

Memorial-Spaulding School Handbook 2019-2020



Personal Achievement
Communication

Effort
Kindness

**250 BROOKLINE STREET
NEWTON CENTRE, MA 02459
617-559-9600**

**ABSENT/TARDY NUMBER
617-559-9617**

**EXTENDED DAY NUMBER
617-630-5151**

WELCOME FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Memorial-Spaulding Families,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the Memorial-Spaulding School! I would especially like to welcome those families who are new to us this school year. I look forward to working together in order to create a productive and successful school year for all our children.

We firmly believe that children are more likely to experience success when school and families work in partnership. Our children's academic, artistic and social-emotional progress is a collective responsibility. Together we can guide our children toward acquisition of the skills necessary to become responsible, well educated, compassionate, creative and productive citizens.

As we foster this collaborative relationship, communication between home and school is an essential ingredient. This handbook is one means of such communication. It contains important information regarding practices, policies, rules, regulations and services. Many of your questions have been anticipated and are discussed in some detail; however, we are always available to clarify your questions and concerns as they arise.

As part of our work together, we ask that all parents please take the time to read this handbook and discuss pertinent information with your child(ren). This information, combined with weekly principal and PTO e-newsletter, classroom newsletters, and additional notices, will keep you abreast of school information, policies and events.

We encourage parents to become involved in the school by participating in parent-teacher efforts such as; Memorial-Spaulding PTO meetings, committees and functions, volunteering as a room parent, and attending scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Please feel free to visit the school and maintain dialogue with teachers and myself regarding the progress of your child.

You are most welcome to contact our office with any questions you may have: 617-559-9600. Again, I welcome you to the Memorial-Spaulding School community and look forward to a successful 2019-20 school year!

Sincerely,

Tom Morris

Tom Morris, Principal
<mailto:morrist@newton.k12.ma.us>

10/08/19

Dear Parents,

We hope your school year is off to a great start! We are proud to be part of this school community and look forward to helping make the school year both enjoyable and enriching for students, teachers, and parents.

Our PTO is made up of a community of parents who volunteer their time and talents to support the efforts of the wonderful teachers and staff of Memorial Spaulding to provide unique learning and enrichment opportunities for our children. We have an incredible community and school spirit that we promote through fun events throughout the year. We already have many wonderful events planned:

- Halloween Party at Memorial Spaulding (October 26th)
- Mystery Dinner (November 16th)
- Book Fair (November 4th-8th)
- International Festival (March)
- Memorial Spaulding Gala (Spring)

All of the above events and funding to support classroom activities are made possible through your time and financial contribution. We are committed to making fundraising both easy and time limited. The Memorial Spaulding PTO brings in revenue in three main ways:

- **Fundraising**
 - **Annual Appeal** – A fundraising drive where each family is asked to make a one-time annual contribution.
 - **Memorial Spaulding Gala** - Join parents and teachers at a festive dinner to support our school. Enjoy a party while you bid on silent auction items, try your luck at the raffle, and mingle with Memorial Spaulding parents and teachers.
- **ASCA** – Our *After School Creative Arts* program is our largest income generator and coordinated by parent volunteers. This program offers a great variety of fun and unique after-school classes that take place right at Memorial Spaulding! Sports, art, music, language, martial arts, cooking and science are just a few of the exciting offerings.

The PTO fundraising efforts have resulted in an amazing new playground that our children will enjoy for many years to come and most recently, interactive classroom projectors and additional chromebooks for our classrooms.

Everything we do is reliant on volunteers and we encourage you to get involved. There are big and small ways to get involved and your time will be an investment that produces lasting benefits. Visit our website for more information and/or contact us directly. We look forward to serving as co-presidents of the PTO this year and working with you to create an unforgettable experience for our children. Welcome to the Memorial Spaulding family!

Thank you,
Erika, Katy and Michelle
www.memorialspauldingpto.org
<mailto:info@memorialspauldingpto.org>

10/08/19

MEMORIAL- SPAULDING SCHOOL

OUR VISION

School is a community in which all children have the right to learn, to grow, to be valued for who they are and who they can become. As the faculty and families work together in a true partnership all our children will prosper.

