

Primary Prep Elementary & Middle School

PREPARING
FOR THE
FUTURE

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Student Handbook 2023-24

INTRODUCTION

The Student Handbook is intended to be a guide to life at Primary Prep. Used in conjunction with the school website, www.primaryprepjc.com and the Curriculum Guide, it provides an essential road map for all in the Primary Prep community. All parents, guardians and students are expected to know, understand and abide by the contents of this handbook.

Ignorance of the contents of this handbook will not excuse students from their responsibilities, or from appropriate penalties for violations of the rules, regulations and procedures of Primary Prep.

While intended to be as complete and helpful as possible, no handbook can address all the issues that surface in a school during the year. The judgment of the administration will be used to decide issues not herein discussed. The administration of Primary Prep Elementary and Middle School reserves to itself the right to interpret, amend, or change the contents of this handbook at any time.

Questions are welcome and encouraged, and should be directed to the school administration.

School Hours

Normal hours are from 8:00 AM through 2:50 (Grades 5 - 8)/3:00 PM each scheduled school day. Students should NOT arrive earlier than 8:00 AM or remain after 3:00 PM unless enrolled in either the Early Morning or After Care programs, respectively.

Pick up/Drop off Points

When dropping off or picking up students, all are reminded to keep safety concerns at the forefront of their thoughts. Drivers should be careful not to block driveways or double-park. The Jersey City Police will be issuing tickets.

All children should arrive promptly by 8:25 AM. Any student arriving after 8:30 A.M. will have to wait until the late doors open again 9:00. Parents are requested to follow the directions given by your child's teacher for the pick-up of students. Dismissal time is 2:50 for Middle School students and 3:00 PM for all others; parents are kindly requested not to ring the doorbell for an earlier dismissal.

Medication

Immunizations: "No shots, no school." All students entering for the first time are required to have proof of immunization against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, mumps, measles, and rubella.

Primary Prep is not authorized to distribute any type of medication (including aspirin) without the explicit permission of a doctor. Students will not be given any medication while at Primary Prep without the written permission of a doctor. Students needing occasional medications, such as penicillin for colds, earaches, or sore throats, are to take these medications at home, if possible. Medication that is prescribed for three (3) times a day may be taken before the student arrives at school, after school, and at bedtime.

If prescription drugs are to be taken while at school, they should be brought to the front office in their original container. A note must be personally delivered to the Administration/Nurse explaining why and when the medication should be taken. All medications must be administered in the presence of the Nurse.

No student should carry prescription drugs on his or her person while at school.

Policy Concerning Illness and Communicable Diseases

In the event a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend school. If such symptoms occur during the school day, the child will be removed from the classroom and a parent or guardian will be called to take the child home.

Severe pain or discomfort	Acute diarrhea
Episodes of acute vomiting	Red eyes with discharge
Sore throat or severe coughing	Swollen joints
Yellow eyes or jaundice skin	Blood in urine
Infected untreated skin patches	Stiff neck
Difficult or rapid breathing	
Skin rashes lasting more than 24 hrs.	
Weeping or bleeding skin lesions	
Visibly enlarged lymph nodes	
Elevated oral temperature (+101.5°F)	

A child must be symptom free for 24 hours or must have a doctor's note stating that the child no longer poses a serious health risk to others to return to school.

In the event a child contracts any of the following diseases, it is mandatory that a parent call the school immediately. A child will not be permitted to return to school without a doctor's note stating that the child is in good health and poses no threat to himself/herself or others.

Respiratory Illnesses

Chicken Pox	Meningococcus
German Measles	Mumps
Measles	Tuberculosis
Whooping Cough	COVID

Gastro-Intestinal Illnesses

Giardia Lamblia
Hepatitis A
Salmonella
Shigella

Contact Illnesses

Impetigo
Lice
Scabies

School Lunch

Lunch will be available on a daily basis. More information will be made available at a later date. Payment must be made through Venmo. Details will be on the menu. The prices for the 2023 - 24 school year lunches will be available on the September menu.

Academics

Homework: Students are expected to be prepared for their classes each day. Homework is a means to achieve this and is a regular component of the learning process at Primary Prep. Students should expect to have homework every day. Homework includes written work, reading, review, research, writing, projects, test prep and other work that is assigned by the teacher. Each student must reflect carefully and decide upon the time he/she needs to commit to his/her studies in order to achieve success. When your child is absent from school and needs his/her homework assignments, please telephone the school office in the morning. The teacher will be notified and the appropriate books and assignments will be made available. These can then be picked up in the office at the end of the school day. It is the responsibility of the student to keep track of the assignments.

Books: Each student must have the required texts for all of his or her courses. Some texts are the property of Primary Prep; other texts are on loan from the State of New Jersey. All textbooks must be properly cared for and covered at all times. Book covers should properly fit books and should be adequately secured. All texts must be returned in good condition upon the completion of the course. A student who returns a textbook in damaged condition, discounting normal wear and tear, will be charged a fee of \$75.00 per book. If a student receives a damaged text in September, he or she must immediately report the damage to the homeroom teacher, otherwise they may be billed for damage upon completion of the course.

