



Parent/Student Handbook
“Leading Innovation Through Creation”

Pinebrook Elementary School

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703-957-4330

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Pinebrook Elementary School
Paul Thiessen - Principal Daryl Rodgers - Assistant Principal
Jeffrey Haynie - Administrator

Dear Pinebrook Pumas,

Welcome to a new year at Pinebrook Elementary! At YOUR SCHOOL, we continue to perform at a very high level of student achievement and personal growth. Our staff is committed to providing all students with a high quality education that will help students “Lead Innovation through creation.” By teaching the Loudoun County Public Schools Curriculum as well as integrating challenging instructional strategies we will continue to prepare students for their lives ahead.

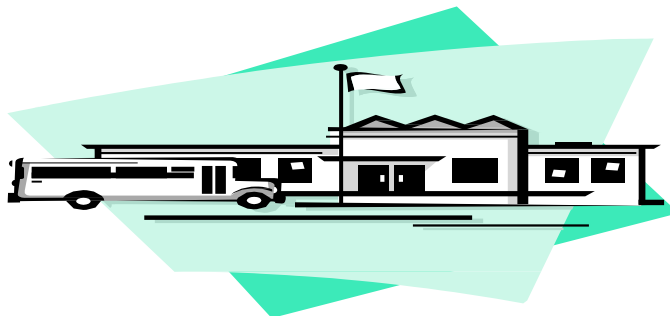
Besides maintaining a strong reputation as a high performing school, we are known as being a school that respects, cares for, and are dedicated to all children. We ARE a family friendly school. I am proud of the fact that we have a strong and collaborative relationship with our PTA. Mrs. Michele Leffler, our PTA president and I encourage each parent/guardian to be an active participant in the PTA. It is my hope that this year, we have a record number of parents joining and then actively volunteering in the PTA. Research shows that when a parent/guardian is involved in their child’s school, that child’s growth and success will increase. Being involved can range from becoming a PTA member and volunteering your time with PTA events to chaperoning a field trip, attending the various Family Nights, or contributing by providing dedicated nightly academic support and staying in communication with your child’s teacher.

As your principal, I believe in the idea that a school provides much more to a child’s learning than strengthening academic skills. Together, we are a community that is responsible for the development of children and I’m convinced that there is no greater charge to be given. We work to guide a child’s understanding of some of life’s most difficult aspects such as social relationships, problem solving, and the power of hard work. We model how to respond to situations appropriately, positively and constructively. A school or a home cannot do this independently from one another. We are a team and a strong bridge must be built between home and school to create an environment for students to find earned success. We rely on each other as we walk behind your child together and push them forward in preparation for their future.

Again, welcome to another great school year! My door is always open, and I am eager to serve you and your child.

Go Pumas!
Warmly,

Paul Thiessen
Principal



ATTENDANCE

Attendance at school on a regular basis is vital in maintaining satisfactory school progress. We ask that you have your child attend school each day that he/she is healthy. It is disruptive to your child's educational program when you remove him/her from school for trips or family outings. Parents should make every effort to plan these outings so as not to conflict with the school's instructional calendar.

Our school day begins at 7:50 a.m. Students are expected to be in their classroom by that time. Students who arrive after the 7:50 bell are considered late (tardy) and **need to be accompanied into the office by a parent/guardian to be signed in and obtain a late pass before proceeding onto their classroom.**

If your child will be absent due to illness or other circumstances, please call our absentee call in line at 703-957-4330 or visit our Pinebrook website at <http://www.lcps.org/pinebrook> and email us your child's absence. Should you need to speak to someone in the school office, please call 703-957-4325 between the hours of 7:15 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Upon returning to school following an absence, a written explanation is required. This note should be given to your child's teacher.

Students who are absent due to a fever, must be fever free for 24 hours without medication, before returning to school.

Students who will be absent due to vacation, and will be absent for three or more days, will need approval from the principal.

If you have not notified the school of your child's absence, school personnel will make reasonable effort to contact you concerning the absence of your child.

Please note that an excessive amount of unexcused absences and or tardies may result in a call from the LCPS truancy officer.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

After school activities are a privilege. Should it be necessary for a student to remain after school for specific activities, parents will need to send in written permission. If it is necessary for your child to stay for detention or make-up work sessions, parents will be contacted for permission. Students will be dismissed from after school programs if they are picked up late twice or if their behavior is unacceptable.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE-CASA

Loudoun County Parks and Recreation offers an after school program for regular school days. This program does not run on school holidays, snow days, or early dismissal days. For information on this program please call 703-737-8540 and speak with Kelly Taylor.

