

Orchard Gardens Pilot School

Every Student, Every Day, College Bound

Family Handbook

906 Albany Street
Roxbury, MA
617-635-1635
www.orchardgardensk8.org

Our Mission

Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School will become one of the top performing schools in the Commonwealth. In order to achieve this goal we will:

- Create and support teams of highly skilled educators who share a commitment to high achievement through data, high quality professional development and opportunities to work, plan and reflect together
- Ensure students will be educated through the creation and support of a safe learning environment and taught by educators differentiating instruction to meet specific, rigorous goals
- Commit our school to work closely with our strategic community partners to provide clear and consistent communication, provide educational opportunities to all members of our community, and give families multiple opportunities to engage in school

Through these steps all our students will be fully prepared for success in college and career.

Our Vision

Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School guarantees all students a rigorous academic experience, provided in an environment that values and celebrates strong relationships between students, staff, families, and community. All students will believe in their ability to achieve and be offered a wide range of enrichments to be fully prepared for success in college and career.

PRIDE Values

Our PRIDE values encompass the habits and expectations we have for our students and school. We recognize students and classes who display PRIDE values throughout the school day during the afternoon announcements and during community meetings.

- **Perseverance:** Try your best even when the task is hard, boring, too easy, when success or reward is a long way off, when you fail at first. Believe in yourself.
- **Respect:** Treat everyone politely and with calm and kind words. Take the time to get to know everyone and appreciate them. Make positive contributions to the OG community. Believe in yourself.
- **Integrity:** Be honest. Know the difference between right and wrong. Take the right action even when it is hard. Work hard to solve problems. Be proud of a strong moral code. Believe in yourself.
- **Daring:** Show the courage to stand up for others, yourself, your learning, and what is right. Be bold and take the steps to achieve your goals. Don't be afraid of hard work or failure. Believe in yourself.
- **Excellence:** Give 100%. Sweat the small stuff. Learn from everyone around you. Seek out opportunities to learn. Believe in yourself.

Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School Leadership

Megan Webb, Principal - mwebb2@bostonpublicschools.org

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Tim Mulvehill, Dean of Students for Grades 3-5 - tmulvehill@bostonpublicschools.org

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School Policies and Procedures

Emergency Contact Information

It is critical that families keep current contact information on file with the school. Please be sure to call the main office at 617-635-1635 to notify Orchard Gardens in the event that any of the following information changes:

- Parent/guardian's home or work telephone numbers
- Current address
- Emergency contact person (must be someone other than the parent/guardian) with current phone number
- Health insurance information

Hours of School Operation

The school building is open from 7:05AM until 3:00PM on Monday-Friday. **Academic instruction begins at 7:25AM for all students. Any student who is not in the classroom and ready to learn at 7:25AM is tardy and must sign in with Ms. Williams.**

Please keep in mind that the school cannot supervise students before 7:05AM or after 3:00PM.

Early dismissals will not be permitted except in the case of appointments, illness or family emergencies. No students will be called for dismissal after 2:00PM. **If there is a change of plans and your child will be going home in a different way than usual** (for example, he/she won't be taking the bus) we ask that **you put a written note in your child's homework folder and call the office to let us know before 1:30PM.**

Arrival

- K-2 parents are welcome to walk their students to class from 7:10-7:25. After the 7:25 bell rings students will be escorted to class by an Orchard Gardens staff member or partner.
- **Kindergarten:** Kindergarten students should report directly to their classroom when they arrive in the morning. Kindergarten classes are served breakfast in their classroom until 7:45AM.
- **1st-5th Grade:** 1st-5th grade students receive universal free breakfast in the cafeteria until 7:20AM. Students transition to their classrooms and start instruction at 7:25AM. Students who arrive after 7:20 will not be served breakfast in the cafeteria.
- **6th-8th Grade:** 6th-8th grade students receive breakfast on the 3rd floor and are expected to eat their breakfast in their homeroom until 7:30AM. Students who arrive after 7:25 will not be able to have breakfast.

Dismissal

- **Kindergarten & 1st Grade:** **Students will be dismissed at 2:20PM from the cafeteria.** An adult or responsible older child must pick up kindergarten and 1st grade students. Your child will only be released to the people you designate on the dismissal sheet or emergency card. We ask that the person who is

picking up your child come into the cafeteria because they will be asked to sign them out. Any person picking up a student may be required to show identification.

