



Montessori
SCHOOL OF CAYMAN

TRANSITION POLICY

Supporting Every Child's Move Into and Through Montessori School of Cayman

Reviewed: August 2025

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Montessori School of Cayman — Transition Policy

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Reviewed and updated: July 2026 — this revision refreshes the policy's language and structure, and clarifies the distinction between transitions for new students joining Montessori School of Cayman and transitions between our internal programmes.

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1. Introduction

At Montessori School of Cayman, we recognise that transitions are a crucial part of a child's educational journey. A well-structured transition process helps children adjust to new environments, routines, and expectations at a pace that supports their development, whether they are joining MSC for the very first time or moving between our internal programmes — for example, from the Toddler Programme to the Casa Programme.

This policy applies to two related, but distinct, kinds of transition:

- New Student Transitions — the process for children joining Montessori School of Cayman for the first time (Section 3).
- Transitions Between Programmes — the process for children moving from one MSC programme to the next as they grow, such as from Toddler to Casa (Section 4).

2. Policy Statement & Aims

This policy ensures that:

- children experience a secure and supportive introduction to their new programme
- families and educators work together through clear communication and collaboration
- the transition process respects the Montessori principles of individualised learning, independence, and respect for the child's developmental timeline.

2.1 Aims of the Transition Policy

1. Ensure Smooth Transitions — provide a structured process that supports children's emotional, social and cognitive needs as they move into a new programme.
2. Promote Individualised Support — tailor each transition to the child's own pace, building confidence and security.
3. Encourage Collaboration — strengthen communication between educators and families so the child is supported together.
4. Maintain Montessori Principles — uphold respect for the child, independence, and holistic learning.
5. Provide Consistent Monitoring — observe and adjust the process as needed to address challenges promptly.

3. New Student Transitions

Beginning school is a significant milestone for young children. For many, it is their first time being apart from parents and outside of the home environment. While exciting, this experience can sometimes feel overwhelming.

At Montessori School of Cayman, we place great importance on ensuring each child's transition is positive, respectful, and paced according to their individual needs. Our transition process is designed to prioritise the social and emotional wellbeing of every child, while gradually building familiarity, comfort, and confidence.

New Toddler students typically participate in a slow, flexible transition process. Each plan is tailored to the child, with parents and caregivers asked to remain flexible and supportive throughout.

New Casa students are welcome to join the programme starting with their intended schedule; however, if more time or a tailored approach is needed, an individual plan will be arranged.

3.1 Key Steps in the Toddler Transition Process

1. School Tour

- Families are encouraged to bring their child on a tour of MSC to introduce them to the environment.

2. Initial Visit With Parent or Caregiver

- The first short visit usually takes place in the outdoor space during Toddler playtime.
- Parents may engage with their child and teachers to help the child feel comfortable.

3. First Short Separation

- During the second visit, the parent or caregiver leaves the child for a brief time (typically 30 minutes).

4. Gradual Extension of Time

- Based on the child's comfort, the Lead Toddler Guide prepares an individual transition schedule.
- Time at school is gradually increased by 30–60 minutes each day until the child has transitioned fully into their intended programme (half-day or full-day).

4. Transitioning Between Programmes: Toddler to Casa

At Montessori School of Cayman, we recognise that moving from one programme to another — such as from the Toddler Programme to the Casa Programme — is a significant step, and one that should support the child's emotional, social and cognitive development.

A well-structured transition process helps children adapt to new environments, routines, and expectations at a pace that aligns with their individual needs. It fosters a sense of security and confidence, minimising stress and maximising their potential for success in the next phase of learning. The policy also promotes collaboration between educators and families, ensuring clear communication and a shared commitment to the child's growth and wellbeing.

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this section is to outline the structured, supportive process for children transitioning from the Toddler Programme to the Casa Programme. This ensures a smooth, well-supported change that respects the developmental needs of each child, fosters collaboration between educators and families, and upholds the Montessori philosophy of individualised learning.

4.2 Key Steps in the Transition Process

1. Mandatory Attendance at Transition to Casa Parent Nights

Timing: Parent Nights are held in August and December, scheduled before the transition period so parents are well-informed about the Casa Programme and the transition process. Students expected to transition during that term/school year are invited to attend.