ARRIVAL OF STUDENTS

Students may not arrive before 7:30 a.m. Teacher's contracts specify a beginning time of 7:30 a.m. and supervision of students before that time cannot be assured. Once the 7:30 a.m. bell rings, students are allowed to go directly to their classroom to get ready for a great day of school.

BICYCLES

If student would like to ride a bike to school, bike racks are provided in the outside grass area near the gym. Please be sure to follow all rules and laws for minors appropriate for riding bicycles including wearing a helmet. Once a child arrives at the Pinebrook campus, they should walk their bikes to the bike rack.



Unicycles, motor bikes, skateboards, roller skates and in-line skates are not permitted on the way to or from school due to safety concerns.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

A very special part of a young child's life is the celebration of his/her birthday. The following are suggestions of ways in which we can join in this celebration.

1. Consider donating a book to the school library or a piece of equipment for recess i.e. playground ball. Please consult the librarian for a list or the office before purchasing.
2. To be consistent with LCPS practice, baked goods/candy, popsicles, treat bags of any kind will not be distributed due to the many allergies.
3. Children's feelings are easily hurt. Consequently, all invitations for individual parties must be made outside of school, unless all students in the class are invited.
4. Balloons are not permitted.

BUSES

It is extremely important that we take the necessary safety precautions in transporting students to and from school. We ask your cooperation in the following:

1. Please review bus safety with your child including safety at the stops.
2. Written requests must be sent to the main office and approved if a student is to take a different bus. Students visiting the home of a friend or relative must provide a written request.
3. Students can not be dismissed from a bus-all students must be signed out in the office and a staff member will get your child from their bus.
4. In the event of an early dismissal, buses will follow their normal routes.



CAFETERIA

Pinebrook offers a daily lunch and breakfast program. The menu is available online from the main LCPS website as well as Pinebrook's webpage. The menu will include the cost for lunch and breakfast. If a student brings a lunch from home, they may purchase milk only. Soda will not be permitted.

We welcome family to join their child for lunch. We ask that if you are purchasing lunch from the cafeteria, that you call the school prior to 8:00 a.m. to allow our cafeteria to prepare additional food.

Lunch and breakfast may be paid in the following ways; via personal check made payable to the County of Loudoun, or by accessing the LCPS website food services page to pre-pay for lunch:

<http://lcpshhealthycfe.org/index.php?sid=2407151445268563>

If possible, do not send cash to school with your child.

Ice cream/juice bars will only be offered on Fridays. Children are expected to eat a good lunch prior to getting ice cream/juice bars.

Students are expected to use good manners and socialize quietly in the cafeteria. Students should:

- Leave the table and surrounding area clean and orderly
- Return trays and utensils to the wash area
- Place trash in proper containers



Applications for free/reduced lunch are available online. Visit the main LCPS page and click "School Menu." Or click, <http://lcpshhealthycfe.org/index.php?sid=2407151445268563&page=menus>.

This application must be completed every school year.

CLASSROOM PARTIES

Classrooms are permitted three (3) parties during the school year. Teachers will request parent volunteers to help with these parties. It is the teacher's decision as to which three (3) parties take place in their classroom.

Surprise parties for staff are not encouraged or recommended. Please see the principal before planning such a party.

CLINIC

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by our Health Clinic Assistant. School personnel will render first aid treatment only. If emergency medical treatment is necessary, parents will be contacted. It is extremely important that the school have on file current and up-to-date phone numbers as well as the name of a friend or relative that could be contacted in the event we cannot reach the parent.



If your child has a fever, they must be fever free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school.

Please see "Medication" section of this Handbook for information regarding practices to bring any medication to school.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

Every effort is made to keep parents informed of what is happening at school. Each teacher provides regular communication via a newsletter, regular group email, class blog or combination of communication avenues. Pinebrook will send a weekly message to share about upcoming events, news from specials teachers, as well as procedural updates and information. It is essential that parents take the time each evening to go through your child's backpack. Most schoolwork will be sent home in the homework folder along with other school announcements such as picture information, PTA information, etc.



Many teachers use Twitter throughout the day. Please see your child's teacher's webpage for their twitter handle. Follow them for updates, reminders, and learning celebrations in the classroom. Pinebrook has its own Twitter Handle @PThiessen_LCPS. Twitter posts from the school or classroom will appear to Pinebrook's main webpage.

