

# Happy Garden

Early Childhood Development



## Parent Handbook

Updated on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2024

**Welcome to**

Happy Garden  
Early Childhood Development  
Reg #51299 - Cat B

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# Happy Garden

## Highlights & Differentiating Elements

- Happy Garden is a Reggio Emilia Inspired Childcare where each child is considered full of potential and capable of interacting with the world in many ways. At Happy Garden, uniqueness of the child is considered a value and differences are strengths on which to build on.
  
- A Foreign Language Exploration program will allow kids of the youngest age to familiarize with a language other than the one used at home. Since preschool children spend an average of 35 hours a week in childcare (a total year before they transition into kindergarten) we think it is important to integrate language exploration while playing and having fun.
  
- "All Inclusive" option to choose from (contact us for detailed information) and parents do not have to worry about anything. Happy Garden takes care of
  - (1) Diapers, Wipes & Cream (Aquaphor, Resinol or comparable brand)
  - (2) Organic Meals & Snacks with ateliers on tastes, colors, and aromas.

## Letter to Parents



I have 25+ years of experience in educating kids of all ages and those with special needs. I have always considered my role as that of a facilitator and co-creator (with kids and parents) of an environment that promotes learning and growth through exploration, discovery, and interactions.

I do not believe in standardized educational approaches because I know each child is unique, full of potential, and capable of interacting with the world in many ways. We just need to nourish them, respecting their differences, their individuality, and their preferred ways to communicate their presence and their needs to the world around them.

I founded Happy Garden to create an early childhood center where kids feel *like they are at home while away from home*.

In addition to educational activities, kids will explore a foreign language that will further help them develop their executive functions. Language exploration happens almost effortlessly since it is incorporated during various daily activities while children play and have fun.

My role as an educator is to stimulate, observe, and document, and to build on the child's experience to further develop his or her understanding. My goal is to make children feel at ease and free to express their thoughts while learning to appreciate interactions within a system of relationships.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss in greater details the pedagogical approach that has inspired me.

Sincerely  
Roberta Venneri-Cundari

## General Information

### Hours and Location

Day	Type	Time
Monday – Friday	Daily	7:00 am - 5:30 pm
	Late Evening	5:30 pm - 10:30 pm
Monday – Friday	Pre School	8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Saturday & Sunday	Daily	7:00 am - 5:30 pm
	Late Evening	5:30 pm - 10:30 pm

#### Pillars of our Curriculum



<u>Weekday Drop-Off</u>	<u>Weekday Pick-Up</u>
Mon-Fri → 7:00 am to 8:30 am	Mon-Fri → 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

#### **Notes**

1. **Extended hours** are possible upon request. Please communicate your needs when contacting us through our website or **FB** page and during your interview.
2. **All-Inclusive** option available to help parents avoid worrying about diapers/wipes/Creams, Meals/Snacks, and laundering napping time personal belongings. We will take care of everything using food as part of the child's daily sensory experiences (tastes, colors, aromas, preparation, etc.).
3. **A Late Pick-Up** fee of **\$2.50** per minute will be charged.
4. **A Late Payment** fee of **2%** of the amount invoiced will be applied if tuition is not paid by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the current month.

Center Address	1510 Brown Deer Rd, Coralville IA – 52241
Website	<a href="http://www.HappyGarden-ChildCare.com">www.HappyGarden-ChildCare.com</a>
Director Information	Roberta Venneri-Cundari Email: <a href="mailto:info@happygarden-childcare.com">info@happygarden-childcare.com</a> Tel : (319) 224-8595 / (319) 569-2550

## Our Mission

At Happy Garden, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child. Our childcare experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.

## Our Motto

***"... like being at home while away from home"***

## Our Philosophy

At **Happy Garden**, we believe that promoting relationships, learning and autonomy is possible by creating spaces in which children feel at ease and free to express their own thoughts while interacting with peers. They learn how to be part of a group and they understand that their uniqueness is a strength. Standardization does not exist in our vocabulary!

Our educational approach is expressed in the careful attention dedicated to the timing and learning method, in the design of the spaces that consider the children's different needs, and in the care that supports autonomy and independence.

## Principles of Reggio Emilia

- *The Hundred Languages of Children* - Children express themselves through many languages (visual, verbal, written, movement and music, etc.).
- *The Image of the Child* - All children are competent, curious, and creative.
- *The Role of the Environment* - The environment serves as an invitation to enter and participate. It is considered as the third teacher.
- *The Role of the Teacher* - To facilitate children's ability to represent what they know and imagine.
- *The Importance of Time* - Children have the time and guidance to use the same materials repeatedly until they are pleased with the results and decide to move to a different interest. Time is not set by clock but by children's own sense of time.
- *The Value of Relationships and Interaction of Children in Small Groups* - Provides opportunities for negotiation and dynamic communication. As well as the emergence of cognitive conflicts that can initiate a process of new learning and development.
- *Observation and Documentation* - The teachers learn how to work with children by continuously observing and documenting interactions through written notes, photos, visuals, etc.



