

**Welcome to
Pond Cove
School**

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU VISIT THE SCHOOL:

All visitors, parents, and volunteers are required to go directly to the main office to sign in upon arrival and sign out when departing. All guests to the school must wear a visitor's tag while in the building.

This is standard school procedure and is designed for the safety and security of our children and teachers. You may enter the school from the entrance adjacent to the parking areas. If you wish to visit your child's classroom, please be certain to arrange the visit *in advance* with his or her teacher.

Parking

Visitors to the Pond Cove School should park in the main parking areas next to the Middle School. School parking *is not permitted* at the Thomas Memorial Library.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE:

8:05	Playground coverage begins at this time. Students should not arrive prior to 8:00.
8:25	Buses arrive. Students go to classrooms.
8:35	School begins.
11:20	Morning Kindergarten is dismissed.
12:20	Afternoon Kindergarten begins.
11:35-12:00	Grade 2 Lunch
12:05-12:30	Grade 1 Lunch
12:45-1:10	Grade 3 Lunch
12:35-1:00	Grade 4 Lunch
2:55-3:05	Dismissal

DISMISSAL PROCEDURES:

All walkers and children being picked up by parents are dismissed at the drop-off/pick-up loop located by the Middle School at 2:55 p.m.

When all walkers and students being picked up have been dismissed, bus students are called by bus number over the school PA system. Children are assigned to buses at the start of the year, and the same schedule is followed daily. It seldom, if ever, changes. Children riding buses are dismissed directly from classrooms to buses.

Dismissal Other Than Usually Scheduled

Please send a note to your child's teacher to request early dismissal or a change in usual procedures. If you come to school to pick up your child, you must sign in at the office, and we will then call your child's classroom. For security reasons, we do not allow children to be picked up directly from classrooms.

Special Note to School Bus Riders

Our buses are generally filled to capacity. Children **are not permitted** to ride different buses. If you need to make arrangements for a childcare provider who lives in another part of town, please call the bus transportation department to see if this is possible. The school office **may not** give permission for your child to switch buses!

PERMISSION TO LEAVE SCHOOL:

If you intend to take your child from school before regular dismissal, please send a note in the morning stating the reason for the early dismissal and the time your child will be picked up. Parents must also come to the school office to sign their child out. ***No child will be permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours unless accompanied by a parent or another adult designated by the parent or guardian.***

BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE:

Pond Cove School has expectations for student behavior, which are essential to maintaining a positive school community. We are revising the format for these standards during the 08-09 school year to make them more child-friendly. You will learn more about them at the fall Open Houses and through regular updates in the Weekly Notices. We will also post information here on the website.

SAFETY AND HEALTH:

To ensure the safety of students and teachers, rollerblades, skateboards, baseball bats, lacrosse sticks, and any other equipment that may present a hazard are not permitted on school grounds.

In case of an accident, first aid will be given in the health office by the school nurse or authorized school personnel. In all cases of serious accident or illness, every effort will be made to contact you. Please be sure that phone numbers are kept current. If we cannot reach you, we will use the emergency contact information provided. If we are unable to reach anyone, we will summon emergency medical services and will notify you as soon as possible.

The nursing staff will administer required medications only if a medication form has been completed and kept on file. The form can be obtained through the nurse's office.

Immunization and physical forms completed by your physician are required upon registration at Pond Cove School.

Medication Policy

School Board policy has strict regulations regarding the use of medication in school. Medications which are necessary for the student's health and attendance in school, **must be sent in the original container** labeled with the student name, teacher name, name of medication, amount to be given and time of administration. Medication will not be accepted by the nursing staff or administered to children if it is not in the appropriate container. Medication should be brought to the health office accompanied by a permission form. The form can be obtained through the health office. A child may self administer medication with the written approval of the parent/guardian and the knowledge of the school nurse.

