

## **Rosemary Hills Handbook**

Rosemary Hills Primary School has 700 students enrolled in four Pre-Kindergarten classes, nine Kindergarten classes, eight First Grade classes, and nine Second Grade classes.

For additional information including curriculum, homework policies, teacher home pages, school activities and more, go to the MCPS website, [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org); and the school's home page, [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rosemaryhillsses](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rosemaryhillsses).

### **School Hours**

The school day begins at 9:15 am and ends at 3:30 pm. Children should not arrive at school earlier than 8:45 am.

On early release days, school is dismissed at 1:00 pm. If your child is a car rider or walker, please make arrangements so that he/she is picked up on time. School bus riders follow their regular dismissal routine at 1:00 pm.

### **Absences/Tardiness**

Parents should call the school at 301-650-6400 by 10 a.m. if their child will be absent. In addition, a written explanation is required from the parent when the student returns to school.

Students are recorded as "AM Absent" if they arrive at school more than one hour late in the morning or are absent from school for more than an hour in the morning.

Students are recorded as "PM Absent" if they leave school more than one hour early in the afternoon or are absent from school for more than one hour during the afternoon.

Students are recorded as "Absent for All Day" if they are present for one hour or less of the school day.

Students arriving after 9:15 will be marked tardy. All students who arrive after this time must report to the office where they will be signed in and receive a pass to class.

When signing your child in or out, please report to the office and use the binders on the front counter. Unless there is an emergency or a scheduled appointment, please avoid pick-ups between 3:15 and 3:30 p.m. This is an extremely busy time in the office.

### **Before- and After-School Program**

A private provider, Wonders Child Care Center, runs a before- and after-school program at RHPS. For additional information, contact Elizabeth Baird, Director of the Wonders program at RHPS, at 301-588-7494 or [ebaird@wonderschildcare.org](mailto:ebaird@wonderschildcare.org).

### **Emergency Closings and Delays**

To subscribe to QuickNotes or the MCPS newsfeed with alerts about early dismissals, emergencies or other news, go to [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/emergency/procedures/sources.aspx](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/emergency/procedures/sources.aspx)

You may also check school closings on the Web at [www.schoolsout.com](http://www.schoolsout.com) or call the MCPS information line at 301-279-3673.

All emergency closings, delayed openings, or early dismissals also are announced on radio and TV stations, including WRC (980 AM), WMAL (630 AM), WTOP (103.5 FM), and Montgomery Cable TV Channel 34.

Parents should not call Rosemary Hills for information about delayed openings and emergency closings. Parents must make childcare arrangements if early dismissal occurs and no one is home to receive students.

### **Communication Between School and Home**

Please check your child's folder daily for important notices or teacher notes.

Written communication between the school and home is extremely important. If your child's after-school arrangement changes, you must send a note to school. If a playdate has been arranged, both children must bring a note to school to inform the school and give any change in transportation information. If there are any unexpected changes in the arrangements for your child on a particular day, please call the school by 2:00 pm. If the school does not receive a note or phone call, your child will leave school according to his/her usual dismissal routine.

### **Contact Information**

Please notify the school of any changes in your telephone, address or employment information. All students must have completed both sides of the MCPS Form 565-2 (yellow form) and returned it to school. All students must maintain three (3) current emergency phone numbers.

### **Curriculum**

For detailed information on the curriculum, go to the school's homepage, [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rosemaryhillsses](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/rosemaryhillsses), and to the MCPS curriculum page, [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum.aspx](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum.aspx)

RHPS curriculum includes the following:

- Reading Initiative – This MCPS reading/language arts initiative consists of daily blocks of time (90 minutes in First and Second Grade and 45 minutes in Kindergarten) during which students are engaged in reading, writing, spelling, grammar, and other language arts. The student-teacher ratio is reduced to approximately 20:1 during these blocks, allowing teachers to differentiate instruction and better meet the needs of all students.
- Gifted and Talented – Testing to identify students as “gifted and talented” begins during the second semester of Second Grade. However, the RHPS staff takes special pride in being able to nurture young learners and to recognize and respond to giftedness prior to formal identification.
- Special Needs – When children with special needs are identified, individualized education plans (IEPs) are developed. RHPS uses a home school model whereby special needs are met in the general education setting.
- Special Subjects – Students at RHPS take special subjects, each taught by a dedicated faculty member. These “specials” include art, music, media center, and physical education.

## **Homework**

Homework reinforces and extends skills and concepts addressed during the instructional day. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns about homework.