- **2nd-5th Grade: Students will be dismissed at 2:25PM from the recess yard.** Your child will only be released to the people you designate on the dismissal sheet or emergency card. Any person picking up a student may be required to show identification. We ask that you wait for your child outside in the recess yard (not in the school building) to ensure that our hallways are clear for classes to transition through.
- **6th-8th Grade:** Students will be dismissed from the back of the school building at 2:30PM. School bus transportation is not provided for our middle schools students. Students should travel home independently, or you should plan to pick up your child.

Attendance Policy

Students must be in school on time, everyday. Children benefit from routine and will miss learning opportunities if they are not in school. The more frequently a student is absent - even if the absence is unavoidable - the harder it is for the student to keep up with the class. **Parents must send a signed note of explanation each day their child is absent.** The note should state the date(s) of the absence, the reason, the telephone number at which the parent can be contacted, if there are questions, and the parent signature. The note should be sent in on the day the student returns to school. The note must be received within seven school days after the absence.

All student absences, including illness, suspension, appointments, vacations, etc. count as absences. **If a student exceeds 12 unexcused absences in a school year, Orchard Gardens reserves the right to retain the student.** Exceptions are made for court-mandated appearances with proper documentation and religious observances.

In order to help ensure that students do not exceed 12 absences, Orchard Gardens has certain support policies in place. They are detailed below:

- Orchard Gardens staff will contact the family by phone every time a student is absent.
- At 3 student absences, Orchard Gardens will contact the family in writing.
- At 6 student absences Orchard Gardens administration will require a meeting with the student's family, during which time an Attendance Plan will be established to put the right supports in place to help attendance patterns improve.
- At 8 student absences, the BPS Supervisor of Attendance may report the students and/or family to certain state agencies or file an official complaint with the court.
- **The school reserves the right to retain any student who exceeds 12 absences.**

Students who are absent from school cannot attend or participate in any school-sponsored activities occurring on the day of the absence, unless the school has given advance permission.

If a student is absent for the first five days of school, or at least nine consecutive days during the school year, and there has been no successful contact between the family and the school to explain his or her absences, that student may lose his or her seat at Orchard Gardens and may be discharged from the school.

Incomplete Days: Lateness

If a student is not in his/her seat by 7:25AM, for any reason, he/she will be marked as tardy. Lateness due to traffic, medical appointments, family emergencies, etc., are not excused. Orchard Gardens may excuse tardies in cases of court-mandated appearances (if proper documentation is provided), disability related appointments and religious observances.

Building habits of arriving to school on time will help your child be successful in high school, college, and career. Students who arrive late miss valuable instruction and opportunities to interact with peers. Missing just a few minutes a day adds up over time, and students can fall behind their peers academically and socially. Please do your best to help your child get to school on time. We will work with families to improve their on time arrival if we notice a problem.

Uniform Policy

Students are expected to wear the Orchard Gardens uniform every day. The uniform policy has been adopted to improve the educational environment for all students. We believe school uniforms:

- unite us as a community

- signify that we are part of a team and that we are proud of our individual and collective accomplishments and potential
- show that we take pride in our work and our professionalism
- ensure that our students focus on learning instead of clothing
- increase school safety and security by making the presence of visitors/outside immediately apparent
- reduce the cost of clothing for families

It is the goal of the school to have a uniform policy that makes things easier for families and students rather than more difficult. For that reason, we have made every effort to be clear about this policy and consistent in its enforcement. Families who have questions or concerns should contact the Dean to seek clarification.

Like all school policies, the uniform policy is strictly enforced. Students who arrive at school without a uniform will be sent to the Dean’s office to borrow a uniform for the day. The Dean will contact families when students consistently arrive out of uniform to create a plan. Families with questions or concerns about the uniform policy should consult the Dean. **Students should not miss school when they do not have a uniform to wear -- please send your child to school and the Dean will provide a uniform for the day.** Further, teachers and school staff have the right to restrict individual items of clothing as necessary if such clothing interferes with normal school activities.

