



Free Horizon Montessori
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FHM Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Readiness Agreement

One of the most frequently asked questions is how parents can know whether or not their children are ready for preschool. We hope to answer this question in relation to the context of our program at Free Horizon Montessori.

- **Your Readiness** – Believe it or not, one of the biggest indicators of a child’s readiness for preschool is their parents’ readiness to be away from them during school hours! Your child is emotionally attuned to you, and will pick up on your cues regarding school. If you are unsure and apprehensive, your child will be, too. If you are excited and believe they will have fun, your child will likewise sense that. The more confident you are in your child’s readiness and the more you trust your decision in sending your child to preschool, the easier your child’s transition will be.
- **Age** – Our Montessori Primary program is designed for children who are 3 to 6 years old. Because we are a Jeffco Public Charter School, we must follow their established requirements for children to be 5 by October 1st of their Kindergarten year and 6 by October 1st of their first grade year. Early admission and grade level retention are rare in our program, and are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- **Developmental Considerations** – Children starting preschool should be able to work and play independently for short periods, to focus on one task or project for several minutes, to follow simple instructions, and to sit still for a few minutes for lessons and circle time.
- **Independence** – Like all preschools, our program requires a degree of independence from students in order for them to have a positive experience. Even though each of our Primary classrooms is well staffed with a lead teacher and two assistants, students need to be able to manage many self-care tasks on their own.
 - **Toileting:** Our Primary program is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services as a preschool. As such, we are not permitted to have diapers or pull-ups at school – including at naptime – and we cannot assist with wiping. The expectation is that a child entering our program will be independent in the toileting process, and that they have been **accident-free for a minimum of one month before their first day at FHM**. Parents should set their child up for toileting success while at school by providing clothes the child can manage easily. Students who have more than 3 days of toileting accidents in a 10 school day period during the first 6 weeks of school are not considered toilet trained, and may be withdrawn. The family may reapply once the child is toilet trained, or may continue to pay tuition to hold the child’s placement until the one-month accident free expectation is met.
 - **Dressing:** Children are expected to handle general dressing and undressing on their own. While the Montessori curriculum does include instruction on practical life skills such as buttoning, snapping, buckling, zipping, and tying, we ask that parents provide clothing that their children are able to manage on their own with little assistance from an adult. Pants with elastic waistbands and shoes with Velcro closures work very well. Limit layers so children can easily dress and undress when toileting.
 - **Eating:** All children have the opportunity to eat a snack while at school, and may also have lunch at school. Children who are ready for preschool are able to feed themselves, drink from a cup, and do not require one-on-one supervision while eating.
 - **Respecting Limits:** A Primary Montessori environment requires small, sharp, fragile materials which may present a choking or laceration hazard if mishandled. Children must be able to respect limits with regard to these materials, and have progressed beyond the stage of exploring by placing objects in their mouths.

Ultimately, you know your child better than anyone. We rely on parents to assess their child’s readiness for preschool, and will work in partnership with you to assure the smoothest and most positive transition possible. Our teachers and administrators have many years of experience and can offer guidance for helping children who might experience anxiety about school. Please feel free to contact the administration to discuss any questions you might have regarding your child’s readiness for preschool. We look forward to working together to create the best possible educational experience for your child.

“I understand the above Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Readiness requirements, and agree to support my child in becoming school-ready to the best of my ability. I agree to withdraw my child from Free Horizon Montessori if I, my child’s teacher, and/or the school administration agree that my child does not meet Free Horizon Montessori’s definition of Preschool or Pre-Kindergarten Readiness.”

Child Name _____ Date of Birth: _____
Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____