

Park Hill School Family Handbook 2019-2020

5050 E. 19th Ave Denver, CO 80207 720-424-4910



**At Park Hill Elementary we are a community of learners.
We listen carefully to what people say and are kind to each other.
We stand up and take charge of our learning behavior.
We honor our diversity by learning from each other.
We are the future and we like what we see!**

This handbook provides important information about Park Hill Elementary. If you have a question that is not addressed in this handbook, please feel free to call or visit the school. Most questions can be answered by a member of the office staff, your child's teacher, or the principal. Please read the following pages and become familiar with some of the basic information concerning our school community.

Additional information can also be found on the Park Hill website: <http://www.parkhillelementary.org>

ADULTS ON CAMPUS

Your child's safety is our number one concern. With that in mind any non-staff adult on campus needs to sign in at the office and wear a volunteer name tag or a visitor badge. Whether you are coming to volunteer for several hours or just to drop off a lunch, please remember to come to the office first. The name tag serves as a visual ID that lets any staff member know immediately who belongs in the school and it also reinforces our monitoring of people on our campus. Exterior doors remained locked, and all visitors must buzz in at the doors and identify themselves to our office staff.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL:

The school day begins at **7:55 a.m.** for all students. Students' arrival time is between 7:45 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. **Please do not drop your child off alone prior to 7:45 a.m. as there is no supervision outside.** If your child desires breakfast, the cafeteria opens at 7:30 a.m. Students should go directly to the cafeteria for breakfast (prior to 7:45 a.m.) or to the playground (after 7:45 a.m.). If it is an inside day due to weather, students go to the cafeteria. Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrival is an interruption to those already engaged in learning activities and results in a loss of instruction time for the tardy student. **Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must report to the office with a parent/guardian to obtain a tardy slip before going to class.**

- All outside games (i.e. 4-square, gaga ball) will cease between the times of 7:45 – 8:00 a.m., and 2:45 – 3:00 p.m. This is for the safety of all students and family members.

School is dismissed at **2:45 p.m.** Park Hill staff will remain on duty until 3:00 p.m. All students must be picked up or on a bus by 3:00 p.m. Any students not accounted for after 3:00 p.m. will be brought to the office to remain under supervision until picked up by an approved adult. **Students will NOT be allowed to remain on the playground after 3:00 p.m. if they are not accounted for and supervised by an adult.**

Parent Pick up and Drop off – Please be mindful of traffic and traffic signs!

- In the mornings, students may be dropped off on the school-side of Elm and Fairfax streets. We highly encourage you to use our **Kiss and Go** drop-off on Elm street. We do NOT want students crossing the streets during drop-off unless with a parent and at a crosswalk.
- Elm Street is on the West side of the school, and is one-way North. Fairfax Street is on the East side of the school.
- We ask that parents do NOT park on Elm and Fairfax during drop-off and pick-up. We intend for these streets to strictly be for a safe drop-off and loading zone. Please park on the side streets and walk using crosswalks and designated areas.
- 19th Avenue is on the North side of the school. The school-side of 19th Avenue is used strictly for bus drop-off and loading between the hours of 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., respectively. Please do NOT park or drop-off on the school-side of 19th during these times, at the risk of being ticketed by DPD. You can park here between the times of 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
- Please pay attention to ALL city parking signs. These are enforced by DPD, not by Park Hill.

Things to remember:

- Use the crosswalks! Jaywalking is illegal and unsafe.
- Loading and unloading only on the side of the streets nearest the school, no parking.
 - Pull as far up as possible in the loading zone, please. This makes room for others and keeps our procedure safe because it's orderly.
 - Exit this zone as quickly as possible in order to make room for others.
- Go around the block if you need to turn around, please do not make u-turns.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENTEEISM

In order for students to receive the full benefit of their Park Hill education, daily attendance is the first and most important step. The school calendar is published and distributed before the commencement of the school year and parents are asked to schedule any travel within the dates that classes are not in session. Please notify the school if your child will be absent or tardy by phoning the school attendance line at **(720)424-4910** or **using the school app**. This should be done each day a child is absent.

Park Hill has an attendance and tardy policy in accordance with the Colorado School Attendance Law and Denver Public Schools' "Denver Plan." These guidelines allow for roughly 10 absences during the course of a school year. Every month the school social worker reviews student attendance and sends letters to parents for those students whose absences are excessive. The definition of "excessive" changes throughout the school year based on number of school days but parents can expect to receive the first communication after 5 absences or 5 tardies.

If absences are chronic, excessive, unexcused, or otherwise of concern a child and their family may be referred to truancy court. Excessive tardies and early withdrawals are also subject to truancy law.