The amount, frequency, and difficulty of homework is flexible, but the maximum amount of time spent on doing homework should be as follows:

- Kindergarten – 10-15 minutes, 2-3 times weekly
- First Grade – 15-20 minutes, 3-4 times weekly
- Second Grade – 20-30 minutes, 4 times weekly

In addition, children should be read to or read independently for at least 15 minutes a night.

## **Grading and Reporting**

For detailed information on the MCPS grading and reporting system, go to [www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading/](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/info/grading/).

Report cards: For kindergarten students, report cards are distributed twice a year at the end of each semester. First- and second-grade report cards are distributed four times a year in nine-week cycles.

Conferences: Parent-teacher conferences take place in November. All appointments for conferences with the teacher or the principal should be made in advance.

## **Pre-Kindergarten Programs**

There are two Pre-K programs at RHPS. The first program is designed to promote the total development of 3- and 4-year old children to enable them to be successful in school and in life. Families in this program receive support through health and social services, as well as training in safety, nutrition, and other areas affecting child development. Parental involvement is emphasized.

RHPS is also home to an autism Pre-K program. This program is designed to teach language through physical and interactive play. Each of the two classrooms is set up with a 1:1 ratio to provide the maximum support necessary for a successful early intervention program.

## **Field Trips**

Classes may go on field trips throughout the year. Parents will be required to fill out a permission slip and provide a nominal fee to cover transportation and trip activities.

## **Guidance Counselor**

At RHPS, one full-time counselor, Al Seward, works with individual students, small groups, and entire classes. Please feel free to contact Mr. Seward concerning your child.

## **Rainbow Big Six**

RHPS seeks to create an open and trusting environment that nurtures children's emotional, creative, physical, and intellectual growth. The school has a set of school-wide expectations called the Rainbow Big Six:

- Follow directions cooperatively.

- Work together and stay on task.
- Treat myself and others so that everyone feels liked and safe at school.
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to myself.
- Take care of our school, school equipment, and school supplies.
- Do my best work.

Students are taught to know, understand, and follow these expectations in the classroom, cafeteria, and halls, as well as on the bus and on the playground. RHPS will work through the Rainbow Big Six to implement discipline as a positive force.

The goal of any disciplinary action is to change inappropriate behavior, and to get the child back into the educational process. Actions include preventative measures, such as helping children identify and avoid potential problem situations. For minor disciplinary problems, the teacher, paraeducator, or bus driver will confer with the student regarding behavior expectations. Continued problem behavior involving the same student requires additional conferring by the teacher/paraeducator, parent, and possibly the school counselor. Unsuccessful efforts to resolve a problem will be referred to the administration and/or counselor and will require parental contact. All consequences are to be fair and appropriate, emphasizing communication with the student and the student's understanding of his/her role in changing the inappropriate behavior.

### **Health Issues**

RHPS has a health room staffed by a Health Technician. The office staff has also been trained to administer emergency first aid when needed. If your child complains of being sick after arriving at school, he/she may go to the health room and you will be contacted. It is very important that you provide the school with up-to-date information and phone numbers so that you may be reached in case of an emergency.

If there are any signs of illness in your child, please do not send him/her to school. It is not fair to your child, or to the other children and teachers who will be exposed.

If your child is diagnosed with strep, chicken pox, or head lice, please contact the Health Technician and inform her of the condition so that others in the same classroom may be alerted.

Medication: The school cannot administer medication until the parent or guardians and the physician complete Maryland State Form #525-13 for each illness and for each medication ordered. Forms are available in the office. Parents must bring all medication to the school. Do not send any medication in with your child.

### **School Meals**

An optional Breakfast will be served at 8:50 a.m. in the cafeteria each day. The price is \$1.30. Lunch can be purchased daily and includes milk. The cost is \$2.50. Milk sold individually costs \$0.60. (There is also provision for free or reduced-price meals. See the school office for a confidential application.) Five times a year, a flyer providing two monthly menus will be sent home with each student.

The cafeteria uses a computerized cash register system. Each student is assigned an account which is accessed by a Personal Identification Number (PIN). It is a debit system in which parents choose to make deposits into their child's account. At mealtime, the computer records food purchases and deducts them from the account when the PIN is entered. Parents can deposit money into the student's account by sending in a check (made out to "RHPS Cafeteria," with their child's name and teacher written in the memo line) or by accessing [www.myLunchMoney.com](http://www.myLunchMoney.com). MyLunchMoney is a service to make prepayments to your child's cafeteria account using your credit card. Students should learn their own PIN. The system is programmed to know which students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, which is always confidential. Parents will receive a notice when a child's account is low. The PIN account carries over from year to year and from school to school within MCPS.

