



GOOSEHILL
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parent Handbook

2016-17



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Goosehill Primary School

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School Hours

Kindergarten
and First Grades

Buses arrive between 8:20 and 8:30 A.M.

The school day begins at 8:30 A.M.

Kindergarten
First Grades

Buses depart Goosehill at 2:00 P.M.

Buses depart Goosehill at 3:00 P.M.

If you drive your child to school in the morning, please enter the circle at the entrance in front of the main office between **8:15 and 8:25 A.M.** A staff member will greet your child at the door.

The School Day

The school day begins at 8:30. If you drive your child to school and arrive after that time, you must park and walk your child into the building and sign him/her in to school. Please make every effort to have your child arrive to school on time. Children who arrive late to school miss important classroom routines and often feel rushed and confused as they begin their day.

Please pack your child a healthy snack every day. If your child also brings lunch from home, please pack it in a separate bag. Please remind your child that food is not shared or distributed in school. (Birthdays and holidays are celebrated without food.) The only exceptions are two school events: Field Day and the First Grade Moving-Up Ceremony in June. Parents will be notified in advance if food will be offered in school.



Please dress your child for outdoor recess every day. We make every effort to have the children play outdoors. Please label ALL articles of clothing.

Children often like to bring favorite toys/items to school. Please do not send your child to school with electronic devices or other expensive items as there is always the possibility of things being lost or broken. Each teacher has her own policy regarding toys in the classroom. You will learn about her specific guidelines at Back to School Night.

Starting the School Year- Register for the Parent Portal to Receive Important Communication

It is important to register for portal access in early August. Go to the District website (www.csh.k12.ny.us) and use the **For Parents** Drop-Down Menu to go to the Parent Portal page. Scroll down to the link that reads:

How can I apply for access to the portal? You can apply for an account online, or log in using an account you have already created, by clicking this link.

You will also see a link to **Email Sign Up**. Please complete the sign up page and click on the school from which you would like to receive emails. You may also choose to receive emails from the District.

Information about Teacher Assignment/Class Placement

Parents will receive an email from the school district in late August letting them know that class placement has been uploaded to the Parent Portal.

Parents will visit the school district website (www.csh.k12.ny.us) and use the **For Parents** Drop-Down Menu to access the Parent Portal. The information can be accessed from anywhere (on the designated date). Before parents can access the placement information, the district will require that they update contact information online on the Parent Portal. This verification will occur twice a year so we always have the most current information for our students. Once that process is completed, they will be directed to the class placement information.

Your child may receive a welcome letter from his/her teacher. S/he will also receive a name tag, at the **Open House** to wear on the first day of school. If you know ahead of time that you will not be able to attend the Open House, you can feel free to contact the principal and pick up the name tag the week before school starts. Rest assured, your child will be fine even without the name tag! All of our staff members are on hand to help the children in the morning during the first week of school.

GPFA = Goosehill Parent Faculty Association

The GPFA supports our school and our families in many ways. The annual dues support our school programs (assemblies, author visits) and family events, such as Family Fun Nights and School Dances. Monthly meetings are held to keep parents abreast of what is happening in the school and ways they can support their children at home. Please make every effort to attend the meetings and workshops. The GPFA Committees organize and run many events, such as Photo Day and the Welcome Back Picnic. They support Field Day, Moving Up Day, Kindergarten Orientation, Class Parents, and our Lunch-Recess Volunteer Program. They also beautify our school (Bulletin Boards, Garden) and create our yearbook. All of the school supplies your child needs are packaged and delivered to your child's classroom on the first day of school through the School Supply Committee. All parents need to do is place the order online! An annual fundraiser is held to raise money for larger projects. Most recently, the GPFA donated a new basketball court for our school! The GPFA's goals are to help parents be involved and enhance the school experience. We greatly appreciate everyone's efforts on behalf of our students.



Preparing for the First Day of School

We invite all students and their parents to visit the classroom and meet the teacher at our **Goosehill Open House**, which is held a few days before school begins. (Check the District Calendar for dates and times.) They will also have an opportunity to climb aboard a van, in preparation for riding the bus to school. If you purchased your child's school supplies through the GPFA, they will have been delivered to his/her classroom.

Bus Transportation Transportation information is posted on the District Website at the end of August. Goosehill Van Drivers also do a "practice run" during the days before school begins. Many drivers leave a note in your mailbox indicating the approximate pick-up time.

We encourage parents to have their children ride the bus to school. Goosehill uses small vans that hold up to twenty children. Riding the bus promotes independence and supports children's ability to separate from their parents in the morning. Please be at the end of your driveway for morning pick-up about 5-10 minutes early to ensure a calm, unrushed transition. Bus drivers are instructed by the bus company **not to honk** their horns, and **not to wait** for children who are not at the **end of their driveway**.

Safety is our number one priority. Students are taught to behave in a safe and respectful manner while riding on the bus. The bus drivers will report any misconduct to the parents and to the school principal. If your child ever feels uncomfortable on the bus, please don't hesitate to call the principal. We work closely with parents to ensure that all children feel safe and comfortable on the bus. For the safety and comfort of all, bus privileges can be removed for a period of time if a child has difficulty following the rules.

It is important to teach your child how to adjust a **seat belt** so it fits around the waist. If your child has difficulty with this task, please let his/her teacher know. It is very important that children know that they may never be out of their seat while the bus is moving.