Grades: The school year is divided into 2 semesters, each consisting of two marking periods. Report cards are issued four times a year at the end of each marking period.

Teachers have discretion in choosing their own method of grading assignments, homework, assessments, and other work. This information will be presented to parents at Back to School Night.

Honors certificates are issued for each marking period for Grades 5 through 8. Students achieving a minimum grade of 92 in all subjects are awarded First Honors. Students achieving a minimum grade of 88 in all subjects are awarded Second Honors.

Gradelink: Gradelink is our student information system (SIS). It allows you to track your child's progress in class and gives you an up to date tuition balance. Parents and students can access grades, performance, conduct, teacher comments and up-coming assignments on-line. Automatic Grade Monitoring sends parents automatic email alerts about their child's current progress. All of which can help contribute to a happier home on report card day. Report Cards will be published through Gradelink.

Class Attendance, Excused Absences, Excessive Absences, and Chronic Lateness: It is essential that students and parents understand that regular attendance is a critical component of success in school. Students who are absent frequently place themselves in jeopardy of failing their classes, and, ultimately, of not gaining entrance to the high school of their choice.

An absence shall be considered an excused absence for the following reasons:

1. The student's illness with doctor's note;
2. Requirements of a student's individual health care plan;
3. A death or critical illness in the student's immediate family;
4. Quarantine;
5. Observance of the student's religion;
6. Requirements of the student's individualized education program (IEP);
7. Alternate short or long term accommodations for students with disabilities;
9. The student's required attendance in court;
10. Eighth grade high school tours/interviews;
11. Emergency medical or dental appointments that cannot be scheduled at a time other than the school day with written document stating this;

Any student who accumulates 18 or more absences, excused or unexcused, during the school year will be retained in that grade. **All students must bring a note to school following an excused absence and detailing the day(s) and reason for the missed attendance.**

Lateness, particularly chronic lateness, is disruptive to both the teacher and the other students. It creates a bookkeeping issue for the teacher, effects the daily lunch order, and delays the start of the academic day. Please do not call the office to pre-order lunch if you are late. The office is not authorized to accept lunch orders. Anything more than five (5) days late will be marked as an absence.

Academic Integrity: Academic integrity is given the highest priority at Primary Prep. Academic integrity requires that one be honest in all aspects of his or her own academic life and that he or she protect the honesty of their own work and the work of others. All Primary Prep students are responsible for preserving their own academic integrity and for being mindful of the academic integrity of the

school itself. To reach these goals, students must be sure to do the following:

- complete their own homework assignments and be careful to make a distinction between helping another student understand problems and concepts related to the work and simply allowing another student to copy work;
- complete their examinations without seeking help from, or offering help to, another student, or obtaining help from an outside source;
- conduct their own research for papers, projects, and other work, and acknowledge the contributions of others to that work by accurately and completely citing sources.

Plagiarism - Although the use of digital technology has changed the way we perform research, it has not altered our firm stand against plagiarism. Successful research demands that students refer to the scholarly works of others and, in turn, incorporate these findings into their own prose. Students must distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate usage of scholarly material. Deliberately taking reference information and presenting it as one's own is plagiarism. Students are especially cautioned to be aware of plagiarism. When researching papers or other work, appropriate credit must be given to all sources. Merely changing words without documenting the source of the words/idea is plagiarism. Questions about appropriate documentation procedures should be directed to the course instructor. Ignorance of the standards of documentation is an unacceptable excuse for plagiarism.

While in no way intended to be a comprehensive list, the following are all examples of behavior that violates the academic integrity that Primary Prep expects from its students:

- Copying from other students or allowing others to copy
- Copying from someone else's paper during a test or quiz or allowing others to copy
- Using a communication device during a quiz, test or exam
- Looking in a book or at notes during a closed-book quiz, test or exam
- Absenting oneself from school to avoid a test, quiz or the submission of a paper
- Taking another's idea - even a fellow student's - and writing about it without giving that person credit for having originated the idea
- Using the words, sentences or paragraphs of another without acknowledging the source
- Accessing, editing or copying data from another's computer file or program
- Downloading another's work from the Internet
- While generative AI has proven to be a valuable resource, it cannot be passed along as a student's own work.

Violations of these and other behaviors that run counter to the principles of academic integrity will result in parental notification and a grade of zero on the assignment, project, quiz, test or exam.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We welcome your requests for conferences. It is important that you know what is going on with your child at school. Conferences can be scheduled by emailing the teacher with whom you want to meet. They are usually conducted from 7:45 AM to 8:15 AM or after 3:00 PM in order to accommodate the teachers' schedule.

Before any conference, you should decide what you want to ask the teacher(s). Discuss the upcoming conference with your child to see if there is anything they would like you to discuss. If possible, both parents should attend. Bring personal notes to facilitate the discussion. Attempt to get all the facts about a school situation before reacting to it.

