



PARK HILL
ELEMENTARY

Park Hill Elementary

Family Handbook

2025-2026

A Joyful Community for Growth

5050 E. 19th Ave Denver, CO 80207 720-424-4910

This handbook provides important information about Park Hill Elementary. If you have a question that is not addressed in this handbook, please feel free to call or email the school. Most questions can be answered by a member of the office staff, your child's teacher, or the principal. Please read the following pages and become familiar with some of the basic information concerning our school community.

Additional information can also be found on the Park Hill website:

<http://www.parkhillelementary.org>

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PHE Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Racism, and Protected Class Policy Statement

Park Hill Elementary is committed to acknowledging, addressing, and eradicating all forms of discrimination, hate, marginalization, and bias in our school and our community at-large. This includes discrimination against any protected class such as ethnicity, citizenship, sexual-orientation, sex, gender, disability, age, race, color, gender identity, or religion. Any form of discrimination or harassment related to any protected class will not be tolerated.

We Stand Committed:

- To protect all students' ability to thrive in an environment in which they are emotionally and physically safe.
- To affirm our identity as an anti-discrimination and anti-racist school community.
- To implement initiatives, strategies and best-practices that will help dismantle racism and discrimination in our community.

DPS Equity Statement: Racial and Educational Equity is our collective responsibility. We will achieve equity when we dismantle deeply rooted systems of oppression that have historically resulted in inequitable access and distribution of opportunities and resources

for those who represent marginalized identities, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language and ability. We will create conditions where we all belong, are included, have clear purpose (why) and have the autonomy to lead in our respective areas. By creating these conditions, we will eliminate the predictability of success or failure for our students and team members.

Adults on Campus

Your child's safety is our number one concern. With that in mind any non-staff adult on campus needs to sign in at the office and wear a visitor badge. All adults must enter through the main doors, located on 19th Avenue. All exterior doors remain locked at all times.

Arrival & Dismissal:

The school day begins at **8:10 a.m.** for all students. Students' arrival time is between 7:55 a.m. and 8:10 a.m. We are implementing a rolling start for 8:10 a.m. - 8:15 a.m., and your child is not late through 8:15 a.m. Please do not drop your child off alone prior to 7:55 a.m. as there is no supervision outside.

If your child desires breakfast, the cafeteria opens at 7:45 a.m. Students are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrival is an interruption to those already engaged in learning activities and results in a loss of instruction time for the tardy student. Students arriving after 8:15 a.m. must check in to the office before going to class.

- Please note, All outside games (i.e. 4-square, gaga ball) will cease between the times of 8:00 – 8:10 a.m., and 3:10 – 3:20 p.m. This is for the safety of all students and family members.

School is dismissed at **3:10 p.m.** Park Hill staff will remain on duty until 3:20 p.m. All students must be picked up or on a bus by 3:20 p.m. Any students not accounted for after 3:20 p.m. will be brought to the office to remain under supervision until picked up by an approved adult. **Students will NOT be allowed to remain on the playground after 3:20 p.m. if they are not accounted for and supervised by an adult.**

Parent Pick up and Drop off – Please be mindful of traffic and traffic signs

- In the mornings, students may be dropped off on the school-side of Elm and Fairfax streets. We do not want students crossing the streets during drop-off unless with a parent and/or at a crosswalk. **Please use crosswalks at all times.**

- Elm Street is on the West side of the school, and is one-way North. Fairfax Street is on the East side of the school. We will continue with our Kiss and Drop Program on the Elm Street side of the school.
- We ask that parents do not park on Elm and Fairfax during drop-off and pick-up. We intend for these streets to strictly be for a safe drop-off and loading zone. Please park on the side streets and walk using crosswalks and designated areas.
- 19th Avenue is on the North side of the school. The school-side of 19th Avenue is used strictly for bus drop-off and loading.
- Please pay attention to ALL city parking signs. These are enforced by DPD, not by Park Hill.

Things to remember:

- Please use the crosswalks. Jaywalking is illegal and unsafe.
- Loading and unloading only on the side of the streets nearest the school, no parking.
- Pull as far up as possible in the loading zone, please. This makes room for others and keeps our procedure safe because it's orderly.
- Exit this zone as quickly as possible in order to make room for others.
- Go around the block if you need to turn around, please do not make u-turns.

Attendance & Absenteeism

In order for students to receive the full benefit of their Park Hill education, daily attendance is the first and most important step. The school calendar is published and distributed before the commencement of the school year and parents are asked to schedule any travel within the dates that classes are not in session. Please notify the school if your child will be absent or tardy by phoning the school attendance line at **(720)424-4910** or using the **school website**. This should be done each day a child is absent.