We believe that play is a very important tool in the development of children in their early years. At **Happy Garden** children are given the opportunity to explore their world through various material, group interaction, creative art, sensory play, and many play activities.

Reggio Emilia Approach brings children together for project-based learning where they learn to include everyone to build a community. It is an emergent curriculum that has documentation as its strongest component. Children and teachers are co-constructors of knowledge. It promotes a positive image of the child. Our program offers Creativity, and Imagination through an enriched environment from which children can literally absorb information and allow for inquiry through play. Our program includes many natural materials to be used through developmentally appropriate activities. These natural materials help children develop their Physical, Cognitive, Social, Emotional, and Communication skills through Sensory Play, Art/Craft, Blocks, Nature Exploration, Lights and Shadows, Physical activities, and much more.

## Foreign Language Exploration

How can we help our children explore a language other than English?

As parents we are eager to provide our children with an opportunity to come into contact with another language, knowing that bilingual experience has been shown to improve cognitive abilities and executive functions - especially problem-solving.

At Happy Garden, language exploration happens almost effortlessly by incorporating foreign language exploration during the various daily activities. The child is exposed to a different language while playing and having fun. Social interaction with peers and with teacher, active participation, and the child's curiosity and natural capability to investigate their environment will do the rest.

General language skills are acquired best through everyday moments — ateliers, listening, talking, laughing, and playing together. Children explore and discover by socializing: interacting with others, and by listening to stories and songs. At Happy Garden, children set the pace and we encourage their uniqueness. We are there to inspire, repeat, build on specific interest, encourage, and make it fun.

## Ateliers

**A different way to learn, explore, discover, and create!**

The culture of the atelier gives identity and shape to the Reggio Emilia educational approach, and to the philosophy of the 100 languages.

Ateliers are workshops that support learning in core areas through creative activities in which children engage in open-ended experiences. Sand, colors, light, shadows, sound, movements, and nature will give young children opportunities to engage differently and participate in the emergence of a learning environment that is stimulating and fun.

The educator responsible for the atelier (known as “atelierista” in the Reggio Emilia approach) develops meaningful experiences, questions, “provokes”<sup>(1)</sup>, builds on specific emerging interests, and promotes dynamic thinking and creative problem-solving.

At **Happy Garden** we believe in an emergent curriculum, in which children are active participants in their learning. Teachers listen carefully and develop a curriculum to support each child in his or her personal journey.

<sup>(1)</sup> Provoke = Stimulates

## Parent /Teacher Interactions

Parents and Educators will discuss their child’s progress on a regular basis<sup>(1)</sup>. This meeting is a chance for you to discuss your child’s progress over the course of the year, as well as give you an opportunity to speak to your child’s teacher about any concerns/advice for helping your child at home. The educator will share all information and answer any questions you may have. If there is a need for an additional conference, parents are invited to send an email so that we can schedule that time for them.

Parents are encouraged to work with us in finding the best way to meet children’s individual learning needs. Parents/Guardians and educators are co-creators and partners in the education of the whole child.

Parents are always welcome to request conferences at any time throughout the year. In addition, opportunities for evening conferences are scheduled twice during the school year. It will help the teacher if parents/guardians come to the conference<sup>(2)</sup> prepared with a list of questions, comments, or concerns regarding their child’s progress. By doing this, we can specifically address your areas of interest.

<sup>(1)</sup> An initial conference should be planned to allow parents to highlight the child’s specific needs and learning objectives

<sup>(2)</sup> During Covid-19 restrictions, conferences will be on-line to limit contact.

## Nutrition

While providing meals and snacks that meet the highest nutritional standards and the specific needs of all children, we want kids to appreciate food and learn about and practice healthy eating.

An important part of **Happy Garden’s** philosophy is to involve children of the youngest age by organizing ateliers on nutrition, on taste and color, and on cooking and setting the table.

We will grow food together in a veggie patch and kids will participate in the preparation process, excited about eating food they helped make. We engage the children in every aspect of the meal, we stimulate their imagination making mealtime fun, and we provide a pleasant, culturally appropriate atmosphere to encourage social interaction and learning. The teacher is there to overlook, propose, “provoke”, and encourage social interactions and the discovery of flavors.

At **Happy Garden** nutrition is more than healthy eating; it is an important part of our educational, child-centered philosophy.

## **Wholeness and Connectedness**

At Happy Garden we believe in the importance of a holistic approach to early childhood development.

Our approach considers educators as co-creators and facilitators and is based on the respect of the child's uniqueness as a whole Being, and as a part of a larger system within which they build relationships and connections.

