

Mary Kay McMillin and William Woodruff

Code of Conduct



Our Mission

Recognizing that every child is a unique individual, our mission is to provide a respectful, caring, inclusive and supportive educational environment that empowers children to grow as confident, responsible and lifelong learners.

Statement of Beliefs

We believe that:

- A warm, caring, inclusive and supportive school climate creates the conditions in which all children can learn and thrive.
- Students should be supported in developing responsibility and accountability for their learning, choices and interactions with others.
- Honesty, trust, kindness, and respect for oneself, others and the school community are essential.
- Every child is unique and should be encouraged and supported in reaching their fullest potential.
- Listening, critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity and appropriate risk-taking are essential parts of learning.
- Children should learn to understand, appreciate and respect the differences among people.
- A strong partnership among the school, home and community is essential to the development of thoughtful, responsible and productive citizens.

Philosophy

Our approach to student behavior is grounded in mutual respect, positive relationships and the understanding that social and behavioral skills must be taught, practiced, and reinforced. School expectations are simple, clear, positively stated and developmentally appropriate. They are designed to create a safe, caring and productive environment in which all students can learn and participate.

When concerns arise, staff help students understand what happened, recognize how their actions affected others and identify more appropriate choices for the future. Responses may include reteaching expectations, reflection, problem-solving, restorative conversations, logical consequences and opportunities to repair harm.

Teachers and staff address most concerns within the school setting. The principal may become involved when a behavior is repeated, significantly affects safety or learning or requires additional support.

Family communication is an important part of the school-home partnership. Families may not be contacted for every minor concern, as students are also given developmentally appropriate opportunities to solve problems, accept responsibility and learn from their experiences. Families will be contacted when concerns are significant, repeated or require collaboration between home and school.

Student Commitments

As a member of our school community, I will:

- Respect the school by helping to keep it clean and taking care of its materials and spaces.
- Respect myself by advocating for my needs and taking responsibility for my choices and working to make things right when a problem occurs.
- Respect your peers by listening, including others and helping to keep everyone safe.
- Respect school staff by being polite and following directions.
- Respect others' learning by participating, listening and avoiding distractions.

What Do These Commitments Look Like in Our School?

- **Classroom:** The classroom is a place where everyone can learn. I participate, listen, take care of materials, follow directions and avoid distracting others.
- **Hallway:** The hallway is kept quiet and clear so learning can continue. I walk safely, stay with my class, keep my hands to myself and follow adult directions.
- **Restroom:** The restroom is kept clean and quiet while being used. I use the bathroom quickly and return to class after flushing and washing my hands.
- **Lunchroom:** The lunchroom is kept clean, safe and enjoyable. I use an appropriate voice, remain in my assigned area, respect others' food choices, use good manners and clean up after myself.
- **Playground:** The playground is a safe and welcoming place for everyone. I follow the rules, use the equipment properly, include others and solve problems respectfully.
- **Nurse's Office:** The nurse's office is a calm place where students receive help when they are sick or hurt. I let an adult know when I need help, use a quiet voice, answer the nurse's questions honestly, and follow the nurse's directions.
- **Main Office:** The main office is a welcoming and busy place. I enter quietly, use respectful words, wait patiently and follow the directions of the office staff.

- **Bus:** The bus is kept safe and calm. I remain seated, use a quiet voice, keep the aisle clear and listen to the bus driver. I keep food and drinks in my backpack.
- **Arrival and Dismissal:** Arrival and dismissal are calm, safe, and organized. I go directly to my assigned area, stay with my group, and leave only with the correct adult. I keep my voice quiet so I can listen to directions.

School–Family Partnership

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Model respectful behavior and communication.
- Support their child’s emotional, social, behavioral and academic growth.
- Work collaboratively with school staff to support their child and the well-being of the school community.
- Promote regular and punctual attendance.
- Reinforce school expectations and encourage their child to take responsibility for their choices.
- Respect and follow school traffic, parking, arrival, dismissal and safety procedures.
- Help their child care for school materials and work with the school when property is lost or damaged.
- Follow applicable district policies and procedures.

