suspension Confiscation of prohibited item Exclusion from extracurricular activities (clubs, field trips with Principal's approval) Restitution/Compensation</p>	<p>Exhibiting disrespect of school employees or other adults Insubordination, noncompliance with the directives of school staff Fighting, physical abuse, or threat of physical abuse Directing profanity, vulgar language, racial slurs or obscene gestures to others Leaving school without permission Vandalism, including defacement of school property False fire alarm Stealing Cheating and Plagiarism</p> <p><b>Consequences Options</b></p> <p>Issue of yellow slip and parent conference with Vice Principal Removal from class Exclusion from extracurricular activities (clubs, field trips with Principal's approval) Restitution (Compensation), if applicable Expulsion</p>
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## **Behavior Plans**

In addition to this discipline policy, the HPA staff may establish more specific detailed behavior plans for individual students. These detailed plans will conform to all provisions of this discipline policy. Under the supervision of the Principal/Vice Principal, HPA staff is responsible for developing, updating and re-evaluating these plans for effectiveness.

## **Teacher Removal of Students**

A teacher may send a student to the Principal's and/or Vice Principal's office in the case of unruly, disruptive or abusive behavior. The Principal and/or Vice Principal shall respond by applying appropriate discipline methods consistent with HPA policy and the code of conduct.

A teacher may remove from class a student whose persistent misbehavior has been documented to interfere with the teacher's ability to communicate effectively, or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn. The Principal and/or Vice Principal may either:

- Place the student in another appropriate classroom;
- Place the student in school suspension; or
- Send the student home with parents.

## **Hearing**

No later than the third-class day after the day on which a teacher removes a student from class, the Principal and/or Vice Principal shall schedule a hearing among the Principal, the parent or guardian of the student, the teacher removing the student, and the student. The student may not be returned to class pending the hearing. Following the hearing and whether or not each requested person is in attendance, after valid attempts to require a person's attendance, the Principal shall order the placement of the student either in in-school suspension, or another teacher's classroom.

## **Non-Disciplinary Emergency Removals**

Students may be removed from regular classes or HPA premises for non-disciplinary health, welfare, and safety reasons when the Principal and/or

Vice Principal determine that an emergency exists. Reasons constituting an emergency include, but are not limited to:

- Being highly agitated.
- Suffering from any other condition that temporarily threatens the student's welfare, other individual's welfare, or the efficient operation of the school.

Any student removed from school for a reason shown above who is in a condition that threatens his or her own welfare or the welfare of others shall be released to the parent, the parent's representative, or other proper authority, including, but not limited to medical personnel. Such removal shall be for as short a time as is reasonable under the circumstances, but is limited to no more than five (5) consecutive school days.

### **Notice to Parent**

HPA shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent prior to removing a child from school premises. If the parent cannot be notified prior to removal, the parent shall be notified as soon as possible of the reasons for removal.

### **Suspension**

A student may be put into in-school suspension for a period not to exceed three consecutive school days. There is no limit to the times per school year that a student may be suspended, so long as each term of suspension does not exceed three school days. The length of the suspension will be based on the severity and number of offenses, and shall be determined by the Principal. A student may be suspended for any offense designated as a serious offense in this discipline policy (Category III or above). A student will not be afforded a hearing on the suspension; however, the Principal will inform the student of the reasons for the suspension and grant the student an opportunity to give his/her version of the incident.

### **Hearing. Notice to Parent**

Before suspending a student, the Principal shall conduct an informal hearing at which:

1. The student is advised of the conduct with which he or she is charged.

2. The student is given the opportunity to explain his or her version of the incident.

The student's parent shall be notified of a suspension by telephone or other appropriate means as soon as reasonably possible. Parents of students who have been suspended shall be advised that it is their responsibility to provide adequate supervision for the student during the period of suspension.

### **Parent Conference**

When the Principal and/or Vice Principal suspends a student for more than one day, he/she shall, within 3 school days, schedule a conference with the student's parent to discuss the disciplinary action and/or the student's misbehavior.

### **Expulsion**

The Principal shall make referrals for expulsion to the Board of Directors for their consideration. The Board shall meet within 3 days of receiving this referral to evaluate the situation and schedule a hearing with the parents.

