



HMM Marathi Shala

Procedures and Policies for Parents and Students



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About HMM Marathi Shala

The HMM Marathi Shala was inaugurated on Oct 12, 2013. HMM Marathi Shala is the education division of the parent organization - Houston Maharashtra Mandal (serving the Greater Houston area neighborhood in Texas, USA). HMM is a non-profit organization registered under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act of September 2, 1980.

HMM Marathi Shala is affiliated with the BMM (Bruhan Maharashtra Mandal) network of Marathi schools founded in many US and Canadian cities. It was founded with the purpose of protecting and preserving Marathi language. It is run solely by unpaid volunteers. Its aim is to help students to communicate in, read and write Marathi, thereby preparing them to appreciate the rich beauty of Marathi language.

The shala currently operates in three branches or shakhas:

- Cypress
- Katy
- Sugar Land

HMM Marathi shala is held once weekly, on either Saturday or Saturday depending on the branch/shakha, and operates in the Fall and Spring semesters.

For shala contact information refer to the HMM Marathi Shala website hmmmarathishala.org.

An annual calendar for the current academic year will be posted to the Shala website at the time of enrollment.

For more information on Shala branch locations, refer to the website.

Admission Process and Eligibility Policy

HMM Marathi Shala Admission is a 2-step process through the HMM Marathi Shala website hmmmarathishala.org, once enrollment is open:

- Paying fees
- Submitting Shala registration form

For registration opening and closing dates, and current information on fees, refer to the HMM Shala website hmmmarathishala.org.



Eligibility –

- o Students need to be eligible for kindergarten in their local ISD (i.e. meet their age criteria) to be eligible to attend Marathi Shala. In general, that means the student must be at least 5 years old by August, but will be based on their local ISD.
- o Students joining Marathi shala at the age of 6 or 6+ and having Marathi language knowledge already, will be evaluated before assigning to the appropriate level.

Registration and Fees Policy

- Shala registration and fee payment will be done only in the Fall Semester, for the entire year.
- **HMM Family membership** is mandatory to enroll for HMM Marathi Shala.
- For registration opening and closing dates for any academic year, and current information on fees, refer to the HMM Shala website hmmarathishala.org.
- Fees will be payable through **Zelle only**, per instructions provided on the HMM Marathi Shala website.
- Parents should save the Zelle Transaction ID.
- Annual Fee Structure per student - \$220/year.
- Payment has to be done 100% at one time in fall.
- The students migrating from other BMM Marathi schools are allowed to enroll in HMM Marathi Shala, in the middle of the year with proof of the last exam taken, exam scores and attendance record.
 - o Fees for the migrating student will be prorated on semester basis i.e., Aug- Dec as Fall semester and Jan-May as Spring semester.
- Students moving internally within HMM Shala do not have to pay fees again but do need to give advance notice to the Program Manager and local Branch Coordinator so that availability of teachers and resources can be determined.

Cancellation / Refund Policy:

- o No cancellations or Refunds will be allowed. We operate solely on a volunteer basis and do not have resources to do multiple payment adjustments. Parents will receive a non-profit donation receipt, if requested.



Shala Schedule and Teaching Format

- **Schedule** – Although Shala gives freedom to each Shakha Pramukh/Branch Coordinator to decide their own timing based on their local ISD, venue restrictions and teacher’s availability, general dates and timeline guidelines set by HMM Marathi Shala committee need to be followed. HMM Marathi shala is held once weekly, on either Saturday or Saturday depending on the branch/shakha.
- **Format** - Based on the success of the academic year 2023-2024 and the positive feedback received from Parents, Teachers and Branch Coordinators and most importantly the progress made by kids, especially the younger ones, in learning Marathi while enjoying the company of their new friends, we have decided to follow the teaching format as laid out here. *(Note that every level, Pahili to Paachvi consists of 2 years in each grade. Beginner level consists of 1 year)*
 - **Lower grades** will be in-person at the respective Shala branch locations.
 - **Higher grades** for our seasoned students will be conducted in a hybrid format- virtual classes over Zoom and at least 1-2 classes in-person per month at the respective Shala branch location. This arrangement is subject to change depending on the number of students at the upper levels and space availability at each Shala branch location.