Please note that the first few weeks of school usually bring irregular bus/van times. Once the driver has adjusted to the route and the children have adjusted to riding the bus/van, the schedule time becomes consistent.

The children are picked up at their house but must be waiting at the **end of the driveway** with a parent or guardian. At afternoon drop off time a parent or guardian must meet them at the **end of the driveway** once again.

If the child is not met at the stop, the bus driver will return the child to Goosehill Primary School at the end of the route.

Please know that our drivers are instructed not to let a child off with anyone other than the parent or the adult who usually meets the child (e.g. babysitter) **UNLESS** a note has been sent to school that morning naming the alternate adult. (The classroom teacher gives the note to the

driver allowing him/her to release the child to the person you have named in the note.)

***Please remember to add to your online emergency contact information **any adult you would like to have the ability to pick up your child**. In the event that we cannot reach you by phone, we WILL release your child to an adult who is listed as an emergency contact.

Changes in Bus/Van Stops

Each bus/van can only transport the children assigned to that bus number. **For the safety of all children, there are no exceptions.**

Parents may make arrangements for their child to get off at another child's bus stop only if the children are assigned to the same bus/van. The parent must fill out the yellow **Change of Transportation Form** indicating that their child will be getting off at a different stop.

Questions or concerns about bus/van transportation can be directed to: District Transportation Office (Jean Luna, Transportation Coordinator) 631.367.5920

If you know your child will not be riding the bus please call the bus company before 7a.m. (Huntington Coach, LLC) 631.427.0011. The bus company also maintains a Lost and Found.

Preparing for the Start of School

Parents are encouraged to begin to gradually move the **bedtime** hour to an early time over the last two weeks of August. We encourage parents to read books aloud to their children about the start of school, and to engage them in conversation about how exciting it is to start something new. Some children need reassurance about making new friends and learning new things. You may want to visit the school playground over the summer to help your child feel a sense of ownership in his/her school. Please note that it is not important to arrange playdates with other children in the class prior to the start of school. Our teachers are experts at building community and supporting the development of friendships in their classroom. Please let your child know that everyone is friendly at Goosehill and we all help each other!



We recommend that parents engage their children in preparing for the first day of school the night before. Children can be given **clothing options** from which to choose so that dressing in the morning goes smoothly. Children can also be involved in choosing their **snack and lunch** for the next day. (Snack and lunch should be packed in **separate bags**. Make sure your child is able to open containers independently.) We also encourage parents to engage their child in helping to pack his/her backpack. If there is a transportation note, or other note to the teacher, show it to your child. It is also a good idea to review your child's dismissal plan. Children feel more confident and secure when their "world" is organized and predictable.

Dismissal Procedures from School

At the 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. dismissal times, classroom teachers put the children on their appropriate buses. Bus drivers are given the names of students who will not be taking the bus that day.

Buses are given clearance to depart when all the children have boarded. The Main Office keeps daily records of all children who are absent and/or who are not taking bus transportation. These lists are cross checked at dismissal to ensure that each child is on his/her appropriate bus.

Bus drivers have been instructed to pick up and drop off children only at scheduled stops. **A parent, guardian, or family member must be at the end of the driveway to meet the child when the bus arrives at your home.** If the child is not met, bus drivers are instructed to return the child to Goosehill Primary School at the end of the route. If you know you will not make it to the stop on time, please call the school and we will ask the driver to return to your stop after the route is finished. Otherwise, your child will be brought back to the school. (In the event that the principal and teachers are in meetings at that time, your child will be brought to the District Office which is attached to Goosehill. Mrs. Jean Luna, Transportation Director, will supervise your child until you arrive.)

Pick Up for Kindergartners 1:50 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

When picking up by car, please park and enter the building through the **Main Entrance**. Please do not park in the circle or loading area. For safety reasons, we ask that you do not leave your car running. When you enter the building, you will be asked to sign out your child. Adults may be asked for identification, especially if they have not picked the child up before. We do not release any child to an adult without receiving written consent from a parent.

Pick Up for First Graders 2:50 p.m.-3:00 p.m.

When picking up by car, please park and enter the building through the **Cafeteria Entrance**. At 2:50 p.m. you will be asked to sign out your child. Adults may be asked for identification, especially if they have not picked the child up before. We do not release any child to an adult without receiving written consent from a parent.

Change of Transportation

Children are most comfortable when their “world” is structured and predictable. Certainly there are times, however, when you need to change the day’s plans. In that event, please send a note on the **yellow Change of Transportation form** on the morning of the change. Please do not send the note before that day or include multiple days. Please complete the form carefully- provide the name and phone number of the adult you are authorizing to pick your child up at school or meet him/her at the bus stop. We respectfully request that you avoid making last-minute changes by calling the office. While we will certainly honor your request in an

emergency, please know that mid-day changes result in interruptions to the classroom and distress for children.

We respectfully request that parents not request changes to their child's dismissal for play date purposes. Too many changes may result in errors and confusion, as the children are too young to manage their own dismissal plans.

If your child will not ride the bus all year, you may send **one note at the start of school** stating that your child will be a pick up every day.

Any adult who may meet or pick up your child from school should be listed as an emergency contact on the Parent Portal. Please double-check the information you provided (when you verified your emergency contacts in August) to be sure it includes all authorized adults and their current phone numbers. If you add a babysitter, or change your phone number, please be sure to call the Main Office to update your contact information.