It incorporates practices that focus on children's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. We believe in the importance of strong relationships and engagement between children, parents, and educators. Children have many voices, and at Happy Garden, we listen to all of them.

## General Policies

### COVID-19

At Happy Garden, we make the health and safety of your children our utmost priority. We maintain compliance with all Federal, State, and County mandated COVID requirements, as well as following the **CDC best practices** (connect to [Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open | CDC](#)) in order to promote behaviors that reduce Covid-19's spread and to protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of children, teachers, their families, and communities

- All educators and parents are required to wear masks at all times.
- Hand washing and sanitizing is frequent and required by both adults and children.
- Unless otherwise arranged, parents are discouraged from entering the spaces. We will bring your child out to you for pick-up and bring them inside for drop-off.
- Spaces are cleaned and disinfected each day and are equipped with a High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) purifier that removes particles whose diameter is equal to or greater than 0.3 µm.

For more detailed information please connect to the web page [Operating schools during COVID-19: CDC's Considerations | CDC](#) (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare>)

### Non-Discrimination

At Happy Garden, equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation, or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

### Confidentiality

See **Appendix D**

### ***"Inserimento"*** (To be implemented after Covid-19 emergency)

Translated from the Italian, *"inserimento"* literally means "insertion" and is a concept of introducing children to the school environment and the initial process of the child's adjustment into a new community.

Upon enrollment, groups of children and families are invited to spend some time with the educator in the classroom. Depending on the needs of the child and the family, these visits generally last from 30 minutes to 1 hour. This is an opportunity for conversation between parents, teachers, and the child within the context of the school environment.

Children’s response to separation varies dramatically. We ask parents to be flexible during the first few weeks of school and plan to spend extra time at school with their child if needed to ease the anxiety of separation. Separation anxiety is a healthy, normal developmental stage, which we believe deserves time and appropriate attention. We feel that by easing into the transition and gradually lessening the time of “goodbye”, children develop confidence that their parents will indeed return and that educators can be trusted to provide a warm and nurturing environment while parents are away. As a child becomes more comfortable, a parent’s short, predictable and loving “goodbye” is often all that is necessary as the child is dropped off. In the event that your child is upset and crying when you are about to leave, it is much less stressful for the child if you say goodbye and leave quickly.

“*Inserimento*” is an important time for children as they develop new relationships with other children, adults, and the new environment. We believe that the process of relationship building is most important for young children; because of this, we treasure this time of “*inserimento*”.

## Photographic Release

Photographs of children enrolled at the school may be used on promotional materials as well as affiliated organizations including ***Inspired Practices in Early Education, Inc.*** and the ***North American Reggio Emilia Alliance (NAREA)***. Photographs are not used for any such purpose without the express written consent of a child’s parent or guardian. At enrollment each year, you are asked to initial the following statements as part of the Enrollment Agreement:

Media Release
We regularly take photos of the children in conjunction with our classroom work at the center and for use within the center or on our website. We may also use photos during professional development initiatives in connection with <i>Inspired Practices in Early Education</i> and the <i>North American Reggio Emilia Alliance</i> . Please indicate that you authorize the use and reproduction of photographs of your child in conjunction with the program.
Occasionally we will post photos on Facebook or other social media sites. We try to reserve this practice for a specific message and/or special experiences. Please indicate that you authorize the use of photographs of your child on the school’s social media sites.

## Important Dates to Remember

Happy Garden will observe the following holidays for 2024:

- *New Year’s Eve*
- *New Year’s Day*
- *Christmas Eve*
- *Christmas Day*
- Labor Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day and Friday July 5th
- Thanksgiving break (Wednesday through Sunday)
- Martin Luther King Day

Furthermore, Happy Garden will be closed for two weeks during the calendar year for training and vacation. Parents will be given a minimum 6-week notice of such upcoming closing. Parents are not expected to pay for care on these vacation days if Happy Garden remains closed.

## Inclement Weather

Happy Garden will remain open during the most severe weather. We will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. If Happy Garden closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

## Meals and Snacks – “All Inclusive Option”

All meals and snacks are prepared using organic ingredients. Children will be engaged with the preparation of meals and snacks so as to make nutrition a great sensory experience. At Happy Garden we make sure that meals and snacks are rich in healthy ingredients and balanced from a nutritional standpoint.