If it is necessary to pick up your child from school during the school day, please go to the office to sign out your child. Teachers are instructed not to release children from the classroom or playground without authorization from the office. This procedure is followed to protect your child and to hold classroom interruptions to a minimum. A child will not be released to anyone who is not on the emergency card or to anyone under 18 years of age, unless the school's office has been notified in writing or by phone by the parent.

CAFETERIA

Breakfast is free of charge to ALL students in DPS. **Park Hill serves breakfast from 7:30 – 7:55 a.m.** each and every morning.

Students have the option of bringing their own lunch to school and/or purchasing milk or a hot lunch through Denver Public Schools. Please speak with our office staff or our cafeteria manager Mr. Dennis Geck if you have any questions.

Menu: www.dpsk12.org/lunchmenu Nutritional Information: www.foodservices.dpsk12.org

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

Denver Public Schools will make a decision in the early morning about closing schools or putting the Storm Schedule into effect. Listen to the local television and radio stations for the announcement.

Information is also posted on the DPS homepage: www.dpsk12.org. Park Hill follows the DPS schedule. When DPS elementary schools are put on the storm schedule, bus pick up times at the bus stops are delayed about one half hour. School will start at the regular time for students who do not ride

DPS school buses. In the unusual circumstance where school must be canceled during the school day, parents and/or guardians will be notified immediately. The information on the Emergency Form on file in the office will be used, and administrators and teachers will determine that all students have satisfactory transportation and supervision at home before releasing them from school. Please make sure your emergency contact numbers are kept up to date to ensure we may make timely contact with you during the school day.

CELL PHONES AND PLAY EQUIPMENT

- Students may not use cell phones between 7:55 am and 2:45 pm. Cell phones should be turned off during the day and kept in lockers or with teachers. If cell phones are used, they will be returned to the student at the end of the day for the first time, and returned only to parents for the second time and each time thereafter.
- Students may bring acceptable play equipment (balls) from home to be used before 7:45 am, during recess, or after 2:45 pm. Any personal equipment must be stored in lockers or classrooms during the day. Please write the child's name on any equipment brought from home.

CLASS PARTIES

Park Hill does not allow individual birthday parties in the classrooms. These can be disruptive to the learning environment and may impact students with specific allergies. If a teacher wishes to hold a celebration (birthday, academic success, reward, building class culture, etc), this will occur on Friday afternoons starting at 2:20pm, and will be held outside on the playground, not in the classroom. By district policy, food provided to students must be store-bought AND approved in advance by the teacher.

School-wide celebrations will be held for Halloween and Valentine's Day. Parents will receive notification in advance of these celebrations.

CLASS PLACEMENT PROCESS

Park Hill seeks to hire and retain the best teachers in the district. Children will be placed by staff according to individual and class balancing needs. Assigning students to classes is most effectively done by our classroom teachers who have been working with the students daily in an educational setting. Teachers consider the learning styles and academic needs of returning students and assign them to the different classrooms at the next grade level. This process is done with care and the utmost consideration of each child's academic and social/emotional needs. It takes careful consideration of many factors to create equitably balanced classrooms in terms of academic needs, behavior, gender, ethnicity, and number of students. If you have information about your child's needs for an upcoming school year, please share that with your classroom teacher. He or she will take that into consideration with other factors. Requests for specific teachers will not be taken. Class lists are subject to change by the administrative staff.

CSC

The Collaborative School Committee (CSC) is an advisory group that consists of representation from parents, community, faculty, administrators and classified staff. CSC meetings are scheduled, advertised, and open to the public. The meetings are open to parents/guardians and the community. Actions of the committee are communicated with the school via web posted agendas and minutes.

Purpose:

- To enhance student achievement and school climate by engaging the school community in collaborative efforts supporting the school and District's goals.

- To provide strategic direction in support of the school’s mission and vision as stated in the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). The UIP, with the school’s program design, should serve as the strategic plan for the school.
- Works collaboratively with the school community that includes the building principal, teachers, staff, students, parents, civic and business leaders, service and neighborhood representatives, and other community members
- Establishes relationships with parents, community members, civic, service and neighborhood organizations to increase involvement in the school and provide a forum for community input

We welcome your communication and will strive to provide you with current information on your topics of interest. Thanks for helping the CSC to keep the lines of communication up and running at Park Hill!

COMPUTER/INTERNET

All parents and students need to sign an Acceptable Use Agreement governing computer use at school. Failure to comply with any or all of this policy may result in a loss of any or all computer use privileges. Park Hill uses laptops, chromebooks, Ipads, and desktop computers.