Van Riders

Children may not ride any van other than their own. We do, however, accommodate stop changes. Your child may get off at another stop on the route if you send a note to school in the morning. Please indicate the stop and the name of the child/family with whom s/he will be staying. These arrangements require notification to the bus driver, and should only be used when necessary for child care arrangements. Please double-check in the morning that the other child is indeed going to school that day and the plan is still in place. Please note—stop changes are not permitted on half days of school.



Dismissal on Half Days – Noon Dismissal

Kindergarten AND first grade students are dismissed together at 11:50 a.m. on half days of school. If your child is in kindergarten, you should wait at the bus stop approximately two hours before the usual time. If your child is in first grade, you should wait at the bus stop approximately three hours before the usual time. Please understand that vans may run a little late on half days, as the kindergarten and first grade students ride home on the vans together.

Van Riders: On half days, the children do not ride their regular afternoon van routes. Instead, they ride the vans they normally take in the MORNING, which are NOT THE SAME as the afternoon routes. In order to avoid confusion, we do not allow requests that a child get off at any other stop but his/her own. (That stop may not be on his/her morning van route!)

YMCA Aftercare Program

The YMCA offers an after-school program at Goosehill Primary School. Please call 631-421-4242 for more information.



Back to School Night

Back to School Night is held in the first weeks of school to provide parents with as much information as possible. Parents are invited to attend a 15 minute presentation by the principal outlining and reviewing school goals and procedures followed by a 30 minute presentation by their child's classroom teacher. Our parents are very involved and make every effort to attend Back to School Night.

How to Contact Teachers

If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, you can call the Main Office and leave a message for her or send the teacher an email requesting that she call you. The teacher will get back to you within 24 hours. If it is important that you reach the teacher that day, please call and let the school secretary know and she will convey that message to the teacher. Please note that **email should never be used to send information that is time-sensitive**, such as information related to that day's dismissal plan.

If you would like to speak about something related to your child's special area classes (art, music, PE) or support services teacher (Special education, speech, OT, psychologist) please call the Main Office and leave a message for that teacher. If something occurred on the playground or school bus that you would like to discuss, please call the school principal.

Health Office

Our Health Office is manned full-time by a registered nurse. Our school nurse maintains all attendance and tardy records. She attends to the children's health and wellness needs and keeps a record of their visits to her office.

Immunizations and Health Records

New York State Law requires that schools ensure that all children have current physicals and up-to-date immunizations. If your child is missing an immunization, you will be contacted by the school nurse. If your child does not have all immunizations by mid-September, s/he will not be permitted to attend school. Please contact the school nurse and/or principal if you have any questions.

Allergies If your child has allergies, please notify the school nurse. If there are dietary or other restrictions, please call to discuss them with her. We have a **peanut-free table** during the lunch periods where your child can sit with a friends. To ensure that the friend's lunch is peanut-free, we try to encourage tablemates who have purchased the school lunch. If your child wishes to sit at the peanut-free table with a friend who has allergies, please send a note indicating that your child's lunch is peanut-free.

All classes have snack in the classroom. If a child has a serious allergy, the school nurse will send a note home to the parents of the students in the class requesting that they not pack that item in their child's snack.

Medication Any medication required to be administered by the school nurse must be in its original container and delivered in person to the nurse with the school medication form completed by the doctor and parent. Please do not send any medicine to school in your child's backpack. No over-the-counter medicine is allowed in school, including creams, lotions, cough drops, and eye drops. All medication must have the physician's orders and parent permission. You can obtain a form from the Health Office.

If your child has an injury or procedure/surgery, a physician's note must be submitted to the Nurse's Office indicating whether or not s/he is allowed to participate in Physical Education and /or recess. After any period of restriction from activity, another note from the physician is required before the child can return to normal activity.

If your child is injured or feels ill at school

You will receive a phone call from the nurse if there is an injury or illness at school that the nurse feels warrants your attention. You will not be called for every visit to the Health Office.

Please keep your contact phone numbers up to date and always make sure someone can be reached and is able to pick up your child within half an hour. Children will often become upset when no one can be reached.



A change of clothes will be provided by the Health Office in the event of bathroom accidents or spills. Please wash and return the clothes to school the next day. If you wish, you may provide your own set of clothes for your child to be kept in the Health Office. Please label everything with your child's name.

Vision and Hearing Screening

Our school nurse conducts New York State-mandated vision and hearing screenings once a year. If she has a concern, she will contact you. Please note that school screening results are not intended to take the place of your pediatrician's recommendations.

Attendance

Regular attendance is a critical aspect of your child's educational development and successful integration and engagement in school. Under New York State law, parents and guardians are responsible for their children's regular attendance and punctuality.

Excused absences include: personal illness, illness or death in the family, impassable roads, religious observance, required court appearances, and medical appointments.

In many cases, absences from school are unavoidable due to health problems or other circumstances. However, chronic absenteeism can have a drastic impact on your child's education. Missing ten percent of the days in a school year (approximately 18 days) is considered chronic absenteeism. Please consider the following:

- It doesn't matter if absences are excused (due to illness) or unexcused (due to vacation or anything other than illness). They all represent lost time in the classroom and a lost opportunity to learn.
- Attendance matters as early as kindergarten. Studies show children who miss too many days in kindergarten and first grade often have trouble mastering reading by the end of third grade.
- The early years are a great time to start building a habit of good attendance and punctuality. Studies show that poor attendance in primary school can predict absenteeism in later grades.