Students in K, 1, and 3 will have vision and hearing screening in the fall. The screening will also include height and weight measurement. Parents/guardians will be notified if a child does not pass the vision or hearing screening, so that they may initiate a professional examination by a specialist. Throughout the year, students in all grades will be screened at parent/guardian or teacher request.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Emergency Cards

Emergency Cards and information update sheets will be sent home with your child on the first day of school. Please fill them out and return them to school the next day. The cards are kept on file in the health office. If you work outside your home, this is our only way to contact you in case of an emergency. ***Please notify the offices immediately if there is a change of address, home, cell or work phone number.***

Fire Drills

Fire drills are held in accordance with state law, and exit routes are clearly posted throughout the building. Each teacher is responsible for instructing students in the proper manner and route for exiting during drills.

Emergency Dismissal

If emergency dismissal is necessary for any reason other than weather, we will use the information provided by parents on the Emergency Card. Please keep this information up-to-date. For weather related dismissals, please check cancellations on the local TV and radio stations or the school website.

Insurance

Student accident insurance is available for Pond Cove students at parent expense. Application forms are sent home with students on the first day of school.

THE PLAYGROUND:

There is one main playground area for students, which includes a play structure, swings, and both grassed and paved sections for recess play. In addition, a natural play area has been designed near the first grade wing and continues to evolve, thanks to the generosity of **the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust and a lcorps of parent and community volunteers.** This area is used both for play and as an outdoor classroom for individual classes.

Children should not play in the fenced area near Thomas Memorial Library or near the back windows of Thomas Memorial Library. Please refer to the "Playground Rules section later in the handbook for specific playground expectations.

Each morning, upon arrival at school, students go directly to the playground area. **Students should not arrive at school before 8:05, as there is no supervision prior to that time.** On very cold or rainy days, the morning duty teacher and the Principal will decide if playground activities will be moved indoors.

THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM:

Pond Cove School offers a hot lunch for students in grades 1-4 at \$2.85, including milk. A menu will be distributed to classrooms at the start of each month and will also be posted on the Cape School web site. Children bringing their own lunch can purchase milk for 50 cents. Parents may pay weekly, monthly, or periodically for their child's lunches by making a payment to their child's account or by logging on the Paypam (<https://paypams.com/HomePage.aspx>) and making an online payment. Checks should be made payable to the Cape Elizabeth School Lunch Program and placed in an envelope clearly labeled with the student's name and classroom teacher. Hot lunch may also be purchased on a daily basis. If your child forgets to bring his or her lunch to school, she or he will be allowed to purchase a hot lunch, and you will be notified of the charge on a **quarterly** statement.

COMMUNICATION:

Communication between school and home is important and necessary. Please provide your child's teacher with the best way and time to reach you: e-mail, home/work phone, etc. Make sure that the emergency contact information you provide to the Pond Cove Office is current and, should it change during the year, that you update the information immediately.

You will need to communicate with the school when your child will attend an after-school activity or be picked up instead of riding his/her regular bus home. This information should be sent, in writing, to school with your child. Particularly for young students, it is important that a note be sent in each time your child attends an after-school activity, regardless of the frequency of the activity (i.e. every Tuesday). Your child's teacher will share dismissal information with the Pond Cove Office. The Pond Cove Parents Association (PCPA) sells pre-printed forms, which can be used for this type of correspondence.

Anytime that your child needs to bring money to school – for lunch, field trips, book orders, etc. – please put this money in a sealed envelope labeled with your child's name and what the money is for. As with other written communication, including homework, it is best to put envelopes containing money into one of the pockets of your child's folder.

Communication is maintained throughout the school year by parent-teacher conferences and report cards, as well as phone conversations and email when necessary. Every Thursday, the Principal's Weekly Newsletter along with other informational notices are sent home electronically or in print. Communications from teachers to their individual students are sent home on an as-needed basis.

Report cards are issued in January and June and are available electronically through the Parent Portal on the school website. A paper copy may be obtained by contacting the Pond Cove Office.

SCHOOL RECORDS:

School records are collected and maintained to promote the instruction, guidance, and educational progress of the student. Folders containing the cumulative records of all students are kept in the main office. Parents have the right to inspect and review all student records directly related to their child.

Please notify the office if you are planning to move so that we may prepare the appropriate paperwork to maintain up-to-date records. Parents of students leaving the Pond Cove School must complete a release of records form, which may be obtained at the school office.

STUDENT ABSENCE:

If a child is going to be absent from school or arriving at school late, parents should call the office between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. Children will be marked tardy if they come to school after 8:35 a.m. Children reporting late for school must stop at the office for a pass in order to enter their classroom.