CONDUCT – KINDNESS MATTERS!

Above all else, please teach your children Kindness. Park Hill is a respectful and caring place of learning. In order to achieve this purpose, high standards of conduct are expected. These standards are based on mutual respect and responsibility—for oneself, toward classmates, adults and for property. We strive to teach our ROAR values and our Character Traits daily. Learning these standards will enable students to develop self-discipline, self-esteem and problem solving skills. Students must be responsible and accept consequences for their behavior. At the beginning of school, all students will be provided with specific information about behavior expectations, including information on bullying. They will have the opportunity to ask questions and discuss expectations to ensure they understand what is required to be a respectful and caring community member.

When misbehavior occurs, the Denver Public Schools Discipline matrix is followed. For minor infractions we try to focus on identifying the cause of the misbehavior and use restorative approaches which could include apologies, community service, and mentoring. Minor misbehavior may also be addressed through gentle reminders which, if not heeded could result in time out, loss of privileges, and/or community service. Gentle reminders and specific behavior learning opportunities are part of our learning community.

For more serious or repeated misbehaviors, consequences also become more serious, including loss of privilege, behavior contracts, suspension and in rare cases, expulsion. Our discipline policy has been designed to help our students learn self-control and discipline in a constructive way.

Bully behavior has serious and lasting consequences for both the offender and the victim. The following definition comes from Stopbullying.gov:

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have [serious, lasting problems](#). In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- *An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.*

- *Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.*

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Bully behavior will not be tolerated at Park Hill.

If your child is being bullied, please help him or her report it immediately. It is best to report it when it occurs and to the adult in charge of that setting. However, sometimes the situation requires a different approach to reporting. Regardless of how or to whom, please, please be sure this is reported. This is for the good of all students involved. We will work with your child, the other student, and the other student's parents to remedy the situation. However, student privacy laws stipulate that we may only discuss a student's behavior with his or her parents. As the parent of the victim, information about the other student and any consequences will be limited.

If your child is engaging in bully behavior, we will confidentially address the situation respectfully and with the attitude that all our children are learners. You will be contacted to partner with us in helping your child identify and learn more positive and productive ways of interacting with peers.

- It is also important to remind parents that not all behavior infractions are bullying behaviors. As kids navigate life, school, and friendships, sometimes kids do things that aren't nice but aren't necessarily bullying. They simply are still learning, may have acted on impulse, or may be repeating a behavior they saw elsewhere. This is a teachable moment and one where accountability is important. The teachers and administration are here to support with such infractions.

DISCOVERY LINK

We are proud to offer Discovery Link at Park Hill! Their highly trained staff provide a creative, safe and caring environment for children before and after the regular school day. Please speak to our office staff or the program director for more information.

DRESS CODE

Park Hill does not have an official dress code. Students are expected to dress appropriately and in "good taste" for a community-based elementary school. Students also need to be prepared for all types of weather, including hot classrooms in the early and late days of the school year. Please be aware of the following dress expectations:

- Students may not wear shoes with wheels inside the building (no wheels allowed, period)
- Students should not wear open-toed shoes for safety purposes
- Students may wish to bring a change of clothes to keep in their lockers
- Hats are not to be worn inside the building for any reason
- Students should write their name inside all of their garments for Lost and Found purposes

EARLY DISMISSAL

It is strongly recommended that all appointments and extracurricular activities be scheduled outside school hours as the loss of class time is detrimental to the student. In the event that the occasional appointment cannot be so scheduled, a note should be sent to school with the student requesting early dismissal for that day and giving the time that the parent will pick up the student. Parents must first go to the office to obtain an early dismissal slip and sign their student out of school, and will then go to their student's classroom to pick him/her up. Students are responsible for handing in all work due in the classes they will miss, and for completing any assignments for the following day.

Should early dismissal become necessary because of an illness or accident in school, the nurse/office will contact that parent or appropriate designee on the Emergency Information Form. A parent or emergency contact person will sign the student out of school as outlined above.

ENRICHMENT

Park Hill offers two sessions of afterschool Enrichment (one per semester), Monday – Friday, for all students. There is a cost to these programs, and registration is required. More information will be provided within the first 3 weeks of the school year.

ELECTRONICS & TOYS

Toys from home are distracting to the learning environment here at school. We encourage these items be left at home during the school day. If you choose to allow your child to bring an electronic device (i.e. cell phone), please note that the school is not responsible for that item should it be lost or damaged. Inappropriate use of electronic items can result in that student losing the privilege of bringing the item to school.