Arrive promptly.

After the conference, discuss the issues with your child, stressing the positive points before discussing any areas that have been identified for improvement.

Discipline

Each staff member at Primary Prep accepts responsibility for the maintenance of discipline and for the promotion of a program for the development of wholesome human relations. A student's behavior must conform to acceptable standards of behavior as established by the Administration and the teachers.

All members of the academic community of Primary Prep, whether faculty, student or staff, are entitled to an environment where the pursuit of common goals is free from the chilling effects of harassment in school and/or through "cyber-bullying," e.g., the misuse of e-mail, other Internet communication, text messages, or cell phones. The harassment of others because of religion, race, gender, national origin, age, color, physical or mental disabilities is a form of discrimination. It creates a hostile, offensive and intimidating environment that interferes with work or study. It contaminates the atmosphere of trust that must exist in a school environment to foster independent, creative learning.

Disciplinary Suspension: A student may be placed on disciplinary suspension due to the nature or pattern of his or her behavior. The decision to place a student on suspension is reserved to the Principal. At Primary Prep, there are three levels of suspension that may be applied to a student:

Suspension Level One

- Parental notification and/or conference
- Student will be placed on in-school suspension

Suspension Level Two

- Parental notification and conference
- Student will be restricted from school for one (1) day

Suspension Level Three

- Parental conference
- Student restricted from school for three (3) days

It is essential that a student understand suspension to be a time of serious reflection and commitment to change previous behaviors and unhelpful patterns. After any suspension, the student's behavior will be carefully reviewed by the Administration and teachers; continued infractions will likely lead to student expulsion from Primary Prep.

Every disciplinary situation is different. The levels may change based on the severity of the behavior. An immediate expulsion could be the result of behavior deemed unsafe for the rest of the student body. Primary Prep reserves the right to distinguish among each circumstance .

Change in Student Information

It is imperative that the school office be notified immediately of a change of address; home, office, or cell phone number; or emergency contact information during the academic school year. This includes any updates to the approved pick-up list.

Inclement Weather

Closing school for snow or other severe weather conditions is never an easy decision and is seldom a decision with which all agree. When severe weather strikes, the regular school schedule may be suspended to ensure students' and staff safety. School closings will be announced by an email blast through Gradelink.

Permanent Records

According to the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, only the parent/guardian or student age 18 or over is permitted to inspect and review educational records relating to the student.

Drills

Every precaution is taken to ensure the safety of your child during normal school hours. Periodic drills (fire, intruder) are executed to make certain students learn proper safety procedures and adhere to all safety guidelines.

Educational Field Trips

Properly supervised and planned educational field trips are an important part of the academic process. A signed permission slip from a parent or guardian is required for all field trips.

Appearance and Dress Code

One hallmark of a Primary Prep student is his or her neat and proper appearance. The normal dress code requires that a student wear the approved school uniform. They should be purchased at Lobel's as they are fully cognizant of our requirements. Shoes, not sneakers or Skechers, must be worn and can be either brown, black, or navy blue. Students are to wear either white or blue socks. During cold weather, white or blue tights may be substituted. Leggings are not to be worn. Shirts should be properly buttoned and tucked into pants. On Activity Day, only the Primary Prep gym attire may be worn. The student's gym grade may be affected for any unapproved uniform. Clothes should be neat, clean and in good repair—i.e., no holes, tears, etc. Hats must not be worn inside the building. Technical fulfillment of the dress code while maintaining a sloppy appearance is in violation of the spirit of the dress code.

The Administration is the absolute and final arbiter of all issues surrounding the dress code.

Communication and Other Electronic Devices

Students may not use cell phones or other electronic devices—or have such devices in hand—while inside the school buildings. Because of the possibility of cell phone misuse, cell phones are to be turned off and placed in backpacks while students are in class or in the hallways changing classes. If a student violates this regulation, his or her cell phone will be confiscated, given to the Principal, and returned only to a parent.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD LEARN

- Start each day right; a calm beginning at home makes the school day much easier
- Encourage your child to have a good breakfast and lunch.
- Make certain that your child gets the proper amount of sleep.
- Praise your child each day for something that he/she has done.
- Have a special place to put school work that is brought home.
- Provide a clean well-lit study area.
- Institute a regularly scheduled time for homework.
- Laugh and talk with your child about school experiences.
- Listen to what your child says about his/her school experiences

- Stress attendance
- Establish lines of communication with your child's teacher(s).
- If he/she is reluctant to attend school, discuss any possible reason with the teacher(s).
- Encourage reading for pleasure.
- Stress organizational skills
- Reinforce the skills taught at school.

POLICY AGREEMENT

School Year 2023-2024

To be completed by the STUDENT

Name _____

Homeroom _____

I have read the entire contents of the 2023-2024 Student Handbook and agree to abide by the rules, regulations, and policies of Primary Prep.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____