Purpose: These sessions help parents understand the differences between the Toddler and Casa environments, expectations for both students and parents, and how they can support their child through this significant change.

Requirement: All parents of children being considered for transition must attend one of these parent nights. Parents unable to attend must meet with the Toddler or Casa team to receive the necessary information.

2. Toddler Teacher Initiates Meeting With Casa Team

Timing: When a child in the Toddler Programme is identified as potentially ready for transition to Casa — typically based on age, developmental milestones, and teacher observations — the Toddler teacher initiates a meeting with the Casa team.

Purpose: To discuss the child's readiness, review their progress, and share observations from both environments.

Process: The Toddler teacher and Casa team review the child's profile on Transparent Classroom, the school's digital platform for tracking individual development, to help ensure the transition plan aligns with the child's unique needs, learning style, and readiness indicators.

3. Casa Team Observes the Child in the Toddler Environment

After the initial meeting, a member of the Casa team observes the child in their current Toddler environment to gain a first-hand understanding of the child's work habits, social interactions, and emotional responses. This helps the Casa team assess how the child is functioning in the current setting and determine their readiness for the Casa environment.

Based on these observations, the Casa team may provide additional insights or suggestions to the Toddler team regarding areas that need further development before the transition proceeds.

4. Casa Team Review and Agreement to Proceed

Following the observation and review, the Casa team meets to discuss the child's readiness. The decision is based on the child's emotional and cognitive development, ability to work independently, social interactions, and physical readiness.

- If the Casa team agrees the child is ready for transition, the following steps are initiated.
- If the Casa team determines the child is not yet ready, feedback is provided to the Toddler team, including specific recommendations on areas to focus on during the remaining time in the Toddler Programme.

5. Introduction to the Casa Environment

Initial visit: The child visits the Casa environment with their Toddler teacher for an introductory session, providing an opportunity to experience the new environment, explore the space, and observe the activities of other Casa children. This first visit is scheduled after the Casa team agrees to proceed with the transition.

Follow-up visit: The child returns to Casa for a 30-minute visit the following day, accompanied by their Toddler teacher, allowing them to engage with the environment more independently.

Independent visit: On the third day, the child visits Casa alone for an additional 30-minute session, helping them begin the process of familiarising themselves with the space and staff.

6. Ongoing Monitoring and Support

Continued visits: If the child adapts well to the initial visits, further visits are planned to help them ease into the Casa environment gradually. The child's emotional and social adjustment is closely monitored by both the Toddler and Casa teams throughout this period.

Communication: The Toddler and Casa teams maintain ongoing communication regarding the child's progress. If any concerns arise, the transition plan is adjusted to better meet the child's needs.

7. Formal Transition Process

Parent notification: Once the child is ready to fully transition to the Casa Programme, parents receive formal notification via email outlining the schedule and expectations for the next steps.

Schedule & transition period: The Toddler and Casa teams agree and create a set transition schedule for the student, which is shared with everyone involved before moving forward, to create consistency for the student and ensure everyone is aware of the details of that student's transition plan. The child's transition to the Casa Programme is gradual, allowing them to adjust to their new environment at their own pace, with continued support from both teams; during this period, the child spends increasing amounts of time in the Casa environment, and the proposed schedule is followed closely.

8. Parent Observation of Casa Work Cycle

Observation opportunity: Parents are invited to observe the Casa Work Cycle during the transition period, providing a deeper understanding of how the Casa environment functions and how their child will engage in this new phase of their learning.

9. Casa Parent Agreement

Purpose: The Casa Parent Agreement outlines the programme expectations for parents, including guidelines on communication, participation, and supporting the child's development in the Casa Programme.

The agreement must be signed by the parent(s) before the child's full transition to the Casa Programme, ensuring both parents and educators are aligned on the goals and responsibilities involved in the child's continued education.

5. Policy Review

This Transition Policy is reviewed at least annually, or sooner if our internal transition procedures or Ministry of Education/ECCE guidance change, to ensure it continues to reflect best practice for supporting children and families through every stage of their journey at Montessori School of Cayman.