We recognize that each child is unique and deserves to have the opportunity to learn the meaning of freedom and responsibility; respect and compassion for others; and to contribute to the larger world. Our school recognizes, values, and celebrates individual differences and creates a safe environment for all learners.

MEMORIAL-SPAULDING CORE VALUES

Communication
Achievement
Kindness
Effort

RESPONSIVE CLASSROOM

We want to take this opportunity to tell you more about our school's Responsive Classroom approach, a research-based approach to education that is associated with greater teacher effectiveness, higher student achievement, and improved school climate. It emphasizes teaching children to take care of themselves, each other, and the school environment so that everyone can learn at his/her best. You will notice our students paying attention to how we treat one another throughout the day. You will also see a strong emphasis on students setting goals for their own learning and taking responsibility for reaching those goals.

There are **seven principles** that guide this approach: The social and emotional curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum; How children learn is as important as what they learn; Great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction; To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn a set of social and emotional skills that include cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control; Knowing the children we teach—individually, culturally, and developmentally—is as important as knowing the content we teach; Knowing the families of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children we teach; How we, the adults at school, work together is as important as our individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

To ensure success for all students, we begin each year with a particular focus on teaching school-wide expectations for recess, safety, and lunch. It is our hope that time spent teaching and reviewing some of our school-wide expectations will continue to promote our school as a welcoming, safe and supportive community for all students and families.

SCHOOL RULES

Try your best

Be kind

Take care of everything around you

GRADE ORGANIZATION AND CLASS SIZE

Memorial-Spaulding School is a school of approximately 460 students from Newton and Boston (through participation in the METCO program), grades K – 5. There are currently 22 classrooms with an average class size of 21 students.

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Memorial-Spaulding is fortunate to have an interested, talented, creative and involved parent community. Each year the PTO sponsors a rich program, which both supports and enriches the school program.

<http://memorialspauldingpto.org>

BEFORE CARE/AFTER CARE

Early Morning Program

Newton Public Schools will be offering an Early Morning Program for students in Grades K through 5 in each of the elementary schools. The program is designed to provide a needed service by giving parents the opportunity to bring their children to school prior to the beginning of the regularly scheduled school day. Within the program, each elementary school will offer supervised before school care from 7:30 a.m. until 8:20 a.m. when the school day begins. More information about the Early Morning Program is available at their web site

<http://www3.newton.k12.ma.us/earlymorningprogram>. Please call 617-559-9025 to sign your child up for the early morning program.

Extended Day Program

Memorial-Spaulding has an Extended Day Program in the building, and has had it housed here for the over 20 years. It is a semi-structured, recreational program, which operates from 3:00pm – 6:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. On Tuesday the program runs from 12:30-6:00pm. Information can be obtained by calling the administrator, Bonnie Croopnick, or the lead teacher, Esta Nissenbaum, at 617-630-5151.

<http://memorialspauldingextendedday.com>

SCHOOL DAY

Start of the School Day

- Students may enter the building at 8:20 AM. This gives them time to get settled and be prepared for learning. Instruction begins at promptly at 8:30.
- The Blue Zone is a drop off, pick up area. It is drive through (stop, drop and move on), no parking area during morning arrival and afternoon dismissal.
- For safety reasons there is NO parking or dropping off in the faculty lot.

POLICIES

ABSENCES, TARDINESS, AND CALL BACK

Parents **must** report children who are absent or late to school. [The Absence/Tardy phone number is 617-559-9617](tel:617-559-9617).

After the recording, please leave the child's name, classroom teacher and day and date of absence. Call the day before or prior to 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. **Please do not leave early dismissal messages on this line.** The Call Back Program is a safety net for children who walk to school or wait at a bus stop without adult supervision.