OGPS Uniform Policy:

K-5 Mandatory Items - (every student **must have** the following):

- Yellow, polo-style shirt
- Navy-colored pants, shorts or skirts (**NO JEANS**)
- Closed toe shoes or sneakers

6-8 Mandatory Items - (every student **must have** the following):

- Navy or white, polo-style shirt
- Khaki-colored (tan) pants, shorts or skirts
- Closed toe shoes or sneakers

Optional Items - (students **may choose** to wear the following in addition to the mandatory school dress code)

- Navy sweatshirt, vest or sweater (logo must be smaller than a quarter)
- Students may wear a plain, long sleeved white shirt beneath their polo shirt during the cooler months of the year

Outdoor Play/Recess

The development of gross motor skills is an important part of child development. Children in grades K-5 will have an opportunity to play outside everyday for at least 20 minutes (30 minutes for Kindergarten students). **During the winter season, it will be important to dress students appropriately for the weather, i.e. coat, hat, and gloves as we will go outside unless it is snowing, raining, icy, or below 20 degrees (with or without wind chill).** Please be sure your child wears comfortable shoes to school. For safety reasons, please do not send children in flip-flops, sandals, or crocs.

Transportation

We follow the Boston Public Schools Transportation Policies. Specifically, students who live within 1 mile from the school **DO NOT** receive transportation assignments from Boston Public Schools. Students 1 mile or further from the school generally receive yellow school bus transportation provided by Boston Public Schools. Buses will arrive at Orchard Gardens at approximately 7:05AM, daily, and buses depart by approximately 2:40PM, daily. **If you have any questions about transportation, please contact the BPS Transportation hotline at 617-635-9520.**

Every day an administrator will check in with both the morning and afternoon bus drivers to collect any incident reports. The behavior expectations for the bus are the same as those in the school building. All students deserve to ride to and from school in an environment that is calm and safe. The following behaviors are not permitted on the bus and may result in an incident report:

- Putting hands and/or feet on another student
- Moving from your assigned seat
- Eating or drinking

- Inappropriate vocal level
- Inappropriate language
- Throwing objects

If a student endangers his or her own safety or the safety of others while on a school bus or on public transit, the principal or headmaster may deny school-provided transportation to the student. Students who violate School-Based Rules or the Code of Conduct while on the school bus or on the MBTA may be disciplined, referred to the Bus Safety Program at the BPS Counseling & Intervention Center, and/or denied transportation, including deactivation of their MBTA pass. Denial of transportation for fewer than four days does not require a hearing. The school must notify the family before denying transportation. The student is expected to come to school on the days when he or she is not allowed on the bus unless the student also has been suspended from school.

Please note that school bus drivers will drop off students, including kindergartners, at the bus stop even when the parent is not there. However, students may stay on the bus if they do not want to get off (such as if their parent or guardian is not at the bus stop). The BPS will then try to locate the parent or guardian. Parents should make sure their children are familiar with the surroundings at their bus stop and know the safest route to walk home if no one is there to meet them.

MBTA Passes

Students in grades 6-8 travel to and from school using the MBTA. MBTA passes are built into the BPS OneCard student ID badges.

The Dean distributes MBTA passes on the first day of school and they are valid for the duration of the year. Students who ride the MBTA are subject to having their “T” pass revoked for violating the Code of Conduct while on the “T” or walking to and from the “T” stop. Students should see Ms. Williams at lunch if they need their MBTA pass replaced.

Health and Illness

The school requests that students do not come to school if they are seriously ill. If school staff believes that a student needs to see a doctor, is contagious, increases the risk of illness to other children, or requires prolonged individual staff attention that interferes with the safety and regular functioning of the classroom, the school will contact families and ask them to pick up and take their student home.

Families will be contacted if a student has a moderate-to-high-fever; is experiencing vomiting or diarrhea; shows signs of contagious diseases; and/or has an illness that prevents the student from participating in activities.

Allergies/Dietary Restrictions

Please be sure to let your child’s teacher know about any allergies and/or dietary restrictions your child may have. If your child has been prescribed medication for their allergy, the classroom teacher and school nurse must have a medicine to be kept at school. (please see Medications section below)

Health Needs

Please make your child’s teacher and the school nurse aware of any medical conditions your child may have. To keep your child safe and healthy, it is important that we have specific information regarding your child’s condition, treatment, and any medication they have been prescribed.

Medications

The school nurse will administer all medications. Please contact the nurse if your child is to be given any medicine during school hours. If your child has asthma, you may want to consider leaving a spare inhaler with the nurse. **Do not send medicine to school in your child’s bookbag. This includes cough drops or “sore throat lollipops.”**

Meals and Snacks

Breakfast and Lunch

Students are served breakfast and lunch daily, at no cost to families. Families may decide whether they would like their child to eat a school lunch or provide a lunch from home. We ask that lunches not include candy, potato chips, or soda.

Snacks

We appreciate parents helping us to provide healthy snacks for kindergarten. Please use the following guidelines so we can have a safe and healthy snack time.