If the school has not been notified of a child's absence or tardiness by 9:15 a.m., we will call your home or place of employment to account for the absent child. If your family is planning to be away on vacation, please notify the school of your child's absence *before* departure. We urge all parents to cooperate with this program for the safety and well being of the children.

If your child attends Extended School Care, please call the care providers at 799-4388 to alert them to your child's absence.

EXTENDED SCHOOL CARE:

The Extended School Care Program is under the direction of Community Services and is located in the Community Services Building. For complete information about this comprehensive before and after school care program, call 799-2868.

BUS SCHEDULES:

Bus schedules are published in the Cape Courier in August. Questions regarding busing should be addressed to the Transportation Department at 799-2868.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES:

The Pond Cove School always tries to respect family needs when planning educational programming. We avoid scheduling major classroom or school events on dates when students of various faiths are absent in observance of holidays.

Pond Cove School attempts to follow a policy of inclusion so that all children can discuss or contribute their particular family and cultural traditions.

We believe that each of us must use our common sense to interpret the policy of inclusion in ways that will truly respect the cultural and religious diversity that exists within our school community.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

In the event of snowstorms or other seriously inclement weather conditions, "No School" announcements will be made by 6:00 a.m. on the following stations:

(Radio) WYNZ, WPOR, WGAM, WMGX, KISS

(Television) WCSH-TV, WGME-TV, WMTW-TV

In addition, it will be posted on the town website: www.capeelizabeth.com

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS:

Students are permitted to bring toys, sports equipment, games or books from home to school. Please remember that any toy brought to school should be something suitable for safe use in a large group of children. No hard bats, hard balls, roller skates, skateboards, hockey or lacrosse sticks are allowed. All toys should be labeled with your child's name on them. If you are unsure as to what is acceptable, please call the office for clarification.

STUDENT DRESS:

Please help your child select clothing that is weather-appropriate each day. To promote independence, please practice the arts of zippering and shoe-tying at home. Sandals, clogs, and other open shoes are not wise choices at Pond Cove. The playground is covered with bark chips that wriggle into such shoes. These shoes are also not ideal for climbing on the playground structures. Since all children are expected to go outside for recess, they must dress appropriately for the weather. Snow pants and boots are necessary during winter months. **Please remember that sneakers are required for gym.**

LOST AND FOUND:

Inevitably, your child will come home without his/her lunchbox or a mitten. Any items left behind in the classrooms, hallways, or on the playground are placed in the "Lost and Found" located near the stairs in the main lobby. Encourage your child to check this area as soon as possible when noticing a loss. This area is periodically cleaned and items remaining are donated to charitable organizations. If items are left on a school bus, we will notify the transportation department. You will greatly increase the odds of your child recovering lost items if the items are labeled with your child's name.

RECESS:

Children in grades 1 through 4 have a grade level morning and lunch recess. All other recess breaks are scheduled at the discretion of the teacher. Each child is expected to go outside daily for recess and should be dressed accordingly. If your child is unwell or unable to do so, please keep him or her at home.

FIELD TRIPS:

Field trip permission slip forms are sent home with each for each planned field trip. Please complete the form and return it to your child's classroom teacher as soon as possible. Students without a signed form will not be permitted to attend the field trip.

LOCKERS:

Each Pond Cove student is assigned a locker at the start of the year. In some circumstances, two students may share a locker. Please encourage your child to take pride in the condition of his or her locker and its contents.

THE POND COVE PARENT'S ASSOCIATION:

The Pond Cove Parent's Association (PCPA) meets regularly. They will publish a meeting schedule each year. Parents of Pond Cove students are invited to join the association and to take part in its numerous activities. Meeting notices are published in the PCPA Newsletter, as well as in handouts sent home with the students.

THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM:

The Volunteer Coordinator for the school district is Gail Schmader. Information regarding the program is sent home at the start of the school year. Volunteers are always needed and welcome. Please remember that volunteers must sign in and out at the school office, log their hours in the book in each office, and are required to wear a badge for easy identification.

Volunteers are required to attend a one-time Volunteer Awareness Session before volunteering in the school. The dates of the awareness session, which are held throughout the year, will be announced in the principal's weekly letter to parents and guardians.