You may also report unavoidable absences such as prolonged illness. **Any child who is absent more than 18 times in a year is considered chronically absent and these absences are reported to the state by NPS.**

ASPEN

Please be sure your emergency information is updated. Information can be changed directly through ASPEN, the Newton Public Schools student database system. The office must make home address changes. **When an address is changed NPS requires two utility bills from the new address and a lease, or mortgage information.**

BUS

You need to call the Transportation office (617-559-9051) or fill in the online form to apply for a bus pass. The transportation web site is <http://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/214>

Children are to ride on the bus to which they are assigned. If a child does not normally take a bus or rides on another bus, he/she can take a bus for a play date **with permission from the office and if there is enough space on the bus.** If you would like for your child to ride a different bus from his or her assigned bus, please send a note to your child's classroom teacher prior to the date of the change to see if space is available on the bus.

CAFETERIA

Children are seated together by their classrooms to continue to build and expand social relationships with classmates. Children in grade 5 will eventually be able to choose where to sit. Children should finish their lunch before going out to recess or back to class. We are trying to prevent the traveling of food outside lunchboxes in the building.

CELL PHONES

For a variety of reasons, students may not use cell phones at school. Phones must be turned off and kept in backpack/locker. If necessary, the classroom teacher may choose to collect cell phones at the beginning of the day. *Memorial-Spaulding School/Newton Public Schools is not responsible for phones that are lost, stolen, or broken while on the premises.*

CLASSROOM CONCERNS

If there is a problem in your child's classroom, or if your child is having a problem, your first step is to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss the issue. If you find that the problem is not addressed or resolved, the next step is to set up a meeting with the principal and the teacher to discuss next steps.

CLOTHING

Children should dress neatly and comfortably for the school day. Keep in mind that students may be involved in using paint, glue, and other messy materials. On the days that children have physical education, they should wear comfortable clothing and appropriate footwear. *Children will not be allowed to participate in physical education without proper footwear.* Children do go outdoors on snowy and cold days, so be sure to dress your child appropriately for the weather (**boots, gloves or mittens, hat**). A second set of clothes, to be kept in your child's locker, is recommended for grades K-2. For safety outside at recess, the children must wear closed heeled shoes. If flip-flops are worn to school they should bring other shoes to change into for recess.

COMMUNICATION

Check your children's backpack daily for work they have completed, and for teacher communication.. School-wide and citywide flyers are usually sent home on Fridays. Please be aware of how your child's teacher communicates with families.

Please speak with your child's teacher about any problems, questions or thoughts you may have. You may email the teachers or call the school to leave a message to have a teacher call you.

CONFERENCES

There are two parent/teacher conferences scheduled each year. The fall conference is a two or three way conference (i.e. teacher, child and parent) depending on the teacher's preference.

CORI

For the safety of your child, all parents who volunteer in the school, including library volunteers, room parents, field trip chaperones, and PTO committee members, must complete a **CORI**. Please come to the office with your **driver's license or passport** and fill out the form. It takes at least a week for CORIs to be processed. Please plan in advance if you want to volunteer for a specific event. CORIs are valid for 3 years.

DISMISSAL

- **Early Dismissal:** School is important, so we ask that you make every attempt to avoid taking your child out of school except in rare emergencies. If your child must be released from school early, a note must be sent to your child's teacher. You must come to the school office to sign your child out of school. At that time the administrative assistant will call down to the child's classroom to have the child dismissed. *Please do not go to the classroom to pick up your child.*
- **Pick-Up:** Children need to be picked up in a timely manner. Please make sure that the person responsible for picking up your child is here when the dismissal bell rings (12:30 on Tuesdays, and 3:00 p.m. on all other days). Also remember that there are 6 "early release" days, other than Tuesdays, scheduled during the school year. Please check your calendar to make sure your children are picked up at 12:30 on these days. The office and classroom teachers cannot be responsible for your child after the school day ends. Establish a consistent pick-up place for your child. Let your child's teacher know your daily dismissal routine.
- **Children Grades K-3** who do not take the bus will only be dismissed to an adult or older sibling
- **Change in Pick Up Arrangements:** If your child's usual after-school arrangements change; we ask that you send a written note to the teacher in the morning. We know emergencies happen, in that case, please call the office with the emergency dismissal change so we can notify the classroom teacher. Do not email changes to your child's teacher because he or she may not check email during the day.

FOOD/CELEBRATIONS

Food may not be shared at school due to concerns regarding food allergies. Likewise, food may not be used to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions at school. Please check with your child's classroom teacher with regard to celebrations.