When to Keep Your Child Home from School Due to Illness

As a parent you have to make decisions about when to keep your child home from school due to a health concern. Sometimes it's an easy decision---your child is obviously sick. Other times, it may not be that simple. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **Fever:** Children should stay home from school if they are running a fever of 100° or greater. They may return to school after 24 hours only if there is no fever without fever-reducing medication.
- **Nausea:** If your child vomits or has diarrhea in the morning before school, s/he should stay home. If s/he has no appetite and/or complains of stomach pain, is clingy, or lethargic, a day to rest and recover is also indicated.
- **Cough/nasal discharge:** If your child's cough or runny nose is producing excessive mucus or discolored discharge, it is important to keep him/her home. Please help him/her practice blowing his/her own nose and covering his/her mouth when coughing. Having the sniffles, mild congestion, or a slight cough, does not necessarily mean a child can't be active and participate in school activities. On the other hand, if s/he's been up coughing all night and needs to be woken up in the morning (if s/he typically wakes up on his/her own), s/he will likely need to stay home to rest and recharge.
- **Head Lice:** Although not considered a health concern, lice are upsetting and require effort, time, and money to treat. You should check your child's scalp on a regular basis, especially if you observe him/her scratching the head. Students are reminded to avoid head-to-head contact at school, which is the primary way lice are spread. We often see an increase in cases following vacations, when playdates and sleepovers are most common. Please be extra vigilant during those times. The following information is important to note:
 - Head lice are not an indication of poor hygiene. They do not cause disease.
 - Head lice are tiny, wingless insects that live close to the human scalp and feed on blood.



-The eggs (nits) are tiny, yellowish or white eggs that attach to the hair shaft. They can look like dandruff but cannot be brushed off. The adult louse is the size of a sesame seed and is tan to grayish-white.

-If you suspect your child has lice, talk to a healthcare provider to discuss the best treatment approach for your family. If your child is treated for lice, there is no reason to keep him/her home from school.

Teachers are vigilant in reminding the children to wash their hands, keep their hands away from their face, and cover their mouths when they cough or sneeze. We also remind children to respect personal space and to avoid head-to-head contact. Please reinforce this at home.

Absences

If your child is absent from school, please call the Goosehill Health Office at (631) 367-5950 **before 10:00 am** on the date of the absence. Please leave a voicemail indicating the date, your child's name and the nature of your child's illness. If your child is absent and the Health Office is not notified before 10:00 am, you will receive an automated call informing you of your child's absence and requesting that you call the Health Office. Please note that you may receive the automated call if your child is late to school, as tardy arrivals require that the system be updated.

New York State Law requires that a note explaining the absence be submitted to the teacher when your child returns to school.

Absences and Homework

If your child is absent due to illness for more than two days, you may call the Main Office to request that some work be provided for your child to complete at home when s/he is feeling better. The teacher and/or an assistant teacher will work with your child upon his/her return to ensure that essential concepts are reviewed.

If your child is absent due to a **vacation**, we are not able to provide school work in advance of that trip. We recommend, in these instances, that families engage their children in daily reading and writing, especially related to the trip (e.g. the location & culture of the area, daily adventures, etc.). Upon your child's return to school, the teacher and/or an assistant teacher will work with him/her to ensure that essential concepts are reviewed.

Lunch & Recess

The lunch/recess period for kindergarten and first grade is 50 minutes long- approximately 25 minutes for lunch and 25 minutes for recess. Students are supervised by Teacher Aides for the entire 50 minutes. Each teacher aide is assigned a class to supervise for the duration of the school year.



Lunch

Students eat their lunch in the cafeteria. They sit at designated tables for their class. Students can either bring lunch from home or can purchase lunch from the cafeteria.

Buying Lunch

Visit <http://www.myschoolbucks.com/> via the CSH website to add money to your child's lunch account. This is the easiest method for students to purchase lunch. Please note that there is a service charge for this method. You can also add money into your child's lunch account by making a check out to the CSH School District Lunch Fund and sending it to school in an envelope in your child's backpack.

Each month a calendar with the lunch choices is available on the school website. Students are asked to decide on their lunch choice in the classroom in the morning. In addition to the main entrée, they may purchase pizza, a bagel, or a grilled cheese sandwich. Teacher aides will assist students in the lunch line as they purchase lunch, drinks, and/or snacks.

If a student requests a second portion of the school lunch, or requests food from the cafeteria after having eaten his/her lunch from home, we provide it for them. The child's account is charged. Because parents can monitor their child's purchases, we do not call home to report these purchases unless it happens very frequently.



Recess

Weather permitting, recess will be held outdoors on the field and playground.

Recess may either precede or follow lunch depending on your child's class schedule. Please be mindful of the weather when dressing your child. Recess will be outdoors whenever possible so coats, hats, gloves, scarves, are necessary. We do not follow a hard and fast rule regarding the temperature at which recess is held outdoors. Rather, we consider the temperature along with the amount of sunshine and the wind chill factor. **Please label all clothing.**

During inclement weather, recess will be held indoors in rooms such as the community room, cafeteria, book nook, and gym. A variety of games, puzzles, and building activities will be available for the children to play with.