FIRE DRILLS AND SAFETY PLANS

Fire drills and other safety drills are required by law and are an important practice in the event that an actual emergency should occur. Students learn the evacuation path established for each room they occupy. Conduct rules during these safety drills are strictly enforced. All building occupants must move silently and in an orderly fashion to a specified area where they remain until instructed to return to the building. All schools practice at least one fire drill a month and a lock down and shelter in place each semester. Please refer to the DPS Emergency Response and Crisis Management pamphlet for a complete understanding of the drills.

HOMEWORK

Homework is considered an integral part of the educational program through which students are encouraged to become independent learners. Whether practicing a concept or skill learned in class, doing research for a project, having time to think and write creatively, assimilating new material on an individual basis, or reading a book of choice, the work should be done carefully and to the best of one's ability. It is beneficial to your child's education to show an interest in his/her studies by reviewing materials and assignments brought home. In the event of an absence, all homework and class work is expected to be completed in a timely manner. **Teachers will communicate the HW policy for their class and grade level at Back to School Night and through email.**

FIELD TRIPS & EXCURSIONS

Classroom learning takes on a whole new meaning when put in the context of professional performance, firsthand discovery and experiences shared with experts. Field trips are a way of taking the classroom into the community and are therefore regarded as an integral part of the educational experience. These trips also serve to heighten community awareness, involvement, appreciation, and commitment. Students of all ages travel to museums, theaters, farms, historical sites, government buildings, and/or concert halls.

Parents are often asked to act as chaperones, especially for outings involving the younger students. Please be aware that there may be times where the school may ask for a nominal fee for your child to attend the excursion. Often times the venue of which the grade level or class is attending needs to have the money in advance. Please be prompt in sending the money. Talk to your child's teacher if there is a question or concern.

LOST & FOUND

Please check the lost and found area that is located on the 1st floor by the gym. Also, please put your child's name on coats, mittens, gloves, lunch-boxes and water bottles. All lost items will be bagged and donated at the end of each month.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are essential to the success of our school. Parents enrich our school with their ideas, interests, talents, and resources.

Just as we have high expectations for our staff and students, we have the same expectations for parental involvement. One of the most important aspects of involvement is communication between the school and the family. As a parent, it is your responsibility to read and manage communications from the staff and room parents. Periodically, you will receive messages from your room parent letting you know about upcoming classroom events and needed help. We want to make sure you have all the information needed to participate fully in your child's education and in the Park Hill Community. Look for more information in our Friday Folder emails.

Teachers will communicate the communication plan for their class and grade level at Back to School Night and through email.

PTSA

Park Hill is very fortunate to have a vibrant, dedicated PTSA. Please look for information on membership and volunteering at the start of the school year and throughout. PTSA will send emails to parents on Tuesday when appropriate.

RECESS

Students go outside every day for recess. Please make sure that they are dressed appropriately to be outside for up to 30 minutes at a time. We are all aware of how fast the weather in Colorado can change so students should always have access to a hat, pair of gloves and boots in their backpack. The sun is also very intense in Colorado. We check the temperature/ wind chill and generally will go out if students won't get wet and the temperature is appropriate.

SCHOOL HOURS

The school day begins at **7:55 a.m.** for all students. Students' arrival time is between 7:45 a.m. and 7:55 a.m. Please do not drop off your child prior to 7:45 (outside) and 7:30 (breakfast), as there is no supervision prior to those times. Students go directly to the cafeteria or the playground. If it is an inside day students go to the cafeteria. Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrival is an interruption to those already engaged in learning activities and results in a loss of instruction time for the tardy student. **Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. must report to the office with a parent/guardian before going to class.**

SCHOOL NURSE

A school nurse is in the building four days a week. On all other days, we have a health aide to distribute prescription medicine and attend to immediate needs. If a child becomes ill or injured at school, he/she will receive temporary care and first aid, and the parent will be notified immediately so that the child may be picked up. Please be sure an accurate emergency phone number is on file.

Regarding medication, in accordance with state law, Denver Public School Policy states that medication may be dispensed with physician and parent/guardian authorizations at school. The parent must provide the medication in a separate prescription bottle that stays at school. The bottle must have a prescription label clearly stating the student's name, doctor's name, name of the medication, dosage and time(s) to be taken. Medication requiring three doses a day should be given before school, after school and at bedtime. Medication requiring four doses a day may necessitate giving one dose at school.

ALL medication must be turned into the office and not carried around by students. Please do not send pills or capsules in plastic bags or over-the-counter medications such as cold pills, Tylenol and cough drops. Medications will be stored and locked in the school office and dispensed by the office staff. The student is responsible for going to the office/clinic to obtain his/her medication.