1. Make sure snacks are sent in individual portions. Snack-sized zip-lock bags are perfect for kindergarteners.
2. Snacks need to be a finger-food, requiring no silverware or special preparation at school. Focus on healthy snacks by limiting refined sugars (no candy or soda please!).
3. Some snack suggestions: crackers/cheese, mini fruit or veggie muffins, string cheese, Rice Krispies treats, cereal in a bag (1/4-1/2 cup is plenty) - **no** granola because of nut allergies, pretzels, Goldfish crackers, veggie bags (carrots, celery, or other favorites cut into sticks or bite-sized pieces), raisins, Animal Crackers, fresh fruit or fruit chews, Cheez-its, graham crackers

Due to increasing numbers of children with food allergies, we ask that you do not send snacks that contain any kind of nuts or peanut butter.

Birthday Celebrations

We will not allow parents to bring in food for birthday celebrations. We also limit the use of food for classroom celebrations and rewards.

Our rationale in this policy is to:

- Limit potential dangers of exposure to life threatening food allergies for students and staff.
- Limit exposure to students of restricted foods which parents do not want their children eating (ie. Sugar restrictions, Gluten free). This directly relates to problems with increasing rates of childhood obesity.
- Reduce the amount of unhealthy (high sugar, high fat) foods students are given at school. (This has a very direct impact on student attention, behavior and academic engagement.)
- Reduce the problems of sharing food with only 'certain' students and not others.
- Eliminate the increased trash and clean up caused by messy treats eaten in the classroom or cafeteria.

Discipline

The school-wide values are perseverance, respect, integrity, daring, and excellence. It is important for children to begin to develop independence and make their own choices. Students will be given guidance about what good choices are and how to make them. Occasionally students need help making these choices and we provide them with adequate support.

School Administration is required to follow the Guiding Principles outlined in the BPS Code of Conduct.

Corrective Consequences

Students demonstrate disruptive behaviors as a response to an unmet or unrecognized need. It is our goal to do our best to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs and reduce the number of disruptive behavior incidents we see. If circumstances and situations arise where a student's behavior takes away from the learning community we have corrective consequences in place to provide an opportunity for skill building and making better choices. Our job is to set them up for success by building the skills necessary to meet expectations.

The following interventions are in place to support students in both building skills and making better choices.

1. Reminder of Expectations
2. Thinking/Reflecting Opportunities - Take a Break Space
3. Buddy Classroom Break
4. Office Referral/Classroom Removal

If a student continues to have a difficult time meeting the classroom expectations after (1) a reminder, (2) time in the take a break space, and (3) a buddy classroom break, they will be referred to the Dean's Office where the Dean and student will determine appropriate next steps and consequences together.

We will call home about behavior concerns and work on a plan together in order to help your child make good choices.

Phone Use/Messages

Parents are encouraged to have students leave cell phones at home. If it is absolutely necessary to have cell phones when traveling to and from school, students must understand that they may not use them in the school building. Cell phones may be carried by students but must be turned off (not just put on vibrate) prior to entering the building. They may not be turned on again until the student leaves the building at dismissal. The consequences for any student found with a cell phone that is on or visible during the day are detailed below:

- First Offense: The cell phone will be confiscated and returned to the student at the end of the school day.
- Second Offense: Second and subsequent offenses: The cell phone will be confiscated and returned only to the student's parent or guardian. The student may not bring a cell phone to school for the remainder of the school year.
- Repeated violations of this policy: Students may be subject to additional disciplinary action, consistent with the Code of Conduct.

Students are only permitted to use the phone with teacher permission and supervision. Parents who need to leave a message for their child should call the main office.

Technology

The BPS Acceptable Use Policy outlines responsible use and prohibited activities when using all technology, including networks, electronic devices, and online resources. Every student is expected to follow all of the rules and conditions listed in the BPS Acceptable Use Policy, as well as those given verbally by BPS teachers and administrators, and to demonstrate good citizenship and ethical behavior at all times.

- Students are responsible for their language. Students will use appropriate language in their e-mail messages, online postings, and other digital communications. Students will not use profanity, vulgarities or any other inappropriate language as determined by school administrators.
- Students are responsible for how they treat other people. Students will use e-mail and other means of communications (e.g. blogs, wikis, chat, instant-messaging, discussion boards, etc.) responsibly. Students will not send or post hate or harassing mail, make discriminatory or derogatory remarks about others, or engage in bullying, harassment, or other antisocial behaviors while in school or out of school.

