

Dear Parents/Guardians,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to Holly Hills Elementary School. The staff and I look forward to working with your family throughout the school year.

Your role in the school community is extremely important. Parents have a positive impact on the educational process here at Holly Hills by supporting their child at home, volunteering in the classroom and during special events, participating as a member of the Parent Teacher Organization, and maintaining close communication with your child's teacher

In order to provide a safe, learning environment in which every student has an equal opportunity to learn and grow, we have created this Student Handbook. Please take some time to read about our school's policies and procedures and discuss important information with your child. We fully believe being a well informed parent provides a solid foundation for an active and involved child.

Education is most successful as a collaborative process involving students, staff, parents, and administration. Working together will ensure great achievements for our students this year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jennifer Murray  
Principal

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Cut and Return

I have reviewed the Holly Hills Elementary School Handbook with my child and understand the rules and expectations.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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## **School Information**

Address: 500 Ogden Drive, Westampton, NJ 08060

Phone: (609)267-8565

Fax: (609)702-9744

District Phone: (609)267-2053

District Website: [www.westamptonschools.org](http://www.westamptonschools.org)

## **Daily Schedule**

School Hours:

Grades Preschool-3: 8:35 AM to 3:35 PM

Main Office: 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

## **Attendance**

A full day of school is four or more hours of actual class time. In order to be considered present for a full day, students must be signed in before 11:35 a.m. or signed out no earlier than 12:35 p.m.

Regular and consistent attendance is essential to a student's success in school and is a law according to New Jersey State Compulsory Attendance Laws (18A:38-25). Most subjects are taught in sequence, requiring the understanding of concepts in the order of presentation. Chronic absenteeism creates a genuine hardship for the student. Parents/Guardians must ensure student attendance and punctuality.

Students may arrive at school at 8:20 a.m. and report to the all-purpose room. School begins at 8:35 a.m. Students arriving after 8:45 a.m. will be considered tardy and must report to the main office with a parent, to sign in to school.

If your child is absent from school, you must call the main office by 9:00 a.m. to report the absence. Absences will be documented as either excused or unexcused. The following are recognized excuses for school absence, tardiness, or early departure from school:

- Personal Illness (doctor's note required)
- Family Illness (doctor's note required)
- Death in the Family (parent note required)
- Religious Holiday (parent note required)
- Court Appearances (legal documentation required)

If the requested notes are not received, the absence will count as an unexcused absence. If students return to school with documentation as listed above, the absence will be recorded as excused.

If your child is absent and you would like to pick up their schoolwork, please call the main office no later than 10 a.m. to allow the teacher time to prepare the materials. When a student returns to school after a time of absence, he/she will be expected to complete any missed assignments.

Chronic tardiness or absence will be handled by the administration to ensure that your child does not fall behind in their work,

## **Attendance, (cont.)**

resulting in poor grades and possible retention. This situation may result in a parent meeting with the principal and a consequence for the child.

## **Affirmative Action Policy**

The New Jersey Constitution and implementing legislation guarantees each child in the public school equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, ancestry, national origin, or socio-economic status. To ensure these rights, The Commissioner of Education and State Board of Education have developed regulations outlined in the N.J. Administrative Code 6:4-1.1 concerning equality in educational programming. We are equal opportunity employers.

The Westampton Township Board of Education affirms that every student should be given an equal opportunity to enjoy the benefits and privileges of full participation in all aspects of school life.

## **After Hours**

After the office closes at 4:00 p.m. on full days and 1:15 p.m. on early dismissal days, students will not be permitted to return to their classroom(s) to retrieve items forgotten or left behind.

## **After School Plans**

All plans for after-school visits with friends or classmates must be made with the families involved before school hours. If a student is to walk home with a friend, a permission note from BOTH students' parents must be brought to school. No permission will be given to a student to ride a bus other than the one to which they are assigned.

## **Arrival/Dismissal**

Students are permitted to enter the school building at 8:20 a.m. The school day begins at 8:35 a.m. Supervision will not be provided for students prior to 8:20 a.m. If children arrive at school prior to 8:20 a.m. parents will be contacted. If this occurs repeatedly, then the school will have to contact the authorities to ensure the safety of the student(s).