Park Hill has an attendance and tardy policy in accordance with the Colorado School Attendance Law and Denver Public Schools' "Denver Plan." These guidelines allow for roughly 10 absences during the course of a school year. Every month the school social worker reviews student attendance and sends letters to parents for those students whose absences are excessive. The definition of "excessive" changes throughout the school year based on the number of school days but parents can expect to receive the first communication after 5 absences or 5 tardies.

If it is necessary to pick up your child early, please come to the **front doors** on 19th Avenue and ring the door buzzer. The office staff will get your child and bring him/her to the front door. Thus, please plan ahead and allow for a 10 minute window of time for this protocol.

This procedure is followed to protect your child and to hold classroom interruptions to a minimum. **Due to the busy nature of a school day, we will not release a student between 2:55 - 3:10 p.m.** A child will not be released to anyone who is not on the student's records or to anyone under 18 years of age, unless the school's office has been notified in writing or by phone by the parent.

Cafeteria

Breakfast and Lunch are free of charge to all students in DPS. **The cafeteria will open at 7:45 a.m. for breakfast.**

Students have the option of bringing their own lunch to school and/or receiving milk and a hot lunch through Denver Public Schools. Please speak with our office staff or our cafeteria manager Mr. Dennis Geck if you have any questions.

Menu: www.dpsk12.org/lunchmenu

Nutritional Information: www.foodservices.dpsk12.org

Cancellation of School

Denver Public Schools will make a decision in the early morning about closing schools or delaying the start of the school day. Listen to the local television and radio stations for the announcement. **Information is also posted on the DPS homepage: www.dpsk12.org.** Park Hill follows the DPS schedule and procedures.

Cellular Phones, Cellular Watches, and Play Equipment

Students **may not use cell phones** between 8:10 am and 3:10 pm. Cell phones should be turned off during the day and kept in lockers or with teachers. If cell phones are used, they will be returned to the student at the end of the day for the first time, and returned only to parents for the second time and each time thereafter. The same goes for **cell watches** that have access to texting and/or the internet, as these can be very distracting in class and to other students.

Students may bring acceptable play equipment from home to be used and shared with other students before 8:10 am, during recess, or after 3:10 pm. Equipment such as baseball bats, baseballs, and other hard objects are **not permitted** during the school day. Any personal equipment must be stored in lockers or classrooms during the day. Please **write the child's name** on any equipment brought from home.

Class Parties

Park Hill does not allow individual birthday parties in the classrooms. These can be disruptive to the learning environment and may impact students with specific allergies. If a teacher wishes to hold a celebration (birthday, academic success, reward, building class culture, etc), this will occur on Friday afternoons starting at 2:30pm, and will be held outside on the playground, not in the classroom. By district policy, food provided to students must be store-bought and approved in advance by the teacher. Also, all food should be reviewed with the School Nurse regarding allergies and specific health needs.

School-wide celebrations will be held for Halloween and Valentine's Day. Parents will receive notification in advance of these celebrations.

Class Placement Process

Park Hill seeks to hire and retain the best teachers in the district. Children will be placed by staff according to individual and class balancing needs. Assigning students to classes is most effectively done by our classroom teachers who have been working with the students daily in an educational setting. Teachers consider the learning styles and academic needs of returning students and assign them to the different classrooms at the next grade level. This process is done with care and the utmost consideration of each child's academic and social/emotional needs. It takes careful consideration of many factors to create equitably balanced classrooms in terms of academic needs, behavior, gender, ethnicity, and number of students. If you have information about your child's needs for an upcoming school year, please share that with your classroom teacher. He or she will take that into consideration with other factors. Requests for specific teachers will not be taken. Class lists are subject to change by the administrative staff.

CSC

The Collaborative School Committee (CSC) is an advisory group that consists of representation from parents, community, faculty, administrators and classified staff. CSC meetings are scheduled, advertised, and open to the public. The meetings are open to parents/guardians and the community. Actions of the committee are communicated with the school via web posted agendas and minutes.

Purpose:

- To enhance student achievement and school climate by engaging the school community in collaborative efforts supporting the school and District's goals.

- To provide strategic direction in support of the school's mission and vision as stated in the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). The UIP, with the school's program design, should serve as the strategic plan for the school.
- Works collaboratively with the school community that includes the building principal, teachers, staff, students, parents, civic and business leaders, service and neighborhood representatives, and other community members
- Establishes relationships with parents, community members, civic, service and neighborhood organizations to increase involvement in the school and provide a forum for community input

We welcome your communication and will strive to provide you with current information on your topics of interest. Thanks for helping the CSC to keep the lines of communication up and running at Park Hill!

Computer/Internet/Technology

All parents and students need to adhere to the Acceptable Use Agreement governing computer use at school. Failure to comply with any or all of this policy may result in a loss of any or all computer use privileges. Park Hill uses laptops, chromebooks, Ipads, and desktop computers.