Keeping informed will aid both the parent and child in keeping organized and knowledgeable about what is happening in both the classroom and school. Be sure to check the Pinebrook web page at <http://www.lcps.org/pinebrook> often.

CONFERENCES

All parents will be scheduled for a conference during the first grading period. The parents or teacher may request additional conferences as the need arises. Parents should call the school office to request a conference with the teacher, assistant principal, or principal. For safety reasons, we do not allow parents to drop by the classroom without an appointment.

Blackboard Connect (Parent Information Management System)

Blackboard is the mass communication system that is currently being used by Loudoun County Public Schools to notify parents of late openings, early dismissals, and upcoming events. Parents are able to update their information through the main Pinebrook website. Scroll down to "Parent Information Management System" to make any changes to your information.

CURRICULUM

Pinebrook offers students a full program of elementary studies: reading, English, science, social studies, Mathematics, writing, spelling, health and safety, family life, drug and alcohol awareness, music, art, physical education, and technology. Classrooms are responsible for the majority of instruction; however some instruction may be departmentalized within grade level.

Half-day Kindergarten students visit the library and computer lab once a week. They also receive lessons from the guidance counselor. Art, music, and physical education are provided by the classroom teacher. Students eligible for the Full Day Kindergarten program also receive instruction in PE, Music and Art.

DRESS CODE

The primary responsibility for students dress lies with the parents; however, the school must see that the dress is appropriate for the task of the day. Loudoun County Public Schools Board Policy 8-33 prohibits the wearing of any article of clothing that has a picture or printed matter advertising any drug, tobacco, alcohol products or weapons. Likewise any clothing that is distracting to others such as tight and short dresses, halter tops, spaghetti strap tops or tops that expose the midriff area, very saggy pants, and cosmetics are considered inappropriate for elementary school. No flip flops are allowed due to safety reasons. Parents will be called for a change of clothes.

EARLY DISMISSAL-DISMISSAL CHANGES

Early dismissal during the school day should be governed by the following procedures:

1. Parents desiring a child to be excused from school for educational or medical reasons must send a written request to the main office. You may also notify the teacher, but the official request must come through the main office.
2. Parents picking up a child for an early dismissal must come to the office and sign their child out. Office staff will call your child from the classroom upon your arrival. Parents are asked not to go directly to the classroom to get their child. You can complete the "Early Release and Dismissal Change" form located on the front page of the Pinebrook website.
3. Please be prepared to show picture identification before your child is released to you.
4. Please be sure to complete a dismissal change or early dismissal by 2:15pm to ensure we have accurate accountability sheets for students.
5. Parents can use the "Change of Dismissal" form located on the main Pinebrook Website

EARLY SCHOOL CLOSING

Early dismissal by Loudoun County Schools during the day may take place due to inclement weather, failure of heating/water systems, or natural disaster. Please have a plan in place for your child in the event of an early dismissal. An "Early Emergency Release" form was included in the first day packet. Please be sure to complete and return ASAP. If your child is typically a walker, we can not send a child home during an Early Emergency Release as we can not guarantee that a parent would be home in this special circumstance. Please plan to pick up your child in the Kiss-n-Go line.

Children should particularly be instructed as to the procedure to follow if no one is home during the school day. Unfortunately the school cannot commit to calling home for each of our students. Phone lines must be kept open for communication with central office personnel. Please check the Loudoun County Webpage at www.lcps.org for up to the minute reports on early school closing.

EMERGENCY CARDS

At the beginning of the school year, a form is sent home with each student that lists phone numbers and persons to contact in case of an emergency. **This form is very important.** Emergency forms must be kept up-to-date. If you move or change your home, work, or cell phone numbers, we ask that you inform us immediately. It is very important that we have correct information at all times.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire drills are held once a week for the first month of school then once per month thereafter as mandated by state law. Specific plans for evacuation are posted in each classroom and other areas of the school. Pinebrook has specific plans for evacuation and relocation should evacuation of the building for an extended period of time be necessary. Two lock down drills are required within the first month of school and one again in January.

Bus evacuation drills and tornado drills are practiced twice a year.
Earthquake drills are practiced on a yearly basis.

Procedures are in place to protect students and staff from unwelcome intruders.

