

DONALD ROSS SCHOOL HANDBOOK



Dear Parents,

This is the Donald Ross School Handbook, developed by the Ross School Council. We hope this gives you the information you need about the school. Please keep it for future reference.

Parent involvement is the key both to a child's success in school and to the genuine success and excellence of the school itself. We invite you to become involved in our school and to communicate frequently any questions or concerns you may have. The Donald Ross School is a special place for children to learn and for you to be partners in your children's education.

Ross School Council
June 2006

BRAINTREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
348 Pond Street

Braintree, MA 02184
www.braintreeschools.org

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Peter A. Kurzberg, Ph.D.
Mary Ann Cuddahy, Secretary
380-0130

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
Maureen Murray
Ann Zopatti, Secretary
380-0130, ext. 107

PRINCIPAL
Donna Bonarrigo

Marie Curley, Secretary
380-0240

Guiding Principles

For the Ross School Community

- Show respect for people and property.
 - Act responsibly.
- Keep yourself and others safe.
 - Do your best.

General Information

School Hours

Students should not come to school before 8:30 am and are admitted into the school building at 8:35 am. Students are considered tardy after 8:45 am. School ends at 2:50 pm. Kindergarten hours are 8:45 to 11:15 for the morning session, and 12:20 to 2:50 for the afternoon session. There is no bus transportation for Ross students, except for kindergarten students who are bussed midday. Phone hours are 8:00 am to 3:30 pm.

Daily Schedule

8:35	First bell rings.
8:45	School begins.
11:00	Grade 1 and 2 recess. Snack is eaten on the playground.
11:15	Recess ends.
11:30	First lunch and recess.
11:50	Second lunch and recess.
12:10	Third lunch and recess.
12:30	Fourth lunch and recess.
12:50	End of lunch periods and recess.
2:45	Warning bell.
2:50	Dismissal.

Recess is outdoors unless it is raining. Please make sure your child dresses warmly for the cold winter months. Students should wear proper clothing including sneakers on the days they have physical education.

Admission

As part of registration at Ross School, parents will be required to furnish a birth certificate and proof of up to date immunizations for the child. An up to date physical is also required for all new students. Parents are requested to present proof of residency, which would include items such as a utility bill with name and address on it, a rent receipt, or a copy of a purchase and sales agreement for a house.

Absences

When your child is absent, please call the nurse's office at (781) 356-5308. Leave a message with your child's name, grade, reason for the absence and expected length of the absence. Families who do not call will be contacted by the school nurse with a Connect-Ed message asking that they call.

Dismissal

Children who are being dismissed from school should bring a note from home when they arrive at school in the morning. The dismissal note should indicate the time the child is being dismissed, and the time, if any, that the child is expected back. Parents should pick up their child at the office, not at the child's classroom. Children being dismissed must be signed out at the office.

Emergency Information

At the start of the school year, each child is sent home with an emergency information form to be filled out by the parent. This form includes important information about how to contact the parent should the need arise. It also asks for the name of a neighbor, friend, or relative to contact should the parent be unavailable. In the case of serious emergencies, the name of the family physician is needed.

If there are changes throughout the school year that pertain to the emergency information form, the parent should notify the school as soon as these changes occur.

Please make sure that your child knows where to go in the event of an early dismissal.

School Cancellations

In the event of school cancellations, parents can tune into any of the major television networks, or any of the radio stations listed below:

WEEI 590 (AM)	WJDA 1300 (AM)
WHDH 850 (AM)	WEZE 1260 (AM)
WRKO 680 (AM)	WBZ 1030 (AM)

Security

All doors are locked at the Ross School. The front door is monitored by a camera. Visitors must ring the bell in order to be buzzed in by the secretary. All visitors must sign in at the main office and pick up a visitor's badge before going anywhere in the building. Visitors must sign out and return their badge before leaving.

The Ross School has a Crisis Management Plan. This written document is given to all staff and states the procedures to use in case of various emergencies or crises. If the Ross School ever had to be evacuated, students would be bussed to East Middle School.

School Council

The Ross School Council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members required to be established by each school pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 59C. Parents and teachers are elected to the School Council and serve three-year terms. The purpose of the council is to develop a yearly school improvement plan.