Parent Volunteers During Lunch & Recess

Parents are invited to volunteer during their child's lunch/recess period. They must first attend a training with the principal, scheduled by the GPFA, to ensure that they are aware of all procedures. Parents must attend the training each year. (See Appendix for a list of Lunch-Recess Volunteer Guidelines.)



Birthday / Holiday Celebrations

The classroom teacher will contact parents to set up a date/time for parents to visit to celebrate their child's birthday. Parents will be invited to the classroom for about 20 minutes to read a book or provide a simple craft for the class to complete. The specifics of the celebration

may vary slightly from teacher to teacher. **As per our School Food Policy, parents are asked to NOT bring in any kind of food or candy for the birthday celebration.**

At Goosehill, we celebrate a variety of holidays with seasonal activities designed by the classroom teacher and supported by our Class Parents. On Halloween, children are invited to wear their costumes to school. Guidelines are distributed regarding Halloween and costumes. Food is not distributed during these activities.

Toys in School

Children often want to bring toys from home into school. Although not prohibited, the decision is at the discretion of the classroom teacher. If a teacher permits toys in the classroom, children must not trade toys with other students.

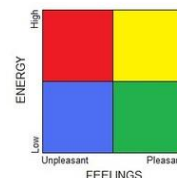
Visitors to Goosehill Primary School

For the safety and security of our school and to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering the school, the main entrance to Goosehill Primary School is equipped with a closed circuit television system and is manned by Security Officer at all times. All entrances to the building, including the main entrance, are locked when students are in the building.

Our Visitor Management System requires that adults present a driver's license so that a visitor's badge can be created and worn during their visit to the school.

Social-Emotional Learning

At Goosehill, we focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) because we know how important it is. Numerous studies demonstrate that students whose schools emphasize social-emotional learning are more successful academically. SEL also improves students' behavior, reduces stress and anxiety, and fosters positive peer interactions. All of these factors help children feel more comfortable and happy in school, making them more "available" for learning.



The goals of our SEL program are to help children acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and regulate their emotions, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Everything we do is rooted in these goals, including the way we help children solve conflicts and how we approach discipline.

Our SEL program is called "The Ruler Approach." RULER is an acronym for the skills we teach our students. We teach them to: Recognize, Understand, Label, Express, and Regulate their emotions using a variety of "tools," including the Mood Meter and Metamoment Strategy.

The first component of the program is the Charter, which provides guidelines for behavior that contribute to the safety and well-being of all of members of our school community. Here is a sample School Charter, created with students' input:

Goosehill Primary School Charter

How do we want to feel in our classrooms, in the lunchroom, on the playground and bus, and in our hallways? *Good, happy, excited, included, safe*

What will we do to make sure we all feel this way? *Keep hands, feet, and body to ourselves, Respect personal space ("Don't pop people's bubbles!"), Include people-invite them to play and sit with you, Share, Use nice words, Talk in a calm voice*

What should we do if someone doesn't live by our charter? (If someone is mean, or hurts us with words or actions...) *Never do it back, Give him/her an "I message," ("I don't like it when you do that. Please stop!"), Walk away, Tell a grown-up*

If someone doesn't learn and breaks the charter again... What should we do? (What are the consequences for "hurtful choices"?) *The teacher/principal will call parents, S/he will lose a privilege, write a sorry note, do something extra nice for the person (make amends)*

The **Mood Meter** is another important component of the program. It is a tool used to help children recognize the emotions they feel. Emotions are represented as colors-red, yellow, blue, and green and are located in quadrants formed by the ranges of feelings (pleasant – unpleasant) and energy levels (high- low) we all feel at different times. Helping children identify what they are feeling in the simplest way (using colors) is the first step toward building self-awareness and the ability to regulate one's emotions.

The self-regulation strategy we teach is called "**Taking a Metamoment.**" A metamoment is a moment in time when instead of reacting with anger or frustration, a person takes a more positive action such as counting to ten, taking a deep ("triangle") breath, thinking a positive thought, walking away from a situation, giving an "I message" and/or asking for help from an adult. We teach the children that by delaying the instinct to lash out in anger or frustration, a person can respond in a way that is helpful to everyone involved. (ie: "make a helpful choice") A metamoment gives your brain time to think so you can "be your best self."

Giving an "I message" is an important strategy to use if a classmate "breaks" the class or school charter. The children know how to give "I messages," and the adults in our school support their efforts to use them. These messages are a form of self-advocacy and a way to use words to express feelings to avoid acting out in anger. An "I message" might sound like this: "I feel sad when you say I can't play." Or "I feel angry when you take my toy." Or "I don't like it when you push me." The children are learning to express themselves in a positive way and also to accept an apology and a promise from a friend who might have made a "hurtful choice." Of course, the children know consequences are part of the process if someone continues making hurtful choices.

Another aspect of our comprehensive SEL program is called **Friendship Club**, which meets in the psychologist's office during lunch or recess. Some of the topics that are explored during Friendship Club include turn-taking, asking a friend to play, navigating conflicts during play, being flexible, sharing, following the rules in a game, and any other issue that may arise during

play. At this age children come to school with various skill levels in terms of play and it is our job to support those developing skills so that all children at Goosehill Primary School feel included and form lasting friendships.

Your child may come home and mention that s/he ate lunch with the school psychologist. It is our goal that all of the students in the school will be able to participate in Friendship Club at some point during the school year. The students will cycle in and out of Friendship Club and most of the groups will run for about three weeks.