GIFT AND SOLICITATIONS POLICY (2015)

The Newton Public Schools Staff Gifts and Solicitations Policy is updated and incorporates current Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law M.G.L. c. 268A. This replaces the earlier 1991 policy.

Newton Public Schools allows a group gift to an individual staff member only if the gift is identified as being from the entire class, the identity of the givers and the individual amounts are not disclosed to the recipient, and the gift does not exceed \$150 per school year. This differs from a gift for the classroom (*).

Individual gifts of appreciation in the form of sentimental tokens are allowed. Gifts of commercial value are not permitted.

NPS allows and encourages giving to charitable organizations such as school PTO's or the Newton Schools Foundation's *Honor Thy Teacher Program* which honors staff while supporting our schools.

HEALTH

Please do not send your child to school if you see signs of illness.

A student will be excluded from school if he/she has:

- A fever of 100° or greater in the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- A communicable disease diagnosis
- A cold in the active stages – coughing, sneezing, nasal drainage
- A sore throat and/or swollen neck glands
- Acute pain that requires relief by narcotic medication

The school nurse will assess each presenting condition on an individual basis and determine whether your child should be sent home because of an illness during school hours. The school administrative assistant must have alternate local telephone numbers of people to call in case of an emergency and neither parent can be reached. Please update your emergency contact information in our online student management system, ASPEN.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important part of your child's schooling. We believe homework is an invaluable way to enrich classroom learning, to reinforce specific skills and to extend school activities to the home. We do not believe in "homework for the sake of homework". Part of the homework assignment is to build responsibility within students.

During the first few weeks of school, time will be devoted each day in the classrooms to clearly define our expectations and to teach students how to do homework successfully. Teachers will introduce homework slowly and incrementally and provide plenty of time for students to practice the routine under our guidance before expecting them to do it at home independently.

While routines may be slightly different among grade levels, all children will practice homework routines such as bringing home in-class assignments or using home-school folders. This will reinforce the learning that takes place during the school day, and allow parents to gain a better understanding of homework expectations so they are better able to hold their children to these expectations.

In addition, all Memorial-Spaulling students must read each night. Your child's teacher will have specific details regarding at-home reading. If at any time you are unclear about an assignment or have any questions about your child's work, please contact the teacher. Families and teachers working together will insure that all Memorial-Spaulling students are successful learners.

As a part of homework routines, we would like to encourage our students to choose a homework buddy, someone they can call if they have any question about an assignment, forgot the assignment, or perhaps to assist one another in their learning.

Part of the homework assignment is for the children to be responsible for their work. Unless a teacher calls and ask for homework to be brought in that day, please do not bring homework into the office to be picked. Please do not go to classroom or lockers to deliver homework to your child.

It is school policy that homework assignments are not given to students who will be out of school for a vacation.

LOCKERS

All children will be assigned a locker where they will place their backpack, outerwear and other belongings. Your child may also have his/her own cubby in the classroom, which will act as a "personal mailbox".

LUNCH/SNACK

Students have time for snack each day. Please send your child with a nutritious snack and drink. **Glass bottles, candy and soda are not allowed.** Due to many children having allergies, snacks cannot be shared.

Lunch can be brought to school or can be ordered through the food service department. You can also do a combination of both. If your child forgets to bring a lunch, the food service department will provide one. You will be charged for the lunch provided. If you **bring** your child's lunch to school, please deliver it to the office and we will have it sent to the café. Do not deliver your child's lunch to your child's locker during the school day. You can get more information about Food Services at this website: <https://www.newton.k12.ma.us/Page/799> or call them at (617) 559-6315.

OFFICE

Ms. Sheehan is our administrative assistant in the office. Please see her with any needs or questions. If, in an emergency, you must drop off something for your child, you may leave the item at the school office. The child's name and teacher's name should be written on the item. The classroom will be called and the child will be sent down to pick up during a break in instruction time.

PROGRESS REPORTS

The progress report is a formalized accounting of children's development as learners and is available through ASPEN twice per year, usually at the end of January/beginning of February and again in June. Parent-teacher conferences during the school year provide an opportunity for parents to meet with teachers to discuss their child's development

SCHOOL HOURS-ALL GRADES

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM
Tuesday 8:30 AM -12:30 PM

Children will be marked tardy if they are not in their classroom by 8:30am.