Sample Menu (6 months – 12 months)					
	AM Snack	Lunch			PM Snack
Monday	Fruit Puree	Vegetable Broth (carrots, potatoes, zucchini,...)	Baby Cereal	Chicken and Gravy Puree	Fruit Puree
Tuesday	Fruit Puree	Vegetable Broth (carrots, potatoes, zucchini,...)	Baby Cereal	Turkey and Gravy Puree	Fruit Puree
“					

Sample Menu (12 months and older)					
	AM Snack	Lunch			PM Snack
Monday	Fresh Fruit Yogurt Cake	Pasta with Tomato Sauce and Parmesan Cheese	Breaded Fish with Spinach	Fresh Fruit	Yogurt + Cookie
Tuesday	Camilla Cake	Risotto with pumpkin	Baked Potatoes, Beans with Omelet	Fresh Fruit	Yogurt + Cookie
“					

## Arrival and departure

At Happy Garden, we ask each parent or guardian to inform us when they are dropping off or picking up a child outside the normal drop/pick-up hour. We also ask parents to inform us when they decide to keep their child at home. Children should be dropped off at the front door and never left unattended at any time. **Parents must sign the child in and out every day.**

Any person picking up a child must be authorized. If a parent is not able to pick up a child on certain days or times, we should be informed of the person picking up the child and we are required to ask for a government-issued Identification to make sure that the person is on the child's record. To add or change anyone on the authorized list, please fill out a form and return it to **Happy Garden**. Anyone picking up a child will be required to show a photo identification and we will check the authorized persons list before releasing the child. Pick-up and drop-off routines may be adjusted slightly to meet public health regulations during times of pandemic/public health emergency. A child will not be released if we feel that it is NOT in the child's best interest to do so. If a person dropping off or picking up a child is suspected of being incapacitated in any way to care for the child, including being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, we will:

- Inform and ask for the Director's support.
- Determine if the person picking up is a parent. If not a parent, the educator will call to inform the parent and to request they or another authorized person come immediately to pick up the child.
- If it is a parent, staff will inform them that they must contact a relative or a friend to accompany them.
- If the incapacitated adult leaves with the child, we will inform the person that they will make a suspected impaired driver call to 911 as well as call DHS.

## Diaper Changing Policies and Procedures

Diapering is an important process in the daily life of the infant and the toddler. Diapering is a time for one-on-one interaction between the child and the teacher. The process of changing diapers is always done comfortably and respectfully. Happy Garden will follow all guidelines for cleanliness and hygiene.

Parents send diapers <sup>(1)</sup> and wipes for their children only if they do not choose the **"All Inclusive"** option. Cloth diapers are accepted by Happy Garden if appropriate materials are provided to transport soiled diapers from school to home for laundering.

<sup>(1)</sup> Normal Diapers, Pull-Ups, and Cloth Diapers. Parents can opt for the All-Inclusive package and let Happy Garden take care of everything.

## Personal Belongings

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or misdirected items that are not properly labeled.

What to bring <sup>(1)</sup> for **Infants aged 12 weeks to 12 months**

- Enough bottles of breast milk or formula for one day's feedings should be brought already prepared each day. Bottles should be marked with the child's name and date. Empty bottles are returned to the family each day.
- Food
- A supply of diapers and wipes and a diaper cream (Aquafor, Resinol or equivalent).
- At least 2 complete changes of clothes and sleep sac.
- Any comfort items that your child needs such as pacifiers, blankies, lovies, etc.

#### What to bring <sup>(1)</sup> for **Children of age 1 year and Older**

- A sippy cup for water or water bottle, which should be brought home each day and returned full of water the next day.
- If your child is a young toddler (under 18 months) and still needs a bottle during the day, we will work with you during the transition to a cup.
- At least 2 complete changes of clothes (more if your child is potty training).
- A supply of diapers and wipes and a diaper cream (Aquafor, Resinol or equivalent).
- Any comfort items that your child needs for naptime such as pacifiers, blankies, lovies, etc.

(1) When choosing the "All Inclusive" option Diapers, Wipes and Cream will be provided by us.

## Napping and Rest Time

Children are provided either a mat or cot to nap or rest daily. Children will be required to have a period of rest typically lasting no more than two hours. During that period, children may sleep or remain on their cot or mat with a quiet project. When infants reach the age of 12 months educators and parents together will decide whether to consider transitioning from Crib to Cot. For more details see "**Safe Sleeping Policy**" below.

## Accidents, Illness, and Injuries

If a child becomes ill while at school, the parents (or emergency contact if the parents are not available) will be notified and asked to pick up the child. Children need to be kept at home if they are too ill to participate in social activities, have a temperature of 100 degrees or more, or if they have a contagious illness, acute cold, flu, or chickenpox. If a child has been exposed to a communicable illness outside of school, the family must notify **Happy Garden** of the exposure. If a child is injured at school, the parent will be notified, and the appropriate accident report form will be filled out. If there is a medical emergency, we will call 911 and immediately inform the family.

## In Case of Emergency

In the event of a fire, blizzard, tornado, injury, early dismissal, or any other emergency, every attempt will be made to contact the parent or emergency contact listed in our records. Please make sure to let



us know when any of the contact information changes by calling **(319) 224-8595** or **(319) 800-9862** and by updating the Contact Form available on our website. If the parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, your child will stay with the main educator until someone is reached. If a family cannot be reached within one hour, the Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protection) will be contacted. In the event of a lost child, a call to 911 will be made and the child's parents will be informed immediately.