Exam and Promotion Policy

It is the Shala’s intent to have students learn to speak Marathi (primarily) and also read and write Marathi in a fun, inclusive and supportive manner. As teachers we strongly feel that students learn best when they are having fun in a disciplined and conducive atmosphere to learn.

Levels

- HMM Marathi Shala has grade levels from Beginner to Pachavi. BMM Shala is collaborating with Govt of Maharashtra/Bharati Vidyapeeth to provide Marathi education in BMM associated schools in North America.
 - o Students starting Marathi Shala at the age of 5 will join at Beginner’s level
 - o Students joining Marathi shala at the age of 6 and above will be evaluated and assigned the level that best fits their understanding and speaking skills in Marathi.
 - o Assignment of each student is decided by the Branch Coordinator and Shala Committee based on their level and teacher availability, keeping in mind the



teacher-student ratio. Parent input cannot not always be considered regarding the choice of teacher. This ensures impartial assignment of students and the best benefits for the student with his/her peers and teacher.

- o Exceptions (students migrating from India or other BMM shalas) will be evaluated before assigning to the appropriate level.

Exams and Promotion

- The syllabus is based on the BMM-Govt of Maharashtra syllabus outlined for each level. Teachers will provide a summary of topics covered in each class and the syllabus for each Semester exam.
- Semester exams will be conducted in December and May to evaluate students' progress.
- There are two types of exams
 - (a) HMM Marathi Shala Exams (these are standardized across all HMM Shala Branches or Shakhas with exam papers set by the Shala Committee.
 - OR
 - (b) BMM Shala Exams (these are standardized across all Shalas in North America with exam papers coming directly from BMM, with no input or influence from HMM Marathi Shala.
- If the student meets attendance and passing scores for EITHER exams, they will be promoted to the next grade.
- BMM exams are optional and to be decided at the discretion of the teacher, coordinator and principal. Parents are welcome to opt their studentren out of the BMM exams, and instead only be evaluated by HMM Marathi Shala semester exams. Students will only be given one exam.
- If students pass EITHER exam and meet attendance criteria, they will be given a certificate of participation. The HMM Shala Exam and BMM Exam certificates are different but this difference does NOT have any bearing whatsoever in promotion.
- Attendance requirement: 80% student attendance is REQUIRED in order to be promoted to the next level and in order to take the BMM exams. Medical exceptions may be made but documentation will need to be provided to the local coordinator and approval will need to be granted by the Core Committee or Principal
- Grading/ Assessment: Exam assessment for both Shala semester exams and BMM exams will be provided in a fair manner and is not up for negotiation/ discussion. Teachers will provide feedback to help students. The exam results are binding. Passing requirement for both BMM and HMM exams is 50% in each of the Written and Verbal sections.



- If a student is unable to obtain the passing grade of 50% in either of the Written and Verbal sections of the HMM exam, they will not be promoted to the next level. They however will be offered an option to retake their level exam in August (at the start of the new academic year), in order to be promoted to the next level.
- Make-up exams - It is the parents' responsibility to ensure that their student is present for both December and May exams. If the student is unable to attend an exam due to illness/sickness, parents need to obtain a doctor's note and contact the Program Manager to discuss a make-up exam date and time. Due to unforeseen personal circumstances, if a student misses an exam or is expected to miss an exam, the parent should discuss the situation with the Program Manager in a timely manner and request a date and time for a make-up exam.

Discipline and Punctuality

- Students should make every effort to wear Shala T-shirt as much as possible for classes. If a school T-shirt is not received, or unavailable, then dress in an appropriate manner for a school environment (similar to your local ISD expectations, i.e. no bold colored T-shirts or with any inappropriate content or message on the clothing).
- Students should arrive at the school on time and should be picked up right after the classes. Teachers and volunteers cannot take care of the students after school hours.
- Students and parents are expected to maintain cleanliness, decorum and refrain from disturbing and/or moving/misplacing any property at the leased Shala venues.
- Students are expected to do their homework regularly and submit it to the respective teachers.
- Students who are sick or show symptoms of being sick should NOT be sent to /attend Marathi shala.
- Students are supposed to bring their own notebook, pencil, writing board (slate/ white board etc.), chalk pencils, coloring pencils, water bottle and tissues.
- Parents are supposed to inform the center coordinator/ teachers if someone other than the parent is picking up the student.
- Parents are requested not to stay in the classroom as this disrupts the students, unless they are in a volunteer capacity.
- Parents and students are requested to respect the teacher's decision. In case of any disagreement, discuss it with the teacher or center coordinator outside of Shala hours.
- As the Shala is operated completely by volunteers, it is expected that parents volunteer with their respective branch at least twice per semester. The local coordinator and teachers will communicate a volunteer schedule to parents.
- Students and parents are expected to behave respectfully and be polite with the Shala staff. Please realize that everyone is volunteering their time and trying to do their best. In