STUDENT PLACEMENT:

The goal of the Cape Elizabeth School Department is to place each student in a program that will best serve his or her academic, social, and emotional development. In order to accomplish this goal, we observe the following School Board Placement Guideline.

Pond Cove Placement Procedure

At the end of the third quarter, parents will be invited to provide feedback about the learning environment in which their child will most likely succeed.

That information will be forwarded to the teacher with whom your child has been placed.

Each grade level team and the administration will carry out a series of meetings to develop reasonably balanced classrooms for next year. The criteria for creating the class groupings are as follows:

- **Language arts and math levels**
- **Heterogeneous balance**
- **Gender balance**
- **Consideration of negative peer relationships**
- **Special education needs**

If there is any parental information that applies to the placement, it will be reviewed by administration.

Parents will be notified by mail of their child's next year placement at the end of the current school year. In that letter, parents will be apprised of the appeal process.

Kindergarten placement will be carried out by the administration subsequent to the kindergarten entry screening. Parents will be notified as soon as possible after the compilation of classes is completed and teachers are assigned.

ADOPTED: May 9, 1995

RETENTION/ACCELERATION:

When a question of student retention or acceleration arises, parents, administrators and teachers meet to assess the needs of the individual student and to make appropriate recommendations.

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Special Education services are available in compliance with state and federal laws. The services are outlined in detail in the packet sent home with students on the first day of school. Additional copies or further information may be obtained by calling the Director of Instructional Support or the Superintendent's Office.

ALLIED ARTS:

Art, Music, Physical Education, Media Center, Computer (for grades 1-4), and Health (for grades 3 & 4) teachers each work with individual classrooms for one forty-five minute period on a six-day rotation, in grades one through four.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE:

Foreign language instruction begins at third grade. The FLES (Foreign Language in Elementary School) Program alternates each year between French and Spanish. Students receive three twenty-minute class sessions per week.

SMOKING POLICY:

Smoking is prohibited in the school building at all times.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:

It is the policy of the Pond Cove School not to discriminate in educational programs, activities, or employment practices on the basis of race, language, sex, age, or handicapping condition under the provisions of Title VI of the 1972 Educational Amendments; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; and the Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975.

CONCERNS OR PROBLEMS:

No individual, group, or organization is perfect, and problems are bound to arise from time to time. In order to keep small problems from becoming big ones, we try to resolve difficulties at the appropriate level as soon as we can. Please contact your child's teacher or the principal whenever you have a question or concern about school.

Dear Parents,

For a number of years, at Pond Cove we have been making an effort to minimize and eliminate situations when foods are brought into school. We have done this for a number of reasons, which reflect our value of respect for all.

1. To make classroom celebrations more equitable. In the past we have had some classrooms that had far more elaborate food offerings during celebrations than others; and this has caused questions and concerns among teachers, students, and parents.
2. To minimize non-nutritious foods being brought into school, and allow individual parents the opportunity to control how much and which foods their children eat during the school day.
3. An effort to increase the sensitivity of our community to the needs of our students who have health issues that affect their food intake. This includes students who have diabetes and are on specific food plans, as well as those students who have severe food allergies.

We want our school to be a safe environment for all students. Those who struggle every day to feel "like the other kids" despite food related health concerns, should not have the added burden that "our class can't have food celebrations or snacks because of me".

We understand that food is part of our culture and a means to celebrate special occasions of all kinds. We also know that all of our children have celebrations with their family and friends outside of school hours. School parties are not the only parties our children attend.

For the past few years we have made the decision to not have any food in our classrooms. This does not mean that our children have not had fun, class parties, or celebrations. We have recognized birthdays and holidays with other activities, and small tokens. Instead of food, students have made craft projects during holiday celebrations. Instead of food for birthdays, kids wear crowns or are the line leader for the day. Rarely, parents have sent in pencils, stickers, or a book for the classroom in honor of their child. We have seen many creative ways to honor students on "their special day" without putting pressure on parents to send in cupcakes or cookies "because everyone else does".

When we eliminate food from parties, lesson plans, and as rewards, we are allowing all children to participate fully in the Pond Cove experience without feeling different.