All students are dismissed from school by 3:35 p.m. on a regular school day schedule. Dismissal begins at 3:28 p.m. Parents should plan to arrive by 3:30 p.m. for pick up. Students are dismissed by 1:05 p.m. on an early dismissal day schedule. (see Early Dismissal Days on p. 9)

Bus students will be dropped off at their respective bus stops at the scheduled time. Kindergarten students will not be released unless an adult is present at the bus stop. All other students will be released at the bus stop, regardless of adult supervision.

If walkers are not picked up at the dismissal time, the office staff will attempt to contact all individuals listed in the emergency contact information. If the staff is not able to reach an emergency contact and/or

### **Arrival/Dismissal, (cont.)**

the emergency contact is not able to get to the school by 4:00 p.m., then the staff will release the student(s) to the Westampton Township Aftercare Program at the parent/guardian's expense. If the Aftercare Program is not able to reach an adult and/or this incident occurs repeatedly, the school will have to contact the authorities to ensure the safety of the student(s).

Any changes to a student's regular dismissal plan must be received in writing via parent/guardian note, email, and/or fax.

### **Behavior and Discipline**

Each student is unique and desires guidance and assistance in mastering social skills that help them throughout life. At Holly Hills, we attempt to provide that guidance in conjunction with support from home. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner and treat others with respect. They are required to follow school rules at all times. Students who choose to violate these rules will be treated firmly and fairly. Students who commit offenses after school hours and/or off school grounds are subject to disciplinary actions. Disciplinary action will be documented on our Awareness Notice form, placed in student's file, and sent home to the parent/guardian of that student only, to maintain confidentiality. Teachers share in the responsibility of maintaining an orderly school atmosphere and may discipline any student who is enrolled in the school. Students who choose to conduct themselves in an acceptable and approved manner will receive special positive rewards.

Students exhibiting desired behaviors for a specified time may receive:

1. Extra recess time,
2. Rewards, certificates, prizes, or homework, passes (to be determined by the teacher)
3. Other positive reinforcements to be determined at school-wide level.

### ***GENERAL SCHOOL RULES***

All students are expected to:

- Show respect for all members of our school community.
- Follow directions of all school authority the first time they are given.
- Keep hands, feet, and any other objects to yourself.
- Treat others with respect - No name calling, teasing, cursing, bullying, or harassment.
- Respect all school property and the property of others.

### ***CLASSROOM***

All teachers are responsible for developing, reviewing, and posting in their classroom and on their webpage, a classroom behavior plan that will allow all students the opportunity to learn and teachers the opportunity to teach.

## **Classroom, (cont.)**

For students exhibiting desired behaviors in class, teachers will devise appropriate and positive reinforcers for their individual classroom. The positive rewards will be awarded in a fair, equitable and consistent fashion. Classroom Disciplinary procedures will include:

1. **First Offense** - Verbal warning from teacher.
2. **Second Offense** - Consequence assigned by teacher, may include but not limited to: moving seat assignment, recess detention, writing assignment, etc...
3. **Third Offense** – Parents will be notified by a note home. Parent contact is documented.
4. **Fourth Offense** – Parent conference with teacher and assign student to buddy teacher for recess.
5. **Subsequent Offenses** - Parent conference with child, teacher, and principal. Assign to buddy teacher for recess time or other disciplinary actions as determined by principal.

If a child fails to complete assignments the following procedure will be followed:

1. **First Offense** – Parent notified through agenda, note home, phone call, or email. Parent contact is documented.
2. **Second and Third Offenses**- Parents receive notification from teacher. (see above) Student assigned to buddy teacher during recess time to complete assigned work.
3. **Fourth Offense** – Parent conference with teacher, and student is assigned to buddy teacher at recess to complete assigned work.
4. **Subsequent Offenses** – Parent conference with principal and teacher, and student is assigned to buddy teacher during recess time to complete assigned work.