## Enrollment

### Admission

Enrollment is open to any child, provided the Center can meet the needs of that child and the Center has space available and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Priority consideration is given to those children who will attend regularly, five days a week, and to children who already have siblings enrolled. The child must be at least 3 months old and less than 5 years of age to enroll in the Happy Garden's early childhood program. Furthermore, being in the community for the community an additional program for 5 and 6 years old is available upon request to meet the needs of parents.

An enrollment form, medical forms, and consent forms must be completed and on file at the Center before the child's first day. There will be an initial meeting with the family to review the policies and procedures. Parents are required to disclose any known developmental delays and specific health conditions that may require special accommodations.

### Registration

A non-refundable registration fee of **\$100.00** will be charged at the time of registration. This fee is due at the time that registration paperwork is provided. This fee will be applied at registration each year. All paperwork must be completed and submitted, along with the registration fee and the first week's tuition payment. When enrolling your child, a registration fee and the first week's tuition is recommended to reserve a place in the proper age group.

### Tuition

Tuition rates vary depending upon the program (Weekdays, Weekends, Late Evening Care), the age of the child, the number of days the child attends, and the number of children from one family attending. Tuition increases and fee adjustments may occur annually.

Payment is due on Friday before noon for the upcoming weeks. Tuition for families whose child is enrolled on a monthly basis is due no later than noon on the last Friday of each month, for the upcoming month. Tuition is due each week (or month) regardless of the child's attendance, as well as for all holidays and in-service days if not specified otherwise.

Parents can also sign up for our "**All Inclusive Option**" and not worry about anything. We take care of wipes, diapers & cream, and, above all we prepare home-made meals and snacks so that kids explore and discover diverse flavors and tastes. Sensory experience plays an important role in our approach to early childhood development.

## Weekend Care

In addition to the daily program (8:00 am to 5:00 pm), **Happy Garden** implements a late evening program (5:00 pm to 10:00 pm) to meet the needs of those parents with work schedules conflicting with normal childcare hours.

Weekend 8:00 am - 5:00 pm					
Age	2 Days	1 Day	2 (1/2 Days)	1 (1/2 Day)	Drop-In 2 hours min
All Ages	\$165.00	\$94.00	\$115.00	\$65.00	\$13/hour

1. Happy Garden has implemented a **Late Evening Weekend Care** for those parents needing evening care for their children. A flat rate of **\$15/hour** for a minimum of 2 hours.
2. Early Drop-Ins (before 8:00 am are charged **\$20/hour**)
3. Lunch plus Morning/Afternoon snacks are included.

## Weekday Care

→ **Daycare** (7:00 am → 5:30 pm)

Weekdays <sup>(1)</sup> 7:00 am - 5:30 pm					
Age	5 Days	4 Day	3 Days	2 Days	1 Day
3 - 24 Months	\$275.00	\$230.00	\$185.00	\$135.00	\$85.00
24 + and older	\$265.00	\$220.00	\$175.00	\$125.00	\$75.00

Weekdays <sup>(1)</sup> 7:00 am - 12:00 pm   12:30 pm - 5:30 pm					
Age	5 (1/2 Days)	4 (1/2 Days)	3 (1/2 Days)	2 (1/2 Days)	1 (1/2 Days)
3 - 24 Months	\$170.00	\$145.00	\$120.00	\$85.00	\$12/hour
24+ and older	\$160.00	\$135.00	\$110.00	\$75.00	\$10/hour

<sup>(1)</sup> Monthly tuition ( $Tm$ ) is obtained multiplying weekly tuition ( $Tw$ ) by 52 weeks and dividing by 12 months  $Tm = \frac{52 * Tw}{12}$

→ **Evening care** (5:30 pm → 10:30 pm)

During weekdays **Happy Garden** offers a late evening program (5:30 pm - 10:30 pm) at a rate of **\$12 per hour** for a minimum of two hours. For families requiring evening care on a continuous basis, a discount will be applied depending on the number of days the child will be enrolled.

## Early School Age Program

→ For 5 and 6 years old (Available on request)

Weekday School Program			
Class	Before School	School	After School
	7:00 am – 8:30 am	8:30 am – 3:30 pm	3:30 pm – 5:30 pm
Kindergarten & Elementary 1	\$130 / month	\$890 / month	\$216 / month

A **10%** discount will be applied to the Before and After School tuition fees when children sign up for both.