Traffic Policy

Parking is not allowed in the driveway in front of the school. In the morning parents may pull into the driveway and drop their children off and should proceed immediately out of the driveway. At dismissal time parking is allowed in the west parking lot. However, you must pull into the parking lot by 2:45 pm because no cars are allowed into the driveway between 2:45 and 3:00 pm. Only buses are allowed to park in the front driveway at dismissal. Parents should not pull into the front driveway to pick their children up at dismissal. Parking is allowed on the school side of Hayward and Commercial Streets. **Children should always cross Hayward Street in the crosswalk at the light where the crossing guard is located.**

It is very important that parents adhere to the parking restrictions at the Ross School. Emergency vehicles need to be able to access the school and cannot if the front driveway is congested. The above procedures are to ensure the safety of the students at Ross.

Breakfast and Lunch Program

Breakfast is available daily. Students wishing to purchase breakfast should enter the building **after 8:15** am and proceed to the cafeteria.

Hot lunches are available for all students in grades one through five. Each hot lunch includes foods from the four basic food groups plus a serving of milk. Students may also purchase an extra entrée and/or ice cream separately. Students who do not like the daily menu that is offered can order peanut butter and jelly sandwiches or another alternate at the same price.

Milk may be purchased by students who bring their lunch to school. Ice cream may be purchased on Fridays only.

Menus for both breakfast and lunch are published in the Braintree Forum, the Quincy Patriot Ledger, and the monthly Ross School Newsletter.

Breakfast and lunch prices are listed in the school's September Newsletter. Children may charge lunch or milk with a limit of three charges. Ice cream may not be charged. If parents wish to have their child considered for the federal free or reduced lunch program, they may ask the school for the necessary forms to apply. Upon the receipt of the forms, the Food Services Administrator will make a determination of the child's status based on federal guidelines.

Code of Conduct Handbook

The Braintree Public Schools puts out a handbook, which describes the discipline policy for the Braintree Elementary Schools. It is given to students when they enter kindergarten and to new families when they enter the school system. Parents should read it over and familiarize themselves with the policies. If the handbook is lost, parents may request another one from the principal.

Possession or use of a knife, gun, or any other object or facsimile which may be considered or used as a weapon is prohibited on school property. This means that students should not bring to school toy guns, knives, etc. and they should not be part of any Halloween costume.

Day Care

There are no after school programs such as day care available at the Ross School. Parents needing that service have to make their own arrangements. Most of the programs will provide transportation from the school to the day care facility. Please contact the school secretary for a list of providers.

Lost and Found

The collection site is maintained on a table in the hallway and is usually overflowing. Parents should check there for missing items. Items not claimed are donated to charity periodically throughout the year.

Home-School Communication

School Website

www.gpvillage.com/rossschool

Connect-Ed – School to Parent Communication System

Connect-Ed allows the school to create and send personalized recorded phone messages about emergencies, school events, early dismissals, or last-minute announcements to all the parents and teachers in the school instantly and simultaneously.

Parent Conferences

Communication between parents and teachers is vital. In the fall evening parent conferences are held. It may be necessary to meet with your child's teacher at other times throughout the year. Phone conferences are often used to keep parents informed of their child's progress.

Many teachers enjoy communicating with parents by sending home classroom newsletters that describe various activities, as well as what is being taught in the classroom. Such newsletters can stimulate parent-child interaction by fostering discussions at home about school.

Parents should feel free to contact teachers at any time about their child's progress.

Elementary Report Cards

Elementary students receive a report card four times each year. Report cards go home in November, February, April, and June. The report cards will indicate how well your child is achieving grade level standards for each subject area. The standards come from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

Kindergarten students receive a progress report in January and June.

School Newsletter

The Ross School Newsletter is published once each month and is sent home with the youngest child in the family. This newsletter provides you with a monthly calendar of school events, PTO news, and information from the principal.

Parent-Teacher Organization

The Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is an organization of parents and teachers who, together with the principal, help provide your child with the best educational opportunities available.

The PTO consists of many committees that need your support, such as Cultural Arts, School Advisory Board, School Council, Project Concern, Publicity, Hospitality, Grade Five Activities, Fundraising, School Beautification, and Holiday Fair. The PTO also collects and redeems Box Tops for Education, Campbell Soup labels, and Hood Sox Tops.

The PTO engages in a number of fundraising activities, which provide funds for various programs and materials that enhance your child's education. The PTO also funds the cost of the buses for all field trips.

Parent Volunteers

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom, when the teacher needs help with special projects or activities. The teacher will let parents know of those opportunities. Included in this handbook is a copy of the Parent Volunteer Contract. A Cori check must be completed on all parent volunteers, including those who help chaperone field trips.