Teachers will have a “Buddy System”. Students may be assigned to their buddy teacher for the loss of privilege of lunch/recess with their class, or exclusion from their classroom due to disciplinary reasons or failure to complete assigned work.

## ***LUNCHROOM***

All students should be able to eat lunch in a pleasant, relaxed setting. To ensure this students will:

- Follow the General School Rules
- Sit appropriately at their assigned tables
- Always walk and use inside voices
- Remain in the cafeteria unless they receive permission to leave
- Keep food on the tray when eating, not thrown or placed elsewhere
- Keep their table area clean.

## **Lunchroom, (cont.)**

Consequences for unacceptable behavior in lunchroom:

1. **First offense** - Verbal warning.
2. **Second offense** - Remove from classroom table to another table for that day. Discipline note home to parents.
3. **Third Offense** – Remove from classroom table to another table and/or a recess detention for up to three (3) days; number of days to be determined by principal.
4. **Fourth offense** – Remove from classroom table to another table and/or a recess detention for up to five (5) days; number of days to be determined by principal. Principal may choose to conference with parent and child.

## ***PLAYGROUND***

Students are expected to behave on the playground in a safe and courteous manner. Students will:

- Follow General School Rules
- Walk when exiting and entering the building
- Play in a safe and controlled manner
- Line up promptly when directed
- Use playground equipment in acceptable ways.

Consequences for playground offenses:

1. **First offense** – Verbal warning.
2. **Second offense** – Sit in designated area for loss of one (1) day of recess. Discipline note sent home.
3. **Third offense** – Sit in designated area for loss of recess for up to three (3) days. Number of days to be determined by principal.
4. **Fourth Offense** - Sit in designated area for loss of recess for five(5)days. Principal holds conference with parent and student.

(The staff will be given a list of students who have lost their recess time and will have those students report to an assigned location on the playground for recess or to the main office.)

## ***BUS***

Students who ride the bus to and from school should always be aware that riding the bus is a privilege. All students are expected to behave in an attentive and responsible manner. When a student is reported by the driver for a safety violation or multiple violations of the rules for the bus, the student's riding privilege may be taken away for a period of time. TITLE 18A-25-2 State Law states "Teacher or other person in authority shall hold every pupil accountable for disorderly conduct on the way to and from school."

When riding the bus students will:

- Follow General School Rules

## **Bus, (cont.)**

- Follow directions of the driver when given
- Remain in assigned seat at all times with seatbelt buckled
- Keep hands, arms, and any possessions inside the bus
- Use voices and actions that do not distract the driver

**Since riding a school bus is a privilege, permission to continue to ride the bus will be the positive consequence for this area. A reprimand for minor infractions in school or on the bus will be given for the first violation of the rules in all the areas noted above.**

Repeat offenses will receive an appropriate disciplinary action as determined by the teacher or principal. Disciplinary action may include but is not limited to:

1. **First Bus Behavior report** – Verbal reprimand and principal conferences with student. Bus behavior report sent to parents.
2. **Second Bus Behavior Report** – Principal conferences with student and sends second bus behavior report home to parents. Loss of recess for one day.
3. **Third Bus Behavior Report** - Principal conferences with parent and student. Loss of privilege to ride the bus for minimum of one day.
4. **Fourth Bus Behavior Report** – Bus suspension, length of time to be determined by principal.

### ***SEVERE CLAUSE***

**\*\*THE SEVERE CLAUSE APPLIES TO ALL AREAS OF THE SCHOOL\*\***

**Severe clause violations include:**

- Fighting, assault or intentional injury to another person, including threat of bodily harm
- Intentional and repeated bullying; harassment
- Willful destruction of or damage to school property and/or the property of others
- Willful disobedience and/or blatant defiance of school authority
- Stealing
- Possession of fireworks, ammunition, or other potentially explosive materials
- Possession of a weapon; weapon being defined as any instrument of offensive or defensive combat - something to fight with
- Zero tolerance for harassment of any kind

**If a student violates a severe clause he/she is automatically referred to the principal. Appropriate disciplinary action will be promptly taken.**



## Severe Clause, (cont.)

*It is not possible for any list to cover all situations; therefore, do not assume that any behavior not specifically forbidden is permitted.*

### ***POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES FOR SEVERE CLAUSE VIOLATIONS***

- Referral to principal's office for conference with student.
- Lunch and/or recess detention – phone conference with parent
- In-school suspension in buddy teacher's room or principal's office – Principal will notify parent
- Out of school suspension – Principal may request a conference with the parent upon the students return from suspension .