## Drop-In Care

Happy Garden may provide “**drop-in**” childcare services (**\$10/hour**) when all enrollment information is on file and up to date. The following policies apply to those enrolled in the drop-in program:

- All drop-in services are contingent upon our being able to meet the ‘*Department of Human Services*’ required staffing ratios. If our ratios cannot be met, your child will not be able to attend.
- No more than one week advance notice will be accepted for drop-in service.
- For care to be provided, all childcare payments must be made before service is rendered.
- If you schedule your child to Drop-In Care, and your child does not attend, you will be charged based on your schedule, if a three working day notice was not given. If your schedule becomes more consistent, you may wish to enroll in our regular program rather than utilize drop-in care to ensure placement within the daycare center when care is needed and to allow your child to participate more consistently and continuously in the various activities including the foreign language exploration program.

## Illness and Vacation Policy

- A **50 percent reduction** in fees will be granted for a maximum of two weeks per calendar year (September year N-1 through August Year N) based on the following criteria:
  - If your child will be absent on an otherwise scheduled day, full charges will be assessed.
  - If your child will be absent a full week due to vacation (Monday - Friday), there will be a 50 percent reduction in your normal charges if a one-week notice has been given in writing.

- If your child is absent for a full week (Monday - Friday) due to the child's illness, a death in the family, or other emergency, and we are notified immediately of the circumstance, you may be given a 50 percent discount to your normal childcare fees for that week.
- Regardless of holidays, sickness, or weather-related closings, scheduled charges will be assessed and billed according to your permanent schedule.

## Late Pick-Up

A late fee charge of **\$2.50** per minute will apply if a child is picked up after closing hours and is added to the next payment of fees. Late pickups will be recorded and reviewed with parents. If a parent is aware that a late pickup may occur, we either encourage you to please notify us before closing time or to try and find alternate arrangements for pickup.

## Termination Policy

The first **2 weeks** will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the contract without notice. Afterwards **60 days** advance written notice is required before withdrawing a child. Please note that the amount paid at registration is non-refundable in the case of withdrawal. Furthermore, the Director reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child should the rules of the center as outlined in the parent agreement not be respected.

## Waiting List

A waiting list, according to priority, will be maintained by Happy Garden in case enrollment is momentarily full. A \$50 nonrefundable registration fee will be required to have a child added to the list. When a space becomes available, parents or legal guardians will be notified and given the option to reserve the spot. If the family does not accept a position when the space becomes available, the next available child on the waiting list will be called and the first child will be placed at the end of the list or deleted from the list.

## Health & Safety

### General Information/Requirements

- Temperature Requirement : We hold to the 100-temperature threshold; before returning to care, children must remain symptom, and medication-free for 72 hours.
- No Shoe Policy : To minimize the introduction of germs; children will remove their “outdoor shoes” upon arrival and change into their “indoor shoes”.
- Access : Access to Childcare is limited to children; for family convenience we are offering safe and efficient door drop-off and pick-up.
- Temperature Check : All children have their temperature checked upon arrival.
- Personal Items : We encourage parents to avoid bringing personal items to avoid the spread of germs.
- Meals & Snacks : To minimize potential home-to-school transfer of germs we propose an “*All Inclusive*” option with meals and snacks provided in-house.
- Surface Cleaning : Our spaces are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized throughout the day with deep cleanings happening each evening and weekend.
- Sanitization : All toys and equipment are systematically cleaned and sanitized throughout the day and in between uses. We use a net zero disinfectant fogger at the end of every day to sanitize all surfaces, furniture, and materials.
- Handwashing : High priority is placed on the frequency and proper technique of handwashing upon arrival and throughout the day.

## Health

### Important Symptoms

In the era of COVID-19, health and safety policies are especially important. For more information about the efforts please contact us.

As a reminder, Happy Garden does not provide sick childcare. To prevent other children and teachers from getting sick we ask that families keep children home when they are ill. This will prevent the illness is spreading to other kids. This means fewer illnesses for children, teachers, parents, and other family members, fewer visits to the doctor, and fewer days lost from work for parents. If your child exhibits any of the symptoms <sup>(1)</sup> below he/she should stay home:

- Fever (> 100°F)
- Pinkeye
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Strep Throat
- Pertussis
- Rash
- Mouth Sores
- Abdominal Pain
- Etc.

If your child becomes sick while at **Happy Garden**, you will be contacted. Sick children should be picked up no later than 1 hour after notification that the child is sick. If the parent notified cannot be at the school by the end of 1 hour, other arrangements should be made for the child's pick up. If we cannot reach a parent, we will notify the emergency contact person(s) listed on your enrollment application.

(1) See Appendix A for a complete list of illnesses to take into consideration.

## Medications

It is the general policy of the center not to dispense medicine except in life-threatening situations. In these circumstances, the following guidelines must be met:

### Prescription Medications:

1. Before any prescription medicine is dispensed ask the educator for the "Authorization of Medical Form", a written and signed authorization that includes date, name of child, name of medicine, prescription number if any, dosage, date, and time of day medication is given must be provided.
2. Teachers will also record any adverse reactions that your child may have to the medication. If there are any noticeable adverse reactions, we will contact the parent immediately and assess whether the child needs to go home or not.
3. Medicine must be in its original container labeled with the child's name and closed in a plastic zip bag with the expiration date written on the outside.
4. Parents must provide and label any necessary equipment for the dispensing of the medicine.