School Services and Programs

There are a variety of support services at the Ross School. Depending on the school budget, these services may vary from year to year.

School Psychologist

A school psychologist is assigned to the Ross School. Counseling services are available to help students develop academically, personally, and socially. Educational and psychological testing is also done by the school psychologist as part of a special education evaluation. The school psychologist coordinates plans for children that qualify for accommodations under Section 504. If you have concerns about your child's emotional well-being that may be interfering with your child's learning, please feel free to contact the school psychologist.

Remedial Reading

A reading specialist works with small groups of children that need additional help in reading. Children in grades one to five are serviced by the reading specialist. Because the focus is on early intervention, servicing children in the primary grades is the priority.

Title I

The Title I teachers provide small group instruction in math and reading. Children may be pulled out of the classroom for help, but are often serviced in the classroom. The program runs for 170 days. Funding for the Title I program comes from the federal government.

English Language Learner (ELL)

Students in grades one to five whose first language is not English receive English language instruction by the ELL teacher. The ELL teacher assesses students to determine the amount of service and schedules them accordingly.

School Nurse

It is the goal of the School Nurse to maintain and promote good health in the school age child. The nurse reviews and updates the medical history of the child. This history is obtained by the physician's physical exam, the parental history form, and the emergency health cards. A physical exam is required by the Braintree School System prior to the child entering kindergarten, fourth, seventh, and eleventh grades. It is also required in any grade if the child is coming from another school system.

Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Benadryl (diphenhydramine) are the only over the counter medications that can be given to your child with only a written parental consent. All other over the counter pain relievers, cough medication, etc. must have a doctor's order as well as parental written consent. It is also required that if you bring in any over the counter medication for your child it must be in an unopened package.

Prescription medications require a doctor's written order as well as the parental consent form. Any medication that is going to be given at school must be in the original pharmacy bottle with the proper label.

ALL MEDICATIONS MUST BE BROUGHT IN BY A PARENT OR GUARDIAN AND GIVEN DIRECTLY TO THE NURSE ONLY. DO NOT SEND ANY MEDICATION IN WITH YOUR CHILD.

There are several health screenings done by the nurse throughout the school year that promote health. These screenings include the state mandated vision, hearing, height, weight, and scoliosis (5th grade only). The third grade non-mandated screening is the dental health program. This is coordinated by the nurse and the third grade teachers and is conducted by a local volunteer dentist.

Please be reminded that although good attendance is desirable, an ill child should never be sent to school.

Child Study Team

When a question arises about a student's progress in school, teachers may request that the student be discussed by a team of teachers, whose job it is to help the teacher provide the best environment for that child. The Child Study Team is an integral part of supporting all students, regardless of specific disabilities or services by bringing professionals together to brainstorm, offer suggestions and initiate accommodations to the curriculum or classroom environment. The Team usually consists of the principal, school psychologist, special needs teacher, and one or more classroom teachers.

Special Needs

Students whose needs cannot be met by the regular classroom teacher are entitled to services mandated by the state under Chapter 766. Children who receive these services have been evaluated by staff and have an individualized educational plan (IEP). The Ross School has one special needs resource room staffed by two special needs teachers and a

paraprofessional. Speech and language services are provided by a full time speech therapist. District occupational therapists and physical therapists are also available.

Regular Education Programs

The general curriculum of the Braintree Elementary Schools follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, which includes English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

In addition to those major subjects, art, music, and physical education are taught by specialists. The Ross School has a computer lab and media center/library. Students receive instruction in computer skills, such as keyboarding, word processing, and responsible use of the Internet. Students have weekly lessons with the media specialist and may borrow books from the library.

Parent Volunteer Contract

Your work as a parent volunteer at Donald I. Ross School is greatly appreciated by the students and staff.

Requirements:

- Younger children may not accompany parents to school for liability reasons.
- When in the classroom all disciplinary action is handled by the teacher.
- Please perform tasks asked by the teacher. If you do not understand directions, ask the teacher for clarification.
- When helping in the classroom, feel free to greet your child. However, please work with all children equally.
- When doing clerical work, use the workroom located across from the office.

Responsibilities:

- It is imperative to respect the privacy of the students, parents, teachers, and support staff. Everything that you hear or see must be kept strictly confidential.

As a volunteer at the Donald Ross School, I agree to abide by the above obligations. I also agree never to discuss a student, parent, teacher, or a school problem without the express consent of the party or parties involved.

Signature: _____ Date: _____