case of any disagreements, discipline related incidents or any other issues between teachers and students, parents and/or teachers are requested to reach out as soon as possible to the Shala branch coordinator to resolve the issues. Shala committee may need to get involved as well.

- Students and parents are expected to help in setting up and cleaning up of the classroom before and after the class.
- Students and parents should refrain from loud chatting in the hallways and school premises and be mindful of any potentially disruptive behaviors.
- Missed Class -
 - o If the student cannot attend class, the parent/student MUST inform the respective teacher and coordinator prior to class.
 - o A minimum 80% attendance is required for appearing the BMM exam, promoting to the next level and for school certificate/reference.
 - o It will be the parent's / student's responsibility to collect the missed class work and homework from the teacher and make sure it is completed before the next class.
 - o If students are attending an HMM program, they can be given an attendance pass, but it will be the student's responsibility to make up for the missed classwork and complete the homework. If an entire class or the teacher will be attending the HMM program and will miss class, it is up to the teacher and coordinator to decide how to make up the class and which portion to assign as homework and which to cover in the next class.

Online Classroom Rules

In addition to the above mentioned rules, the following are expected for an online class:

- Students are expected to join the class on time for virtual classes.
- Students are expected to keep the video ON all the time during the class.
- Students are expected to keep audio on MUTE during the class unless the teacher has requested to keep it ON for participation.
- Students are expected to raise their hand in case of any query or comment.
- Students are expected to sit in a quiet place during the class.
- Students are expected to be respectful towards the teacher and maintain decorum by not getting distracted during the online class.
- Parents are requested not to stay in the classroom as this can be a distraction for the student and teacher.



- Parents should refrain from providing any suggestions or comments to the teachers during the class. Keep those suggestions and comments for after the class. Teacher or coordinator meetings can be arranged outside Shala hours.
- In a virtual environment, it may be necessary for Parents/Caretakers to help get the homework scanned and sent to the teachers.

Parental/ Student Consent

Parental/ student consent is required for following items–

- HMM Marathi Shala and property managers of the shala location will not be liable for any accidents/ injuries that may occur during school hours.
- BMM and HMM Marathi Shala can publish student's work/photo/audio/video clips on BMM /HMM Shala Internet web site and/or BMM/HMM Mandal's web page and/or in the BMM newsletter or Shala publications.
- BMM or HMM shala teaching/ exam materials are BMM or HMM copyrights. Parents/ students are not allowed to share it either in a written or verbal form.
- Awareness of HMM Marathi shala rules and policies.

HMM Marathi Shala reserves the right to change any rules and policies in the future.



Document Control

Name	Date	Version	Edits
Nitu Tarnekar	07/06/21	v1 from meetings	
Mayur Khare	07/10/21	v1.5	Edits, review and finalization
Madhura Kelkar	07/15/2021	v1.6	Minor language and formatting edits
Nitu Tarnekar	07/18/2021	v2.0	Baselined for year 2021-2022
Madhura Kelkar	09/27/2021	v2.1	Added policy about syllabus sharing and class teacher assignment
Madhura Kelkar	06/30/2022	v3	(1) Exam papers set by BMM and HMM respectively (2) exam passing 50%
Madhura Kelkar	04/30/2022	v4	HMM Program attendance policy and promotion in case of failing grade
Anuja Zambre	07/13/2023	v5	Updated branches, fee per academic year and teaching format for 2023-24
Anuja Zambre, Lalita Phadke, Amrut Athavale	07/13/2024	v6	Updated fees per academic year, HMM membership, Zelle payment and teaching format for 2024-25.



			Updated information about Shala levels. Updated Discipline and Punctuality and Online Classroom Rules sections.
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