### Non-prescription Medications:

Before dispensing non-prescription medications, the center requires a note and directions signed by the child's pediatrician. Non-prescription medication shall not be administered for more than 3 days unless a written order by the physician is received.

Non-prescription topical ointments such as diaper cream, sunscreen, and insect repellent will be administered only if the center is authorized by the parent.

## Safety

### Clothing

Dress your child for school in clothing that are washable and that allow the child to move freely. Children in diapers should wear clothing that are easily removed for changing. Please do not send children to school in clothing that you would not want to get soiled or stained as your child will be engaged in “creative” activities such as painting, outdoor play, sand, water play, clay, gardening, etc. Outfits that the child can manage alone will make the day go more smoothly. Heavy leather boots, complicated belts, and buttons often pose problems for children at school. Children should wear shoes to school that facilitate climbing and running and other such activities. Children should not wear flip-flops or other backless shoes. Supportive shoes will help eliminate injuries during the school day. Teachers would be appreciative if you keep pants that need snapping at a minimum.

### Safe Sleeping

- Infants will be placed on their backs in a crib to sleep unless a physician’s written statement authorizing another sleep position for that infant is provided. The written statement must include how the infant shall be placed to sleep and a time frame that the instructions are to be followed.
- Cribs shall be in compliance with CPCS and ASTM safety standards. They will be maintained in good repair and free from hazards.
- No objects will be placed in or on the crib with an infant. This includes, but is not limited to, covers, blankets, toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other soft items.
- No objects will be attached to a crib with a sleeping infant, such as, but not limited to, crib gyms, toys, mirrors, and mobiles.
- Individual crib bedding will be changed daily, or more often as needed, according to the rules. Bedding for cots/mats will be laundered daily or marked for individual use. If marked for individual use, the sheets/covers will be laundered weekly or more frequently if needed. Bedding for infants will be laundered onsite as needed. During Covid19 Happy Garden will launder all bedding items daily.
- Infants who arrive at the center asleep or fall asleep in other equipment, on the floor or elsewhere, will be moved to a safety-approved crib for sleep.
- Swaddling will not be permitted, unless a physician’s written statement authorizing it for a particular infant is provided. The written statement must include instructions and a time frame for swaddling the infant.
- Other infant positioning devices and monitors will not be permitted unless a physician’s written statement authorizing their use for a particular infant is provided. The written statement must include instructions on how to use the device and a time frame for using it.



## Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play does not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 99°F or less than 32°F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play is canceled if external conditions (wind, rain, pollen, etc.) are not safe for children.

## Closing Due to Extreme Weather

In case of extreme weather, Happy Garden will continue to operate normally. In the case of severe weather with safety concerns (i.e., snow blizzards, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes) please listen to the local news and/or radio station. If Iowa City Public Schools are closed Happy Garden will continue to operate normally and will close only if the safety of the children is at stake. If weather conditions do not impact children's safety, we are flexible and will adapt to parents' specific needs knowing that they are the first to be impacted in case of extreme weather.

## Closing Due to Physical Plant Defects

In the event of loss of power, loss of water, or other defects that prevent **Happy Garden** from opening on time or at all, or necessitating early closure, families are contacted by text, telephone and/or email. If any of these conditions happen during the school day and are deemed to persist for longer than one hour and in the case where proper care of the children beyond that time will not be possible, parents and/or emergency contacts will be called to pick up children as soon as possible. Happy Garden will maintain emergency supplies to provide basic necessary care for at least 4 hours.

## Fire Safety

At Happy Garden we conduct a fire drill and review fire evacuation plans on a monthly basis. Spaces are fully equipped with all fire safety equipment as requested by Iowa DHS.

## Injuries

Safety is a major concern in childcare so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside to prevent injuries. First aid is administered by the educator if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and the course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you are contacted immediately. We are equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations. In the event of a serious medical emergency, 911 will be contacted at once and the child will be transported immediately by ambulance to the nearest hospital. Parents and/or emergency contacts will be notified at once. If an authorized person cannot be contacted or arrive before the ambulance an educator will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

## **A Special Note about Biting:**

As upsetting as it can be for children and adults, biting is a normal stage of development that is common among young children. Most young children bite and/or are bitten by another child at least once when they are in group care settings. Often, whether their child was the child who bit or the child who was bitten, parents experience strong emotional reactions to biting.

**Why do children bite?** Again, please be assured that biting is normal developmentally in children who are experiencing discomfort due to teething, do not have the verbal skills to communicate their frustrations, and are unable to exhibit self-control that would limit their reactions in frustrating situations.