Discipline

At Goosehill Primary School, we are mindful of the fact that the Latin root of the word discipline means **“to teach.”** Young children need explicit teaching about emotions—what triggers them and ways to manage them. They are learning the vocabulary of feelings to help them understand and express what they are experiencing in their minds and hearts. Every conflict, disappointment, outburst, or impulsive act is an opportunity to teach a child a skill that will help him/her make better decisions and handle conflict more successfully in the future.

The Dignity Act

The intent of the New York State Dignity Act is to provide all public school students with an environment free from discrimination and harassment, as well as to foster civility in public schools. It also focuses on the prevention of harassment and discriminatory behaviors through the promotion of educational measures meant to positively impact school culture and climate. The Dignity Act requires age-appropriate responses to the discrimination and harassment of students and/or employees on school property, with remedies and procedures focusing on intervention and education. The Dignity Act Coordinators of Goosehill are the principal and school psychologist. Parents can contact either coordinator to report a concern. Our responses are designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the behavior, and protect the target of the act.

Home-School Communication

Our School District Communication system utilizes an ALL-CALL system to notify parents about events, such as the posting of class placement, report cards, and emergency school closings (**snow days**). You will receive a phone call on your home and cell phones. If you wish to also be contacted **by text to your cell phone**, you can subscribe to the system by texting the word **SUBSCRIBE** to **68453** and following Text notification prompts.

Parent-teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the home-school connection. When teachers and parents work together, children benefit in countless ways. During your conference, you can share what you would like the teacher to know about your child. What are his/her interests? What does s/he love about school? How are homework

routines going? What impresses you the most about your child's learning? What concerns do you have?

The teacher will share information about how your child performs in school, how his/her skills and work habits are developing, as well as how your child interacts socially. It is important to remember that all learners develop at different rates and in different ways. Your child's teacher will help you know the areas in which your child is performing comfortably and the areas in which s/he needs some support. She will let you know what she is doing to address your child's needs and what you can do to support your child at home. We may offer AIS (**Academic Intervention Services**) for a period of 4-8 weeks to give your child a "boost" in a particular area such as reading. You will receive notification about AIS and a progress report at the end of the session.

The best way to support your child's growth and confidence as a learner is to celebrate and encourage effort and perseverance. Let your child know how proud you are of how hard s/he works in school to be the very best student s/he can be.

Committee on Special Education – CSE/CPSE

The Committee on Special Education and Committee on Preschool Special Education are teams appointed by the Board of Education, which review evaluations and student progress in order to determine eligibility for special education services. A child is recommended to the CSE if it is determined that s/he has a disability which adversely impacts upon his/her education. The CSE recommends appropriate programs and services to ensure that classified youngsters receive an appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. If you have any questions about your child's needs, please let your child's teacher know. You may contact the principal to discuss programs and services to which your child may be entitled.

The Committee on Preschool Education (CPSE) addresses the special needs of preschool children (ages 3-5). Any child of preschool age who is suspected of having a developmental delay or other disability may be referred to the district's Committee on Preschool Special Education. The office of Special Education and Pupil Services should be contacted to set up a screening in order to identify the need for special services. For further information, contact Denise Campbell, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Services and Human Resources, at 631-367-5936.

Homework

One goal of homework is for students to practice and apply the skills they are learning. Other goals include helping them develop independence, a sense of responsibility, and organizational skills. Our teachers assign homework on some nights, and may also offer a Choice Board. Choice Boards provide a variety of learning and practice activities and tasks from which a child may choose. We believe that children are more engaged with homework when they have some

choice in the process. Choice Boards also enable a teacher to differentiate the homework for children who have varying needs.

There are many ways parents can support their children as they complete homework:

- **Establish a homework routine.** It's a good idea to give your child some control over when homework is to be done---right away, after a snack, right before dinner. (After dinner HW time often is problematic, as children and parents are tired.) *Make sure your child has at least 30 minutes before bed (without electronics) to unwind.
- **Establish a daily homework folder routine-** Have your child unpack the folder, set up HW tasks, choose the tasks s/he will complete (if it is a Choice Board) and an order in which tasks will be completed. Help your child pack all HW up and put the folder back in the backpack immediately.
- **Read and respond to notes from the school.** Remove "checked" homework. Decide what should be saved (such as your child's writing) and what can be discarded (such as practice worksheets).
- **Utilize a family calendar-** Record school events, dates when forms/assignments are due, children's activities, family plans, etc.
- **Have all materials accessible-** Create a drawer or fill a box with the items your child may need: pencils, sharpener, eraser, counters (pennies), ruler, paper, children's dictionary, scissors, glue stick, colored pencils, markers...
- **Read the instructions together-** Talk about what is being asked. Have your child paraphrase the instructions and then clear up any misconceptions.
- **Allow/Encourage** your child to complete the task independently. Watch/support as he gets started/completes one or two problems, and then fade back. Let your child know you are available to help *after* he's tried it on his own.
- **Celebrate effort and independence first.** Help your child feel proud of himself: "You must feel really good about how hard you worked on this." or "You must be proud of how you did this on your own!"
- **Review the work-** Ask questions, show interest. "How did you solve that problem?" "What did you learn from this?" Comment on the positive. ("I like how you...") If quality/neatness is an issue, ask, "What can you do to make this better? If your child resists, let the teacher know you would like quality/neatness reinforced.
- **To correct or Not to Correct?** If you see your child making an error, it is okay to help him correct it. It would be counter-productive for a child to practice doing something incorrectly. However, be careful not to do too much for your child. If he needs a lot of support from you, please send the teacher a note.