Conduct – Kindness Matters!

School Creed:

At Park Hill Elementary we are a community of learners.

We listen carefully to what people say and are kind to each other.

We stand up and take charge of our learning behavior.

We honor our diversity by learning from each other.

We are the future and we like what we see!

Above all else, please teach your children Kindness. Park Hill is a respectful and caring place of learning. In order to achieve this purpose, high standards of conduct are expected. These standards are based on mutual respect and responsibility—for oneself, toward classmates, adults and for property. We strive to teach our ROAR values and our Character Traits daily. Learning these standards will enable students to develop self-discipline, self-esteem and problem solving skills. Students must be responsible and accept consequences for their behavior. At the beginning of school, all students will be provided with specific information about behavior expectations and kindness.

When misbehavior occurs, the Denver Public Schools Discipline matrix is followed. For minor infractions we try to focus on identifying the cause of the misbehavior and use restorative approaches which could include apologies, community service, and mentoring. Minor misbehavior may also be addressed through gentle reminders which, if not heeded could result in time out, loss of privileges, and/or community service. Gentle reminders and specific behavior learning opportunities are part of our learning community.

For more serious or repeated misbehaviors, consequences also become more serious, including loss of privilege, behavior contracts, suspension and in rare cases, expulsion. Our discipline policy has been designed to help our students learn self-control and discipline in a constructive way.

Bully behavior has serious and lasting consequences for both the offender and the victim. The following definition comes from Stopbullying.gov:

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have [serious, lasting problems](#). In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- ***An Imbalance of Power:*** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- ***Repetition:*** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.
- ***Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.***

If interested, please reference this document as to the expectations of PHE staff and students: [The Park Hill Way for Culture](#)

Bully behavior will not be tolerated at Park Hill.

If your child is being bullied, please help them report it immediately. It is best to report it when it occurs and to the adult in charge of that setting. However, sometimes the situation requires a different approach to reporting. Regardless of how or to whom, please, please be sure this is reported. This is for the good of all students involved. We will work with your child, the other student, and the other student's parents to remedy the situation. However, student privacy laws stipulate that we may only discuss a student's behavior with his or her parents. As the parent of the victim, information about the other student and any consequences will be limited.

If your child is engaging in bully behavior, we will confidentially address the situation respectfully and with the attitude that all our children are learners. You will be contacted to partner with us in helping your child identify and learn more positive and productive ways of interacting with peers.

It is also important to remind parents that not all behavior infractions are bullying behaviors. As kids navigate life, school, and friendships, sometimes kids do things that aren't nice but aren't necessarily bullying. They simply are still learning, may have acted on impulse, or may be repeating a behavior they saw elsewhere. This is a teachable moment and one where accountability is important. The teachers and administration are here to support such infractions.

Normal Peer Conflict	Bullying
Equal power or friends	Imbalance of power; not friends
Happens occasionally	Repeated negative actions
Accidental	Purposeful
Not serious	Serious with threat of physical or emotional harm
Equal emotional reaction	Strong emotional reaction from victim and little or no emotional reaction from bully
Not seeking power or attention	Seeking power, control or material things
Not trying to get something	No remorse - blames victim
Remorse - will take responsibility	No effort to solve problem
Effort to solve the problem	

Dress Code

Park Hill does not have an official dress code. Students are expected to dress appropriately and in "good taste" for a community-based elementary school. This includes clothing free of vulgar, offensive, and insensitive content. Students also need to be prepared for all types of weather, including hot classrooms in the early and late days of the school year. Please be aware of the following dress expectations:

- Students may not wear shoes with wheels inside the building.
- Students may wish to bring a change of clothes to keep in their lockers.
- Hoodies are allowed to be worn, but hoods are not allowed to be pulled up over the ears/head.
- Hats are not allowed to be worn in the school building, but may be worn outside.
- Please write your child's name inside their extra layers of clothing.

Early Dismissal

It is strongly recommended that all appointments and extracurricular activities be scheduled outside school hours as the loss of class time is detrimental to the student. In the event that the occasional appointment cannot be so scheduled, a note/email should be sent to the school office and teacher requesting early dismissal for that day and giving the time that the parent will pick up the student. Please come to the **front doors** on 19th Avenue and ring the door buzzer. The office staff will get your child and bring him/her to the front door. Thus, please plan ahead and allow for a 10 minute window of time for this protocol. This procedure is followed to protect your child and to hold classroom interruptions to a minimum. **Due to the busy nature of a school day, we will not release a student between 2:55 - 3:10 p.m.** Students are responsible for handing in all work due in the classes they will miss, and for completing any assignments for the following day.