There are three lunch and recess periods:

Kindergarten 11:25 am -11:55 am/11:55 am - 12:25 pm

First Grade 12:35 pm - 1:05 pm/1:05 pm - 1:35 pm

Second Grade 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm/12:30 pm - 1:00 pm

### **Recess**

Children have supervised play outside on the playground. Dress children appropriately for the weather. Students participate in outdoor recess unless there is inclement weather. In cold weather, children should have warm jackets, mittens or gloves, hats or hood, and on days when there is snow, boots. Hats are acceptable for outside playground use only, and must be removed upon entering the school building.

### **Food Guidelines**

Because so many children have food allergies, MCPS policy states that only store-bought food may be sent in to school and it must be sent in its original container. This policy applies to food served for class parties and school-wide events. It does not apply to food sent in for an individual child's lunch. Contact the school office in the event your child has any dietary concerns or food-related medical restrictions.

### **Safety/Security**

One of the watchwords at RHPS is safety. If your child walks to and from school, please assist him/her in selecting a safe, regular route and teach him/her to cross streets at the following places: Lanier Drive and Porter Road, Leonard Drive and Porter Road, Leonard Drive and Spencer Road, Porter Road and Sundale Drive.

To reduce the traffic in the halls in the mornings, parents are asked to say goodbye to their children at the school entrance. The school cannot monitor hundreds of adults in different areas of the building at once.

To ensure safety during the school day, all outside doors will remain locked. Access to the building is by the front door only. State laws, safety regulations, and insurance policies require that all persons in the building be identified. Visitors to the school during the day must check into the office before proceeding to other parts of the building or school grounds. Please be sure

to sign in at the office upon your arrival to the school, pick up a visitor's badge, and inform the office staff of your intended destination. Please sign out at your departure.

For students in the "Quad", a key swipe system was installed at both the main building and the Quad doors. Students will go to the bathroom in pairs and when a child needs to go to the health room, he/she will be escorted by two students so those students will have a partner for the return trip. The Quad has access to our regular public address system and each teacher in the Quad has a cell phone for use in an emergency.

### **Transportation**

*Bus Riders:* Bus transportation is available for those students who live too far away to walk. The school system attempts to have buses pick up students as close to home as possible. Please have your child outside and ready to board the bus at his/her appropriate time. Bus riders are dismissed starting at 3:30 pm, as the busses arrive at the school. The number and symbol for the buses are called to signal dismissal for those students who ride those busses. All bus riders are dismissed through the main entrance to the school.

*Car Riders:* Children driven to school should be dropped off or picked up at the "car riders' door" closest to the front parking lot. School staff is there to direct your child into the building. Car riders are dismissed at 3:28 pm, before the first set of busses is called. Car riders exit the school by the doors closest to the parking lot. They are met at the door by two staff members who escort them to the cars waiting in line in the parking lot.

*Walkers:* Walkers are dismissed in similar fashion. The children are dismissed by grade and exit the school by the doors closest to the gym. Night Owls and Kindergarten walkers are dismissed at 3:28 pm and the first and second grade walkers are dismissed as their classes are called.

Please note that from 8:00-9:30 am and from 3:00- 4:00 pm, the driveway in front of the building is to be used by buses only. Any other vehicles in the driveway or blocking the entrance to the driveway present a serious safety concern.

### **Volunteers**

All volunteers are welcome at school. The school values and appreciates parent volunteers.

- Please sign in to the Volunteer Log in the main office and get a visitor's badge.
- Please leave other siblings at home in order to give your full attention to the job at hand.
- Try to help all the students follow the classroom rules and model them yourself.
- Consider volunteering for a "special", such as media center, computers, art or music.
- If you are unable to make your scheduled time, please let the teacher know in advance.
- Please share your time and attention with all the children.
- Respect the confidentiality of your relationship with the school. Your knowledge of its students is privileged information and should only be shared with responsible staff at RHPS.
- Make any constructive criticisms of the school, staff, or procedures only to the principal.

### **Lost and Found**

Please label your child's clothing and belongings to help minimize losses. If your child should lose clothing or a lunchbox, please notify the homeroom teacher. Your child may check the Lost and Found collection in the front entry near the parking lot. Unclaimed clothing will be donated to a local charity at the end of the school year.