



3434 Falaise Ave. Vancouver, BC V5M 4C1

## Communication with Separated or Divorced Parents

At Happy Corner Preschool, our priority is the well-being, safety, and educational experience of every child. We recognize that some families may be navigating separation, divorce, or shared custody arrangements, and we aim to support each child with sensitivity and professionalism.

If there is a legal parenting plan in place—such as a Consent Order, Court Order, Parenting Coordinator’s directive, or an Order issued through arbitration—a copy must be provided to the preschool. This ensures the school is informed of any legal custody arrangements, communication protocols, or decision-making responsibilities relevant to the child’s care.

In the absence of a legal parenting plan, the following guidelines will be applied to ensure consistency, respect, and clear communication for all parties involved:

## **1. Neutrality of Teachers and Staff**

Teachers and staff are not mediators and will remain neutral in all matters concerning parental disputes. They are not responsible for facilitating communication between parents or resolving personal disagreements. Teachers will not take sides, interpret one parent's wishes for the other, or be used as messengers.

## **2. Equal Access to Information**

All school-wide communication will be distributed equally to both parents if both are listed on the registration forms, unless legal documentation states otherwise. It is the responsibility of the parents to ensure they are both receiving communication. Teachers are not required to provide additional updates beyond what is communicated during pick-up.

## **3. School-Related Communication Only**

Emails to teachers or the school should focus solely on the child's education, well-being, or school-related logistics. Teachers are not compensated for time spent outside of school hours responding to parent emails and already volunteer a significant amount of their time out of love for the preschool and its families. Please keep email correspondence to a minimum and limit it to matters that cannot be addressed during drop-off or pick-up. Emails containing personal grievances, accusations, or attempts to involve teachers in parental conflict will not receive a response and may be redirected to the executive team.

## **4. Communication at Pickup**

Teachers will communicate daily updates, incidents, or concerns to the parent or caregiver present at pick-up. This fulfills the school's obligation to inform parents. It is the responsibility of the receiving parent to share relevant information with the other parent if needed. Teachers are not expected to duplicate communications or follow up with both parents unless a legal custody order explicitly requires it. Both parents are still entitled to the same school-wide communication and are expected to stay informed.

## **5. Respectful Conduct**

We expect all communication with teachers, staff, and the executive team to remain respectful, concise, and focused on the child. Inappropriate or hostile communication may lead to a formal warning and/or a meeting with the executive team to determine appropriate next steps.

## **6. Internal Escalation Process**

If a parent has a concern that cannot be resolved through respectful communication with teachers or caregivers, they may submit their concern in writing to the executive team. The executive team will review the matter to determine if it falls within the preschool's scope (i.e., safety, school operations, or conduct within the school environment). Concerns relating to personal disputes, co-parenting conflict, or matters outside the school's responsibility will not be addressed by the preschool and may be best handled through private communication or professional supports outside the school setting.

## **7. Duty to Report**

The preschool is committed to the well-being of every child in our care. If staff observe that family dynamics—including ongoing conflict between separated parents—appear to be negatively impacting a child's emotional, physical, or psychological safety, they are legally and ethically obligated to report their concerns to the appropriate child protection authorities. The preschool does not mediate or intervene in custody or co-parenting disputes but will act in accordance with mandated reporting responsibilities if a child's welfare is believed to be at risk.

## **8. Removal from the Preschool**

In the event that the guidelines for communication and conduct outlined in this document are consistently disregarded, the executive team may need to assess whether the preschool is able to continue supporting the child's enrollment. This decision will be made with careful consideration of the child's well-being and the overall harmony of the preschool community, and will only be pursued as a last resort.

## **Thank You**

We sincerely appreciate your understanding and cooperation in adhering to these guidelines. The preschool's goal is to provide a supportive and nurturing environment for every child, and we are grateful for families who work with us to uphold a respectful and collaborative atmosphere.