FIELD TRIPS

Pinebrook Elementary students are afforded the opportunity to visit various places of educational interest in the surrounding areas to enrich their classroom experiences. The trips are usually taken in a school bus under the supervision of the classroom teacher with at least three other adults present. **Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring other children on the trip.** Parental permission is required before any student is taken on a field trip.



GUIDANCE

The elementary guidance program provides classroom lessons to all students. The guidance counselor is also available for small groups or individual counseling. Teacher and parents may refer their child to the counselor. Parent permission must be obtained for a student to meet regularly with the counselor in a small group or in an individual setting.

GUM

Gum is not permitted in the school building at any time because of possible damage to books, furniture, or school building.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can provide practice and drill that reinforces classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research, and creative thinking. Parents can help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for the student to work and by seeing that assignments are completed. The LCPS guidelines for the amount of homework given each evening are as follows: children in grades one through three should be given no more than thirty minutes of homework each night; children in grades four and five should be given no more than sixty minutes of homework a night. Children in the primary grades are often asked to read nightly and study math facts for their homework assignment. This type of assignment is just as important as a written assignment and should be completed just as carefully as any other written work assigned.

Often teachers in the upper grades will assign children long-term projects. The expectation is that the children will learn to “pace themselves” and not save all of the work for one or two nights. If you have a question about the amount of homework your child is receiving (too much or too little) please discuss this with your child’s teacher.

It is our belief that weekends are made for quality time with family. Homework will not be assigned on weekends.

IDENTIFICATION

All persons entering Pinebrook Elementary School during school hours will be required to show picture Identification. A camera is located outside the main entrance to the school. Please ring the bell, show picture ID and a school secretary or administrator will buzz the door open.

ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

School Board Policies 18-35, 18-36, and 19-37 address the possession, distribution, and use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs by students. School Board Policy prohibits the possession of weapons. These policies clearly set forth the responsibilities of students and the consequences of violating the policies. These may be reviewed in the School Board Policy Manual located in the principal’s office and library.

INSURANCE

Student accident insurance is available. Application forms are distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year. Each student has a choice of 24-hour coverage or basic school time coverage.

LIBRARY

The library is available on a regular scheduled basis and is supervised by the librarian and or librarian assistant. Library classes are held for grades K-5 once a week. They are held for the purpose of library instruction as well as for the enjoyment of materials and books. The library is also open to students, under the supervision of a classroom teacher, for the purpose of completing related assignments, such as independent study projects. There is no fine for overdue books although students will not be allowed to check out additional books until overdue books are returned. If a book is lost, the child will be assessed a fee to cover the cost of the book. Should the book be found, the money will be refunded.



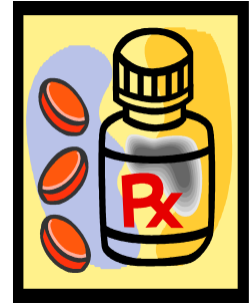
LIBRARY, c on't

The library collection is constantly updated and expanded. Books are chosen for either their educational or recreational value. A variety of audio-visual materials are available through the library for teacher use in the classroom.

MEDICATION

If a student must take medication at school, the following requirements must be met:

1. Prescription Medications:
 - Student's name
 - Name and purpose of medication
 - Dosage and time of administration
 - Possible side effects and measures to be taken if side effects occur
 - Termination date for administering the medication
 - Physician's signature
 - Parent/guardian signature
2. The parent is responsible for informing the principal and clinic assistant of any change in a student's condition or any change in a student's medication.
3. The medication must be in the original container with the prescription label.
4. Medical forms are available in the clinic. Forms are required for all prescription medications. A form for long-term medication must also be on file.
5. Refrigeration is available. Medication will be kept in the clinic unless a doctor prescribes otherwise.
6. Prescribed student medications will accompany the child on field trips.



NO MEDICATION MAY BE TRANSPORTED WITH THE CHILD. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE SCHOOL AND PICKED-UP FROM THE SCHOOL BY THE PARENT. MEDICATION MAY NOT BE TRANSPORTED VIA BUS.

MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Messages for students and teachers will be taken and delivered by the office staff in order to minimize classroom disruptions. Neither student nor teacher may be called to the telephone during class time except in the case of emergency.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Pinebrook encourages volunteers. To be a volunteer, the main office must have on file a copy of a **negative** TB screening.

Parents, grandparents, and community members are encouraged to help in the classroom as needed by individual teachers. Upon arrival at school, volunteers need to sign in at the office and wear a volunteer badge. Volunteers will need to sign-out when leaving the school. Also an LCPS volunteer form should be completed.