**ALL STEPS AND PHASES OF THESE PLANS MAY BE ALTERED UPWARD OR DOWNWARD AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PRINCIPAL AND/OR SUPERINTENDENT WHEN WARRANTED.**

### **Behavior Reward System**

For behavior that goes above and beyond the expected behavior specified in the discipline plan, the following may apply:

- Students will be periodically recognized at the discretion of school personnel for exhibiting one of the ten pillars of character education: caring, citizenship, courage, fairness, honesty, perseverance, respect, responsibility, self-discipline, and trustworthiness.
- Student will receive a ticket on which they will put their name and it will be placed on the bulletin board.
- These students may also receive a tangible reward such as pencils, stickers, etc.
- Students will bring home written notification to share with parents for home support.
- These rewards may be expanded as other opportunities present themselves.

### **Cafeteria**

Lunch menus are posted on the school website. Applications for free and reduced lunches and breakfast will be sent home the first week of school. Parents are encouraged to utilize our lunch portal website to purchase and/or monitor student lunch accounts. Milk, fresh fruit, juice, ice cream, chips, and cookies are available daily.

Kindergarten and first grade students will be offered participation in our snack program. You may contact the school office for more information.

## **Cellular Phone**

We are aware that parents have legitimate reasons for requiring their children to carry cellular phones. However, it remains our position that there is no need for a student to carry an activated phone during the school day. We will continue to assume that the phone is for emergency use only.

Therefore, from the time when the student boards the bus in the morning until the student exits the bus in the afternoon we will expect that the phone will be turned off and out of sight. Any student whose phone “rings” during a class or who is observed making or receiving a call, or making or receiving a text message will be in violation of this policy. The phone will be confiscated and the student written up after the second offense. Parents will then be notified to come into the main office to retrieve the confiscated phone.

## **Dismissal:**

If you need to sign your child out prior to 3:35 p.m. dismissal, on a full day (1:05 p.m. on early dismissal day) it is strongly suggested that you arrive by 3:15 p.m. on a full day (or 12:45 p.m. on early dismissal day) It is often difficult to reach the classroom teacher after 3:15 p.m. to be able to get the child to the office prior to boarding the bus.

## **Dress Code**

Student attire should be school appropriate, neat, clean, and reflecting an appearance of modesty. Students may wear clothing, hairstyles, and personal decorations which suit their individual sense of style and taste; however, as long as these choices do not interfere with the educational program. Inappropriate dress can be disruptive or distracting to the educational process and the school administration reserves the right to make the final decision regarding appropriate dress in school. Examples of inappropriate dress are: inappropriate pictures or advertisements on clothing; signs or slogans degrading any race, creed, religion, gender, socio-economic status, or sexual preference; bare midriff or crop tops, exposing the abdominal area, spaghetti straps or strapless tops; and shorts that are more than three inches above the knee, weather permitting. In addition, sneakers with backs must always be worn when in physical education class and recess. Children wearing shoes with no back (i.e. flip-flops, sandals, etc...) will not be permitted to participate in recess or physical education class. No hats are to be worn in school. Parents are responsible for monitoring their child's dress. Students who do not comply will not be permitted to attend classes on that day without a change of clothes.

Please send your child to school dressed appropriately for the weather and the playground. We feel that the children should have an opportunity to get outdoors if weather permits. Fresh air and exercise are essential for positive achievement at school.