### **Due Process**

Before a student is expelled, the HPA Board shall provide the student an opportunity for a hearing at which the student is afforded due process, which shall include the following:

- Prior notice of the charges and the proposed sanctions so as to afford a reasonable opportunity for preparation.
- Right to a full and fair hearing before the HPA Board.
- Right to an adult representative.
- Opportunity to testify and present evidence and witnesses in his or her defense.
- Opportunity to examine the evidence presented by the school administration and question the administration's witnesses.

The notice shall be in writing and shall advise of the nature of the evidence to be used against the student, including a list of witnesses and the nature of their testimony, and any documents that will be used at the hearing. The decision shall be based exclusively on evidence presented at the hearing. The final decision

shall be communicated promptly, and in writing, to the student and parent within 5 school days of the hearing date.

### **Physical Restraint**

Any HPA employee may, within the scope of the employee's duties, use and apply physical restraint on a student that the employee reasonably believes is necessary in order to:

- Protect a person, including the person using physical restraint, from physical injury.
- Obtain possession of a dangerous object.
- Protect property from serious damage.
- Remove from a specific location a student refusing a lawful command of an HPA employee, including from a classroom or other school property, in order to restore order or impose disciplinary measures.
- Restrain an irrational student.

### **Cheating/Academic Dishonesty**

Copying another person's work, such as homework, class work, or a test, is a form of cheating. The student will be subject to academic disciplinary action that may include loss of credit for the work in question. Teachers who have reason to believe that a student has engaged in cheating or other academic dishonesty will evaluate the academic penalty to be imposed. Students found engaging in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary penalties as stated in the Student Code of Conduct.

## **Dismissal of Students/Parents/Staff Members**

HPA reserves the right to dismiss a student, parent and/or staff member whose presence in the school is considered detrimental, disruptive or dangerous to the best interest of the students, staff or the school in general. HPA also reserves the right to terminate or refuse renewal of student enrollment if the school concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make a positive and constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise seriously interfere with the school's accomplishment of its mission. HPA also reserves the right to dismiss any student, parent and/or staff member who knowingly goes against any of the school's published policies and/or promotes negative advertising against the school verbally, in writing and/or on any published medium, including social networking sites.

HPA reserves the right to refuse registration or renewal of registration due to failure to provide all required documents, fees, forms, conference or any other item the school has requested.

# COVID-19 Prevention, Mitigation, and Response

## Procedures

As we plan to return to school at Houston Peace Academy, we recognize that this will be an unusual school year, but we remain committed to supporting your student's learning, as well as his or her safety.

This document outlines the procedures our campuses will have in place to prevent or mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and to respond if a positive case is identified.

The virus that causes COVID-19 can infect people of all ages. For many children, there are distinct benefits to attending school in person, including instructional, social, and safety benefits. For these reasons, the American Academy of Pediatrics has made a statement supporting on campus instruction for students in the coming year.

While it is not possible to eliminate all risks of furthering the spread of COVID-19, the current science suggests there are many steps schools can take to reduce the risks to students, teachers, staff, and their families significantly. The HPA strategy for opening and operating is outlined below.

## Prevention

To prevent COVID-positive individuals from entering our campuses, your child's school will have the following COVID-19 symptoms screening procedures in place:

- All staff will be required to self-screen daily before reporting to school.
- All visitors will be required to screen upon arrival.
- Parents are asked to proactively identify if their child exhibits COVID-19 symptoms and therefore keep them home. According to the CDC, symptoms of COVID-19 include:
  - Fever or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches

- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

## **Criteria for Returning to School**

Conditions for return to school after an individual shows symptoms or gets a positive test result: Either:

- 72 hours with no fever; and
- Symptoms improved; and
- 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Or:

- An acute infection test at an approved testing location (<https://tdem.texas.gov/covid-19/>) that comes back negative for COVID-19

Or:

- A doctor's note indicating an alternate diagnosis

## **Mitigation**

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, facial coverings will be worn by all medically and developmentally able staff, students, and visitors who show symptoms. Individuals who show symptoms and are not able to wear facial coverings for medical or developmental reasons will not be admitted to the school's campuses.

## **Response**

In the event of a COVID-positive case on campus, the campus will take the following steps:

- All areas that are heavily used by the individual with the lab-confirmed case will be closed off until disinfected.
- All teachers, staff, and families of all students in that school will be notified.
- The local health department will be notified.

We hope that this information gives you confidence in our systems and our ability to stop the spread of COVID-19 on our campuses. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the School Principal.

While this will be a challenging year, we believe it can also be a great one, and we look forward to supporting your child on his or her learning journey.