PETS

No pets of any kind are allowed at school without prior permission. The principal may give special permission for pets to be brought to school as part of a special activity.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The staff at Pinebrook believes that physical education is an important part of the educational experience. The development and maintenance of a healthy body is essential for physical well-being and good mental health. We also believe that attitude development is an important part of education. We attempt to create an atmosphere for the development of leadership, sportsmanship, and congeniality through our physical education program. P.E. classes with the physical education teacher are provided three times a week for all students in grade 1-5. **Children must wear tennis shoes for all physical education classes.**

PICTURES

Pictures of students can only be taken if the event you are photographing is open to the entire school, i.e. our yearly musical production. Pictures of classroom events that are not open to the entire school are not permitted, i.e. classroom parties, classroom events.

Pictures are taken twice a year by a professional photographer. They are taken in the fall and this is the picture that is used for our school yearbook. These pictures must be preordered and prepaid. Retakes are available. Pictures are taken again in the spring. These pictures are sent home with your child with the option of purchase. They are not prepaid and there are no retakes. Class pictures are also taken in the spring. These pictures must also be prepaid. The school also does a yearbook which must be pre-ordered and prepaid.

REPORT CARDS

The purpose of the report card is to inform parents of their child's academic and social progress. Children in K-2 will use specific coding to help parents understand the progress their child is making in the primary skills as well as personal development. In grades 3-5, grades are recorded in the major subject areas as well as social and work habits. Report cards are issued four times a year, approximately two weeks after the end of each nine-week grading period. A student who shows a marked drop in achievement, or who is doing poorly in any subject, will receive an interim report midway through the grading period to inform the parents of any problems.

Parents are able to sign up for access to their child's grades throughout each quarter of the year. Please see the "ParentVue" section of the school website to register for this service.

SELLING/SOLICITATION

It is the Loudoun County School Board policy that elementary age school children not be allowed to sell anything before, during, or after school. To abide by this policy, we ask that Pinebrook students not bring items from a non-school organization to sell to other students. Examples of this include, but not limited to, older sibling fundraiser items, sports fundraising items, Girl Scout cookies, Boy Scout popcorn, etc.

SCHOOL ALERT

Loudoun County provides a "closing and school alert system". This system will allow you to be notified on your cell phone, e-mail (either work or home), or smart phone about an early closing as well as any other emergency information in Loudoun County. Log on to the Loudoun county website at www.lcps.org and click on the closing and alert system.

SCHOOL TELEPHONE

Children may use the phone in the office only in an **emergency**. Forgotten homework, lunches, notes, etc are not considered emergencies. Please remind your child of this policy.



STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HANDBOOK

At the beginning of each school year, every LCPS student receives a handbook setting forth system rules and expectations for student behavior. It is incumbent upon every parent to read this document carefully and help all students understand the rules and expectations our county has set forth.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are provided to all students in Loudoun County. Students are responsible for all books loaned to them and for any loss or damage. If a book is lost, misused, or damaged beyond reasonable repair, the student shall replace the book. Textbooks are not for sale to students. Parents should carefully check books at the beginning of the year and sign and return the book loan form to the school.



TOYS

Toys of any kind are not permitted in school. This also includes trading cards of any kind including Pokeman, Yugioh cards or any other type of trading cards. Toys also include any type of electronic game i.e. PSP, Nintendo, etc.

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

Please follow all directional signs upon entering and exiting the school parking areas.

Please use the designated cross walks when crossing from the school to parking lot or vice versa. For safety reasons, during morning drop off and afternoon pick up, the crosswalk closest to the track is the only crosswalk that is to be used.



Car traffic is prohibited in the bus loop between 7:00 and 7:50a.m. and between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m.

If you are using the Kiss-n-Go, please do not park in the upper (Ball field) parking lot between the hours of 7:20-7:50am.

VISITORS

All visitors to any Loudoun County Public School are requested to report to the main office and sign-in when entering the building. All visitors must enter through the main doors located in the front of the building. All visitors are required to wear a visitor's badge identifying their self.

Please do not go directly to your child's classroom. Additionally, we ask that you not drop by a teacher's classroom unexpectedly for a conference. Please call and arrange a time with the teacher. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Walking your child to the classroom every morning will not be necessary. If you feel that your child will need assistance, we will assign a 5th grade student to help with this.