The complete Acceptable Use Policy can be found in the Guide to the Boston Public Schools for Families and Students on the BPS website.

Family Communication

At Orchard Gardens, we believe that developing and maintaining relationships with our students' families is critical to their success at school. As their first teacher, you have valuable knowledge and insights about your children that we encourage you to share with us. We communicate with families in a variety of ways:

- **Facebook/Twitter/Website:** We will post announcements about events, field trips, sports, and the arts on our school website, Facebook page, and Twitter account. Please check these regularly to learn about what's happening at Orchard Gardens!
- **Email/Text Notifications:** All families should indicate how they would like to receive newsletters and updates and provide an email address or phone number to receive notifications. The Remind service allows us to provide regular updates about events at Orchard Gardens via text message.
- **Back to School Night on September 26th, 5-7PM**
- **Parent/Teacher Conferences in January/February**
- **Newsletters:** Newsletters are sent home weekly in K1 and monthly in K2-8th grade
- **Progress Reports:** Progress reports are sent home mid way through the quarter/trimester, and provide an update about your child's academic progress, attendance, and behavior.
- **Phone Calls, Notes, Emails**
- **K-2 Family Folders:** Children will bring folders home each day with completed work and parent information. **Please check these folders daily.** Read, complete, and return appropriate papers in this folder. Also, make sure that any notes you send to school are **inside** the homework folder. **We will be checking folders, not backpacks for notes.**
 - **Notes:** Notes are required for the following reasons:
 - Absences/illness
 - Early dismissal for doctor appointments
 - Different person picking student up from school

Grading Policies

Students in grades K-5 will be graded on a standards-based report card three times per year. Students will earn a grade of 1-4, based on end-of-year criteria. Students in grades will be graded on a standards-based report card four times per year. Students will earn a grade of A-F, based on end-of-year criteria.

Kindergarten - 5th Grade		6th Grade - 8th Grade	
Grade	Standard-based report card	Grade	Standard-based report card
4	Above grade level	A	Excellent
3	On grade level	B	Good
2	Approaching grade level	C	Average
1	Below grade level	D	Below Average
		F	Failing

Field Trips

Field trips are planned to align with curricular themes throughout the year. During these trips, it is important for all students to be responsible for their behavior since the site of the activity or event is a temporary extension of the school grounds. A permission slip that allows students to attend all school-sponsored field trips and events will be sent home prior to the trip and must be signed by a parent or guardian. Classes only go on field trips when there are enough family volunteers or staff to allow for an adult to child ratio of 1:4 in kindergarten, 1:5 in 1st-2nd grade, and 1:10 in 3rd-8th grade.

A student may be considered ineligible for a trip for reasons including but not limited to: not returning the school-sponsored trip permission form, involvement in a disciplinary incident on a prior trip, poor school attendance, misbehavior in school in the days prior to the trip, etc. Students who are considered ineligible for attending a trip will be required to attend school that day.

Teachers will make every effort to make sure that all families that would like to participate in field trips get the opportunity to do so. Any family member that would like to chaperone must go through the CORI/SORI process. CORI/SORI forms must be submitted at least two weeks before the date of the trip to provide enough time for BPS to process the form. Teachers will bring a first aid kit, necessary medications (as needed), and emergency contact information, and a cell phone on all field trips.

Volunteer Policy

Any family member that would like to volunteer must go through the CORI/SORI process and coordinate with our Community Field Coordinators. Please allow for at least two weeks for the CORI/SORI forms to be processed. All visitors are required to report to the Main Office upon entering the building and have their visitor pass visible during the entirety of the visit.

Supplies

Families will be asked to provide a limited number of supplies throughout the school year. Each grade will send home a letter over the summer requesting specific supplies for the classroom.

Kindergarten students will need the following supplies at school:

- **Extra Set of Clothes** - We also ask that students bring an extra set of clothes (1 pair of socks, underwear, 1 shirt, and 1 pair of pants) in case he/she has an accident.
- **Backpack**
- **Lunch Box** (if your child will be bringing lunch to school each day)

Please label all supplies/clothes sent to school with your child's name.

2018-2019 Family Handbook Confirmation of Receipt*

I have received and read a copy of Orchard Gardens' Family Handbook and understand the expectations for myself and my student. I understand that if I ever have any questions, I can ask a member of the school community for a further explanation.

Student Name

Parent/Guardian Name

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

* If a family has more than one child attending the school, a separate Confirmation must be returned for each child.