Parents and guardians can expect school staff to:

- Model respectful, caring, and professional behavior.
- Establish and maintain a positive, inclusive, safe and orderly learning environment.
- Teach, model and reinforce school expectations in developmentally appropriate ways.
- Communicate student progress through conferences, progress reports and other appropriate means.
- Communicate significant or repeated concerns and work collaboratively with families to address them.
- Respond to family communication within a reasonable timeframe.
- Apply school expectations and responses to behavior fairly while considering each student’s age, needs and circumstances.

Technology and Personal Devices

Technology is a tool for learning. At the PK-2 level, school technology is used in developmentally appropriate, teacher-directed ways. Students are expected to use technology safely and responsibly, care for equipment and follow staff directions.

In accordance with New Jersey law and district policy, personal internet-enabled devices, including cell phones and smartwatches, may not be used during the school day. Families are strongly discouraged from sending personal internet-enabled devices to school. Any device brought to school will be turned off and stored in the student's backpack from arrival through dismissal. Exceptions are made when a device has been authorized for a documented educational, health, communication or safety need. Families who need to contact a student during the school day should call the main office.

Dress Code

Students should come to school dressed in clothing that allows them to participate safely and comfortably throughout the school day.

Clothing should:

- Provide appropriate coverage during sitting, movement and active play.
- Include safe, secure footwear suitable for recess, physical activity and the weather.
- Display words, pictures and messages that are appropriate for an early childhood school setting.
- Avoid accessories or clothing that create a safety concern, substantially distract from learning or interfere with classroom activities.

Families are encouraged to consider the activities of the school day when selecting clothing, including recess, physical education, and sitting on the floor. Shorts are encouraged to be worn under dresses or skirts for comfort, movement, and privacy. When clothing creates a safety concern or significantly interferes with a student's participation or the learning environment, the school will contact the family to help provide an appropriate alternative.

Responses to Student Behavior

When a student does not meet a school expectation, staff will respond in a developmentally appropriate manner that considers the student's age, individual needs, the circumstances surrounding the behavior and the effect of the behavior on others.

Responses may include one or more of the following:

- A reminder, redirection or reteaching of the expectation.
- A private conference or additional support from a teacher, school counselor, principal or other appropriate staff member.
- An opportunity for reflection, problem-solving or making a more appropriate choice.
- Participation in a restorative conversation or action to repair harm.
- A temporary loss of a related classroom or school privilege.

- Sitting out for a brief portion of recess, when appropriate.
- Parent or guardian communication or a conference with school staff.
- Development of an individualized action, behavior-support or safety plan.
- Additional responses consistent with district policy when behavior is repeated, significantly disrupts learning or creates a safety concern.

Responses will, whenever possible, be connected to the behavior, preserve the student's dignity and provide an opportunity to learn, repair harm and successfully return to the school community promptly.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

The district policy regarding suspected incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying is followed. The policy can be found at the following link:

<https://www.bhpsnj.org/o/berkeley-heights-ps/page/harrassment-intimidation-and-bullying>

Safety Concerns

If a student makes a statement or engages in behavior that raises concern for their own safety or the safety of others, the school may conduct a risk assessment or behavioral threat assessment, as appropriate.

Attendance and Punctuality

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to student learning, classroom routines and a child's connection to the school community. Parents and guardians are expected to ensure that students attend school consistently, arrive before 8:50 a.m., and remain in school for the full instructional day whenever possible.

The school will communicate with families when absences or tardiness become a concern and will work collaboratively with families to identify barriers and improve attendance.

In New Jersey, a student is considered chronically absent when they miss 10% or more of the school days for which they are enrolled. For a student enrolled for a full 180-day school year, this is equivalent to 18 or more days. Families will receive notification when a student is at risk of chronic absenteeism.

For specific attendance and tardiness procedures, including arrival times and the requirements for a student to be considered present, please refer to District Policies 5200 and 5240 in the district [Policy Manual](#).