## **Emergency School Closing/Delayed Opening**

In the event of severely inclement weather or emergency, the school may have a delayed opening, early closing, or cancellation. A public release will be made via radio and television stations. A message will also be posted on the district's website at [www.westamptonschools.org](http://www.westamptonschools.org). In addition, a global phone call will be sent out as soon as a decision is made to close school.

In the event of a delayed opening, notification will proceed as indicated above. Your child's bus pickup time will be delayed the same increment as the opening, either one or two hours. Walking students should report at the delayed opening time, since supervision can not be provided prior to the delay.

## **Early Dismissal (Half) Days**

Throughout the year there are times that early dismissal days occur due to holidays and staff in-service days. For your information, these dates are listed on the district calendar, and the district website. It is your responsibility to secure supervision for your children on early dismissal days. Buses will drop children approximately two hours earlier and children will be ready for pick up at 1:05 p.m. The school cannot provide supervision after 1:05 p.m., so it is important for you to take notice of these days on the calendar and make arrangements. Children who are not picked up at 1:05 p.m. will be sent to the Westampton Township After School Care Program at the parent/guardian's expense.

- ◆ **Early Dismissal School Hours:** Grades K through 3— 8:35 a.m.-1:05 p.m. Parents should plan to arrive at school by 1:00 p.m. for pick up.

## **Early Sign-Out**

If it is necessary for you to take your child out of school early, it is helpful if you call the office in the morning or send a note with your child indicating the time you intend to pick him/her up. The parent/guardian must come to the office to pick up the child. Parent's will be asked for identification before the student is released into their custody. Only individuals that are listed on the emergency card will be allowed to sign-out that student.

## **Guidance**

Counselors are available for all students. All discussions with the school counselor will be kept confidential, with the exception of a situation that will cause a safety concern for that student or other individuals in the school community. Students can participate in group or individual sessions.

## **Homework**

Homework contributes to the development of independence and responsibility on the part of the student. It is assigned to review, practice, or utilize skills acquired in class. Students are given homework based on their ability and the educational program to which they are assigned. Students

### **Homework, (cont.)**

are expected to complete homework assignments as an integral part of their learning experiences. If your child seems to have difficulty with the assignments, please communicate with the teacher. When your child is absent from school, please telephone the main office before 10:00 p.m. to allow the teacher to prepare homework, which can be picked up in the office at the end of the school day. When a student returns to school after a time of absence, he/she will be expected to complete any missed assignments.

Teachers have a “Buddy System”. Students may be assigned to their buddy teacher for the loss of privilege of lunch/recess with their class, or exclusion from their classroom due to failure to complete assigned work.

### **Library**

The library is open on a regularly scheduled basis and is supervised by the librarian. Library classes are held for grades K-3. They are held for the purpose of library instruction as well as for the enjoyment of materials and books. Each student may check out one or two books for a period of up to one week. Lost or damaged books must be paid for and parents will be billed accordingly.

### **Lost and Found**

A Lost and Found service is maintained in the school. Anyone finding lost items should turn them into the Lost and Found in the rear of the All Purpose Room. Students may request permission to check the Lost and Found. No valuables of any kind should be brought to school. After a reasonable amount of time, items in the Lost and Found are donated to charity.

### **Medication/Nursing**

Students may not have medication in their possession. This includes cough drops, cold medicine, aspirin, vitamins, or any other over-the-counter medications or preparations. Medications prescribed by a physician must be kept in the nurse’s office. The medications must be kept in the original container and be accompanied by written permission and directions from the physician in order to be administered by the school nurse.

### **News Articles/Photographs**

There may be occasions throughout the year when we will be sending various items of newsworthy events to area newspapers and media outlets. Additionally, our website will document school activities and upcoming events. Should you wish that your child’s name or photos not appear in the media, please contact the Principal immediately.

## **Parent-Teacher Organization**

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is an active organization that provides assistance and support to the educational programs in our school. The PTO is a great way to get involved in what is happening in the schools. The PTO provides an informative link between the home and the school, creating a communication vehicle among parents, teachers, and administrators.

The PTO is only as successful as each parent/ guardian will enable it to be by your membership, support, and active participation. If you would like to volunteer or if you need to reach the PTO for any reason, you may leave a note in the PTO mailbox in the school office and the President will get in touch with you.