SNOW DAYS

Newton has a reverse phone system in place. If you have designated a phone number to be called, you will receive a message from the school department when school is closed or delayed. The following radio and television stations also broadcast no school announcements: WBUR 90.9FM, WBX 1030AM, WILD 1090AM, WRKO 680AM, WNTN 1550AM, channels 4,5,7 and Newton Cable TV. Please listen to the radio or watch television if you do not get a call. We kindly ask that you **DO NOT CALL** the school department, the fire or police departments or the school itself.

VISITORS

All visitors should use the front door to enter the building, stop at the greeter's desk to sign in and get a visitor's pass before they begin their visit. **If there is no one at the greeter's desk go to the main office to sign in.** When leaving, all visitors are asked to sign out. This is an important step in ensuring the safety of our children

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

ART

Elementary students receive visual art instruction from visual art specialist. The instruction is conducted in designated art classrooms. In addition, the visual art specialists are available to work with students and teachers on special projects. The visual art instruction is focused on providing students with experiences in a variety of visual art media and techniques while developing artistic and creative skills. Students are also given learning experiences, which are designed to increase their knowledge of art history and to develop art appreciation.

MUSIC

Music specialists who are assigned to each school conduct music instruction in the elementary schools. Each school offers general, vocal and instrumental music instruction. Students in grades K-2 & 4-5 receive 30 minutes of general music instruction per week. During this instruction, students are taught fundamentals of music through a sequential curriculum, which develops skills and knowledge in music performance, appreciation and history. Students in grade 3 receive 60 minutes (two 30 minute sessions) of general music instruction each week in a curriculum that introduces students to the recorder. Students in grades 4 and 5 participate in all-inclusive choral groups and can also sign up for instrumental music classes. The music specialist with the aid of paid piano accompanists conducts all choral-performing groups.

LIBRARY

The Library Media Program strives to ensure that every student is information literate and proficient in the use of information in all formats including current and emerging technologies. We will provide curriculum instruction and professional development opportunities to enable students and teachers to use technology creatively and effectively for teaching and learning and to construct and communicate new knowledge

Through effective teaching and engaging learning experiences we will create a community of life-long learners, critical thinkers, insightful readers, and ethical users of information resources prepared to participate in an evolving global society.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The purpose of the Physical Education, Health and Wellness Department of the Newton Public Schools is to enhance the well-being of the school community by creating a culture that integrates and balances the six dimensions of wellness: social/environmental, physical, intellectual, career/occupational, emotional and spiritual. The department strives to encourage an active, healthy lifestyle, positive choices and student centeredness, which will provide each student with a diverse education in a safe supportive environment. It is the hope that this mission will help to promote self-responsibility, motivation and excellence in learning as well as life-long commitment to wellness.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Memorial-Spaulding is extremely fortunate to have a very talented team. Support personnel include our social worker, psychologist, speech therapist, learning center teachers, occupational therapists, physical therapists, Team Specialist and Inclusion Facilitators.

Memorial-Spaulding Co-Taught Classrooms - Grades: 3 - 5

Overview: The goal of the program is to address students' multiple needs by providing a comprehensive range of services and a consistent, structured, and nurturing environment throughout the school day. At the same time, a co-taught model enables students to fully participate in the general curriculum. Creating co-teaching partnerships between general educators, the masters of content, and special educators, the masters of accessibility, increases the probability of curriculum being seamlessly differentiated and strategies being implemented. Opportunities for extension of curriculum and expanded differentiated instruction emerge within the co-taught setting. All students are provided a challenging, developmentally appropriate curriculum in various aspects of the school day. All students participate in the curriculum of the grade level with small group teaching of specific skills for students who require specialized instruction. Staffing: The staff consists of a full-time elementary teacher, a full-time special education teacher, and a full-time intern or assistant. Classroom Instruction: Within the class there is a range of group sizes during teacher-facilitated instruction. At times throughout the school day students may participate in small group, mid sized group as well as whole class instruction.