Report cards

Report cards can be accessed on the Parent Portal (under the For Parents tab) of the Cold Spring Harbor School District website: www.csh.k12.ny.us after 5:00 p.m. on a designated date in December, March, and June. (see the District calendar)

The Goosehill report card is designed to communicate your child's achievement in relation to the New York State Common Core Learning Standards. Our students are developing foundational skills, learning complex ideas, and developing strategies that will help them achieve at high levels throughout their school experience. Please remember that while a report card provides you with insight into your child's progress *at a moment in time*, it does not define him or her as a student. It is *one* part of our important home-school connection.

Performance levels range from 1-4 and indicate where your child is performing in relation to *benchmarks* set for each marking period. If your child is **meeting expectations** (level **3**), it means that s/he has learned the foundational concepts and skills expected at this point in the school year and can apply them with some level of independence. It is important to note that grade level expectations are quite high, so **a performance level of 3 is a commendable achievement**. Occasionally, a child demonstrates a strong ability to perform in a particular area and applies a skill consistently and independently. His/her performance may actually exceed expectations at points during the school year (level **4**).

If your child **needs support to meet grade level expectations** (level **2**), it means that while s/he is learning and demonstrating many of the skills s/he needs, s/he is not quite able to consistently apply them on his/her own yet. **Most children perform at level 2 in a few areas**, and their teachers target instruction to address those skills in the classroom. A child performing at level 2 *may* or *may not* be receiving Academic Intervention Services (AIS) at this time, but his/her progress is being monitored. Remember, at Goosehill we recognize that learning is part of a developmental process that involves many factors including age, readiness, and experience. All children develop at different rates and at different times. We provide extra support to many, many students whenever we think they need a little "boost." This is not a cause for alarm! Rather, it is part of a very comprehensive approach to meeting children's needs.

If your child is **having difficulty meeting grade level standards** (performance level **1**) s/he is receiving AIS or other kinds of support in addition to classroom instruction. Your child's teachers will have shared their plans for teaching your child the necessary skills so that s/he can make steady progress toward meeting the expectations of the grade level.

Transition to the Next School Year

The ability to deal with change is an important skill for children to develop. Our goal for the transition to the next grade is to provide opportunities that will help our students understand the upcoming changes and feel comfortable asking questions and sharing any concerns they may have. While we address the changes that each group of students will experience, we keep things simple. Children don't need to be overly concerned about the future! We simply want them to feel confident that no matter which school they attend or classroom they are assigned, they will be safe, comfortable, and happy.

While our kindergarten students have the simplest transition, we want them to get to know a little about first grade before they leave school in June for the summer. Each kindergarten class makes a weekly visit to a first grade class for “Buddy Reading.” The first graders give their kindergarten “buddies” a tour of their classroom and then they spend time reading their favorite books and/or their own writing to each other. We believe this experience helps build excitement while easing the transition to first grade for our kindergarten students.

Our first graders visit West Side and Lloyd Harbor Schools in June for the very same reasons. They ride a “big bus” to their new schools where they have a tour and spend time in the second grade classrooms. Our first grade teachers are very skilled at helping the children feel comfortable about moving on to second grade. They answer their questions about each of the schools and assure them that they are ready to “move up.” The teachers acknowledge that the children may be sad that some of their friends will be attending a different school and reassure them that they will continue to have good friends in their new schools. Parents often help their children maintain “across town” friendships through play dates and of course, all of the children will be together again in seventh grade. Parents of current first graders receive an invitation to attend an Orientation Meeting at Lloyd Harbor and West Side Schools in May.

Use of Student Photos/Videos/Names: In various district-associated publications, such as the district calendar, newspapers, newsletters and websites, we occasionally will use photographs or videos of our students and/or identify them by name as part of school news related articles. You may not want to have your children’s name, photo or video appear in these media. If you wish to exercise this option please contact your building principal.

Safety Drills

We conduct safety drills on a regular basis. The children learn what to do in the event of emergencies requiring either evacuation (e.g. fire drill) or a lockdown of the building. During a lockdown drill, teachers instruct the children to be seated in a specified area of the classroom. They explain that Lockdown means we **lock** the door and sit **down** in a safe area in our classrooms. The drill serves as a practice experience for the children so that in the event of an emergency, they will be more readily able to follow their teacher’s directions. Most importantly, it serves as an opportunity for the adults in charge to review and implement our safety protocols. During the course of the school year, we conduct drills as a matter of course and without notification to parents. If you arrive to school and there is a note on the door indicating that a drill is in progress, please don’t be alarmed. The drill will be completed in minutes and you will be able to enter the building. Please be assured that we make every effort to ensure that the children are not concerned or distressed about the drills. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact the principal.

Parent Involvement

Parents are our students’ first and most important teachers. We hope that our communication with you helps you be able to better support your child’s development. Please make every

effort to attend classroom and school events, GPFA meetings, and parent workshop. We also hope you will read the Weekly Notes regularly, where we provide information about school happenings and ways you can support your child's effort and performance in school.