## **Parties**

It is common for classes to celebrate holidays or birthdays throughout the year; however, parties are to be held to a minimum for only important occasions. The quantity and quality of refreshments should be appropriate and not overdone. The school encourages parents/guardians to provide healthier options for these occasions.

Birthdays: Birthday treats are generally allowed. Parents are asked to send in enough treats for all students in the class. These treats will be distributed during the lunch period, not in the classroom. Do not send birthday flowers or balloons/decorations for the health and safety protection of all students.

Birthday invitations may only be passed out at school if the entire class is invited.

Holidays: During the school year, several dates are set aside for parties. The PTO and room parents will be responsible for organizing and conducting them. Parents who would like to help with their child's class parties should contact the PTO. For the safety of students and faculty, the number of parents is limited to three per class, exceptions at the discretion of the principal.

## **Personally Owned Devices**

Personally Owned Device (POD) or Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) is a policy that allows students to bring and use their own personal electronic devices at school. Devices include but may not be limited to: smartphones (such as iPhone or Android), tablets and eReaders (such as iPad or Kindle), laptops, and netbooks. With teacher approval, students may use their devices in the classroom to access and save information from the internet, collaborate with other learners, and utilize productivity tools available to them. Please visit our website to view this policy in its entirety.

## Registration

Children new to the area should pre-register as soon as possible at [www.westamptonschools.org](http://www.westamptonschools.org). Please contact the main office after pre-registering on-line to set up an appointment for screening and to complete registration. The following documents are required when registering:

- **Birth certificate** with raised seal
- **Proof of township residency:** Deeds, agreements of sale, or rental leases are required with 2 proofs of residency
- **All immunization records:** including MMR, at least four DPT, three polio, and three Hepatitis B immunizations

## Report Cards

Report cards are issued four times a year for grades 1-3. Kindergarten students will receive a report card beginning with the second marking period. The report card has an explanation of the marking system for each particular grade. The report card envelope must be signed and returned each marking period.

## Student Records

Parents have the right to review their children's school records. Pupil records shall only contain information relevant to the education of the pupil. This includes mandated state pupil records, and permitted pupil records, including but not limited to: identifying data, attendance, parent/guardian information, health records, teacher observations, and discipline reports. As a parent/guardian, you and your child have a right to individual privacy and the right to know concerning information gathered by the school. This protection should help you maintain faith and trust in your local school system and will also assist school administrators and other staff members to effectively educate your child.

## Surveillance Devices

Our schools and grounds are equipped with surveillance devices which are the property of the Westampton Board of Education.

## Transportation

**Walkers:** All parents must fill out a dismissal form for EACH child to indicate specific dismissal instructions. The staff will adhere to only these written instructions. Students who walk to school should be instructed to use sidewalks whenever possible. Students should cross streets only at corners, or cross at the crossing guards and within the painted crosswalks. Students may not ride bicycles to school as there is no safe place to store the bicycles and safety concerns exist.

### **Transportation, (cont.)**

Parents driving children to and from school should exercise extreme caution on school property in order to promote student safety. Please drop children off at the blue crosswalk in front of the school main entrance. Please keep all vehicles out of the bus lane, and if you choose to get out of the car to greet your child or help your child, please park your vehicle in the spaces provided.

**Busing:** Students who have been provided transportation by the district will be bussed to and from school. Students are only permitted to ride their assigned bus. Students will be assigned a seat by the building principal. Students may not ride the bus if they are not entitled to transportation and students are not permitted to switch from one bus to another. If students want to socialize with each other after school, but do not travel on the same bus to school, parents must provide transportation.

### **Visitors/Volunteers**

Parents and other visitors are encouraged to visit the Westampton Township Public Schools. Visitors are requested to notify the teacher prior to the visit so a suitable date and time can be arranged. Arrangements to visit the school can also be made by calling the school office. All visitors/volunteers must report to the main office to sign-in when entering the building. A picture ID is required to enter the building.