### **When biting happens:**

1. Our first response is to act immediately to provide appropriate care for the child who was bitten by comforting them and cleaning the area that was bit.
2. We also respond to the child who has bitten with strategies designed to help him/her learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus is not on punishment for biting, but on developing effective behaviors that address the reasons for biting.
3. Notification of a biting incident is given in written form to both the family of the child who was bitten and the child who bit. We work together with families to keep them informed and to develop strategies to address the situation.
4. If the same child bites consistently we will ask for a parent-teacher conference to discuss further steps to take. Those steps may include talking to parents about any changes that may have happened at home recently, shadowing the child who is biting, and asking parents if introducing temporarily a “chew” necklace could help.
5. The educators also pay close attention to who is getting bit. If one child gets bitten frequently (the amount will be determined on a case-by-case basis) by the same child, we will call a conference for both families. At school, the teachers will work to empower the child who is getting bit by giving him words to use (if needed) to tell the child that “biting hurts” and support him/her in standing up for themselves.

**\*\*Please note\*\*** There are no hard and fast rules about biting. Each child and each situation is unique.

#### **Research**

Eight years ago, Walter Gilliam, Ph.D., director of the Edward Zigler Center in Child Development and Social Policy at Yale University’s Child Study Center, and Golan Shahar, Ph.D., a visiting professor at Yale, published research on just how often young children were getting expelled.

In the years since, several states have committed to addressing the problem, and the American Academy of Pediatrics and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) have recommended against preschool expulsion.

Preschools are designed to teach young children the academic, social and emotional skills they’ll need for elementary school and beyond. A child expelled for behavior problems misses out on that essential learning, and a key opportunity to correct the behavior is lost. Gilliam likens it to “kicking a person out of a hospital for being sick.”

Pizzolongo, now an associate executive director for NAEYC, which promotes excellence in early education and accredits thousands of preschools nationwide, agrees. Nothing, he says, should prompt an expulsion.

For further information on our approach to biting, we recommend the excellent article entitled “Dealing with Biting Behaviors in Young Children” which is available online at: <http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/poptopics/biting.html>

## Acknowledgement

I have read the information contained in Happy Garden Childcare's Parent Handbook at the different sections (General Information, General policies, Enrollment, and Health & Safety) and I agree to abide by the policies stated within.

Child(ren)'s Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A

- **Fever** of 101 or greater, until 24 hours symptom-free without fever-reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- **Diarrhea** (not associated with diet changes or medications; multiple loose or watery instances within an hour; or accompanied with fever and or vomiting) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not to be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- **Vomiting** (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/ symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- **Pink eye** (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- **Scabies**, until after treatment has been completed
- **Tuberculosis**, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare
- **Impetigo**, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- **Strep throat**, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- **Chicken pox**, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- **Hand Foot and Mouth** sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- **Pertussis**, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- **Mumps**, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- **Hepatitis A virus**, until 1 week after onset of illness
- **Measles**, until 4 days after onset of rash
- **Rubella**, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion

## Appendix B

Available on [www.HappyGarden-ChildCare.com](http://www.HappyGarden-ChildCare.com) under **Forms&Waivers**

1. Parent Handbook
2. Enrollment Form
3. Authorized Pick-Up Form
4. Sleep Waiver
5. Administration of Medication

## Appendix C

[Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment | NAEYC](#)

[https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/Ethics%20Position%20Statement2011\\_09202013update.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/Ethics%20Position%20Statement2011_09202013update.pdf)

## Appendix D

### Confidentiality Policy

The purpose of this Confidentiality Policy is to establish guidelines for maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of information related to children, families, and staff at **Happy Garden**.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and any other individuals associated with **Happy Garden**.

Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Personal information about children and their families
- Medical and health records
- Enrollment information
- Staff records
- Any other information deemed confidential by **Happy Garden**

All staff members are responsible for safeguarding confidential information. Information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis within the organization. Unauthorized disclosure of confidential information is strictly prohibited. Access to confidential information is restricted to staff members who require it for their job responsibilities. Passwords and other security measures will be implemented to control access to electronic records.

Information about individual children will only be shared with their parents/guardians or authorized representatives. Any communication regarding a child's progress, behavior, or health will be done privately and discreetly. Confidential information will not be disclosed to third parties without written consent from the child's parent/guardian, except as required by law.

All records containing confidential information will be securely stored and maintained. Records will be retained in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Any unauthorized access, use, or disclosure of confidential information must be reported immediately to **Roberta Venneri**.

All staff members will receive training on the importance of confidentiality and the procedures outlined in this policy, and all contractors, volunteers, and other individuals who may have access to confidential information will be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

This policy will be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with relevant laws and regulations. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment or contract. This policy is subject to all applicable local, state, and federal laws regarding the privacy and confidentiality of information.

For questions or concerns related to confidentiality, please contact **Roberta Venneri**.