While at home, there are many ways to engage your child in enjoyable learning experiences. Here are a few opportunities for educational adventures that you and your child may enjoy:

Aquariums and Zoos

- Cold Spring Harbor Fish Hatchery and Aquarium**
- Long Island Aquarium
- Bronx Zoo

Museums

- Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum**
- Hecksher Art Museum**
- DNA Learning Lab**
- Vanderbilt Museum**
- Sagamore Hill**
- Garvies Point Museum and Preserve
- Long Island Children's Museum
- Oyster Bay Train Museum and Train Yard (and the Long Island Steamers)
- Old Bethpage Village Restoration
- Fire Island Lighthouse

Nature Centers

- Teddy Roosevelt Nature Center and Preserve**
- Sweetbriar Nature Center
- Tackapausha Nature Center
- Holtsville Ecology Center
- Suffolk County Farm
- Planting Fields Arboretum**
- Bailey's Arboretum (also home to Volunteers for Wildlife)
- Old Westbury Gardens
- Clark Botanic Garden

Hikes

- St. John's Preserve**
- Nature Conservancy, Upland's Farm**
- Sagamore Hill**

State Parks

There are many wonderful state parks on Long Island to explore, including Caleb Smith State Park and Sunken Meadow State Park.

Playgrounds

*There are many wonderful playgrounds to enjoy. Hecksher Park** and Breezy Park**, Eisenhower's "Let All the Children Play Park" is farther away but worth the drive (and walking*

*distance to children's outdoor mini-golf...a summer "goodie.") Some local beaches have nice playgrounds as well, such as Gold Star** and Fleet's Cove***

Biking

Caumsett State Park** is very popular for long bike rides. It is a great family destination featuring a 3 mile loop to an historic Gold Coast mansion with a stunning water view along with a view of a historic stable and horses while on your bike ride. It is also a wonderful destination for long walks and cross country skiing.

Sledding

Coindre Hall is a popular sledding destination.**

Camping

Long Island is home to some wonderful State Park campgrounds, including Wildwood State Park and Hither Hills.

Beaches

The local town beaches are all wonderful as well as the State Park Beaches. Eagle Dock, West Neck beaches. The town of Huntington and Laurel Hollow beaches are enjoyable as well as the state park beaches such as Tobay and Jones Beach.

Garden Centers (these centers have wonderful fall festivals and holiday activities)

Main Street Nursery**

Hicks Nurseries

Additional Activities

Cold Spring Harbor Library** has wonderful children's activities

The Home Depot Tool Club

Oyster Bay Car Show (Every Tuesday evening in the summer)

Fruit and Vegetable Picking

Note...if you find yourself using the state parks, it is worth is to purchase the New York State Empire Passport.

"If you never did, you should, these things are fun and fun is good!" Dr. Seuss



School Events

We are fortunate to have a very involved school community. Our parents attend numerous events during the school year. Please consult the District Calendar and read the Weekly Notes regularly so that you can plan to attend events such as our Halloween Parade, 100th Day Concert (K only), Moving Up Day Celebrations (Gr. 1 only) and Field Day. The GPFA's evening family events can also be found on our calendar. Class parents also organize opportunities for parents to do seasonal projects in the classrooms. Children enjoy seeing their parents at school. Not only is it fun for them, it shows that we are partners in their education.

Parents, teachers, administrators---we work together as a team!



Lunch/Recess Program - Guidelines for Volunteers



Thank you for offering to serve as a lunch/recess volunteer! The lunch/recess volunteer program runs Tuesdays through Fridays from October until the end of May.

The schedule will be made using VolunteerSpot. After attending the training with the principal, you will receive instructions for sign up via email from your grade level coordinator.

You may sign up for two spots per month. If spots remain open, you will be invited to sign up for an additional spot.

If you need to cancel and it's at least a few days ahead of time, please just free up the spot on the sign-up website so someone else can take it.

If you need to cancel a spot at the last minute, there is no need to contact anyone unless you need us to inform your child that you are unable to make it.

We are unable to accommodate last-minute sign-ups. Therefore, the last opportunity to sign up for a spot each week is Sunday night.

You cannot sign up a spouse to volunteer unless s/he has attended an orientation. Please contact the principal if there are special circumstances.

A few points about the program....

Our school aides are "Lunch Teachers." They are responsible for supervision and safety.

When you arrive at school, please sign in at the Security Desk and pick up your name badge.

Please be respectful of teachers' time when dropping off classes to their classrooms.

Please don't attempt to engage the Lunch Teachers in discussion about your child's interactions or any concerns you have about other children. If you have any questions, see Mrs. Herschlein.

It is helpful to encourage the children to finish eating so they have enough play time. Only staff members may attend to the children at the nut-free table.

Children are not permitted to return to their classrooms during the lunch or recess periods for forgotten items unless accompanied by a staff member.

If a child needs to go to the nurse/bathroom, s/he must ask the Lunch Teacher.

Please do not lift children onto the playground equipment.

Following the recess period, please proceed to your car via the field rather walk with the children to their classrooms. Please give your name badge to a lunch teacher at the end of recess. Please do not make a last-minute decision to have your child leave school!

Please.....no siblings. No cameras (except for parents taking yearbook pictures) or cell phones.

Confidentiality: Every child has a right to privacy. If you see or hear something that concerns you, please alert one of the teacher aides or assistants on duty. Our staff members will report your concern to the classroom teacher and/or to me.

Thank you for your cooperation & support. If you have any questions, please contact the principal.