Enrichment

Park Hill offers three sessions of afterschool Enrichment (one per trimester), Monday – Friday, for all students. There is a cost to these programs, and registration is required. More information will be provided within the first 3 weeks of the school year.

Electronics & Toys

Toys from home are distracting to the learning environment here at school. We encourage these items to be left at home during the school day. If you choose to allow your child to bring an electronic device or a toy (i.e. cell phone), please note that the school is not responsible for that item should it be lost or damaged. Inappropriate use of electronic items can result in that student losing the privilege of bringing the item to school.

Fire Drills and Safety Plans

Fire drills and other safety drills are required by law and are an important practice in the event that an actual emergency should occur. Students learn the evacuation path established for each room they occupy. Conduct rules during these safety drills are strictly enforced. All building occupants must move silently and in an orderly fashion to a specified area where they remain until instructed to return to the building. All schools practice at least one fire drill a month and a lockdown and shelter in place each semester. Please refer to the DPS Emergency Response and Crisis Management pamphlet for a complete understanding of the drills.

Homework

Park Hill does not require homework due to best-practice research and equitable practices. Teachers may choose to send home optional work to support curriculum or specific needs (extensions or extra practice). Any work sent home will not be graded (letter grade or completion) or used for punitive reasons. Teachers will communicate to parents the expectations and purpose of any work sent home. Families are encouraged to engage in some form of reading daily (20-30 minutes).

- Daily Reading Recommendations/Expectations:
 - 20-30 minutes per night
 - Students can read independently, or parents/guardians can read to/with students (read aloud, shared reading, audio books, magazines, etc.)

Field Trips & Excursions

Classroom learning takes on a whole new meaning when put in the context of professional performance, firsthand discovery and experiences shared with experts. Field trips are a way of taking the classroom into the community and are therefore regarded as an integral part of the educational experience. These trips also serve to heighten community awareness, involvement, appreciation, and commitment. Students of all ages travel to museums, theaters, farms, historical sites, government buildings, and/or concert halls. Parents are often asked to act as chaperones, especially for outings involving the younger students. Talk to your child's teacher if there is a question or concern.

Lost & Found

There is a Lost and Found area that is located on the 1st floor by the gym. Please put your child's name on coats, mittens, gloves, lunch-boxes and water bottles. All lost items will be bagged and donated at the end of each month.

Parent Involvement

Parents are essential to the success of our school. Parents enrich our school with their ideas, interests, talents, and resources.

Just as we have high expectations for our staff and students, we have the same expectations for parental involvement. One of the most important aspects of involvement is communication between the school and the family. As a parent, it is your responsibility to read and manage communications from the staff and room parents. Periodically, you will receive messages from your room parent letting you know about upcoming classroom events and needed help. We want to make sure you have all the information needed to

participate fully in your child's education and in the Park Hill Community. Look for more information in our Pather Pages emails.

Teachers will share the communication plan for their class and grade level at Back to School Night and through emails.

PTSA

Park Hill is very fortunate to have a vibrant, dedicated PTSA. Please look for information on membership and volunteering at the start of the school year and throughout. PTSA will share communications in the Friday Folder each week.

Recess

Students go outside every day for recess. Please make sure that they are dressed appropriately to be outside for up to 30 minutes at a time. We are all aware of how fast the weather in Colorado can change so students should always have access to a hat, pair of gloves and boots in their backpack. The sun is also very intense in Colorado. We check the temperature/ wind chill and generally will go out if students won't get wet and the temperature is appropriate.

School Nurse

A school nurse is in the building five days a week. In addition, we have a health aide to distribute prescription medicine and attend to immediate needs. If a child becomes ill or injured at school, he/she will receive temporary care and first aid, and the parent will be notified immediately so that the child may be picked up. Please be sure an accurate emergency phone number is on file.

Regarding medication, in accordance with state law, Denver Public School Policy states that medication may be dispensed with health care provider and parent/guardian authorizations at school. The parent must provide the medication in a separate prescription bottle that stays at school. The bottle must have a prescription label clearly stating the student's name, health care provider's name, name of the medication, dosage and time(s) to be taken. Medication requiring three doses a day should be given before school, after school and at bedtime. Medication requiring four doses a day may necessitate giving one dose at school.

ALL medication must be turned into the office and not carried around by students. Please do not send pills or capsules in plastic bags or over-the-counter medications such as cold pills, Tylenol and cough drops. Medications will be stored and locked in the school office

and dispensed by the office staff. The student is responsible for going to the office/clinic to obtain his/her medication.

YMCA Before and After School Care

We are proud to offer the YMCA at Park Hill! Their highly trained staff provide a creative, safe and caring environment for children before and after the regular school day. Please speak to our office staff or the program director for more information.