



# **Friends School of Portland**

*inquiry • reflection • action*

## **Community Handbook**

### **2011-2012**



## Friends School of Portland Important Dates 2011-12

NOTE: Parent Forums are scheduled for the first Tuesday of every month beginning in October. Details will be published in the weekly ebulletins. Board of Director meetings take place on the second Tuesday of the month and are open to all.

August 29-September 2	Professional days
September 1	Meet the Teacher Day 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
September 6	First day of classes
September 22	Parent Night 6 p.m.
September 30	Potluck Dinner & Contradance
October 11-14	Parent-teacher conferences
October 7 & 10	NO CLASSES: professional day & holiday
October 18	Parenting for Peace: Children's literature & social justice
October 23-26	NEASC Accreditation Visiting Committee
November 4	End term 1
November 11	Veterans Day NO CLASSES
November 23-25	Thanksgiving break
December 19-30	Winter break
January 2	Classes resume
January 16	Martin Luther King, Jr Day NO CLASSES
January 20	End term 2
February 3	Potluck Dinner & Musical Performances
February 6-10	Parent-teacher conferences
February 20-24	February break
March 9	NO CLASSES: admissions decision day
March 16	Potluck Desserts & 7-8th Grade Play
March 30	End term 3
March 31	Auction & Brunch (tentative)
April 16-20	April break
May 2	Parenting for Peace: Michael Thompson
May 14-16	Parent-teacher conferences by request
May 25	Grandfriends Day (Grandparents & others)
May 28	Memorial Day NO CLASSES
June 8	Last Day of Classes, Farewell Assembly & Commencement

### School Day Schedule

Monday – Thursday 8:15 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Friday 8:15 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.

All children may arrive as early as 7:55 a.m.

The Preschool – K program begins at 8:45 a.m. & the morning only session ends at noon

Meeting for Worship – Monday or the first day of the school week at 8:25 a.m. Assembly – Friday 1 p.m.

# Mission Statement

*The Friends School of Portland challenges and empowers students to develop their intellectual, physical, emotional, creative and spiritual potential. We honor our students' natural gifts as they learn to enter the world with confidence, competence, joy and a sense of purpose. We are guided by the Quaker values of simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, stewardship, and truth.*

## Table of contents

Our Values-----	1
Governance-----	1
Academics-----	1
Community Life-----	6
Parent-School Partnership-----	8
Arrival, Departures, Absences, and Aftercare-----	9
Safety & Security-----	11
Re-enrollment-----	12
Index-----	14

## Contact Information

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## Faculty and Staff

Karen Andrews	Assistant Infant/Toddler Program
Aliscia Babcock	Assistant Infant/Toddler Program
Nicole Borrasso	Classroom Teacher Grades 3-4
Lee Chisholm	Math Teacher Grades 5-8 & Science & Social Studies Teacher Grades 7-8
Christina Chute	Music Teacher
Ellen Couture	Director Infant/Toddler Program
Jessica Eller	Office Manager & Admissions Coordinator
Jonathan Ewell	Aftercare & Assembly Coordinator, Part-time Kindergarten Teacher
James Grumbach	Head of School
Celeste Henriquez	Art Teacher
Jamien Jacobs	Science Teacher Grades 5-6
Billy Maley	Physical Education Teacher & Assistant Teacher Grades 1-2
John Marble	Director of Business & Development
Jennifer McNally	Marketing Coordinator
Carmen Menjivar	Spanish Teacher
Elaine Nadzo	Learning Specialist
Pete Nowak	Language Arts, Social Studies, & Math Teacher Grades 5-6
Jonathan Rhoads	Assistant Preschool Teacher
Corie Scribner	Kindergarten Teacher
Katie Spirer	Classroom Teacher Grades 1-2
Oren Stevens	Director of Summer Programs
Lea Sutton	Preschool Teacher
Mary Tracy	Director of Studies & Language Arts Teacher Grades 5-8

## Our Values

**SIMPLICITY:** Uncomplicated routines, uncluttered use of space and careful use of resources help us stay focused on the unfolding development of each person in our school. The Quaker witness of simplicity reminds us to live wisely, finding the time and space in an increasingly materialistic world to appreciate the Spirit.

**PEACE:** We learn to resolve conflict through respectful conversation and peaceful negotiation, we practice sharing community time and space creatively, and we study the peaceful leaders and movements of the world.

**INTEGRITY:** We seek and enjoy that of God in each person. This is our clear focus. We provide children with challenge, a low student-teacher ratio, high expectations for learning and behavior, and clear and open communication. We use resources carefully and we study and learn to care for the world.

**COMMUNITY:** We create a close and accepting atmosphere as an essential condition for growth and learning. Warm welcomes, daily class meetings, group singing, handling challenges side by side, and celebrating success contribute to a strong sense of community. We also carry out service projects and field trips in the wider Portland community.

**EQUALITY:** We seek diversity in students and staff, and we learn to truly listen to each person. This means nurturing a dynamic balance between the individual and the group.

**STEWARDSHIP:** We use resources carefully and we learn to care for the world. We study the ecosystems of Mackworth Island in order to understand the interconnectedness of all living organisms. We cultivate a community garden and encourage sustainable practices.

**TRUTH:** Quakers believe in the continual revelation of truth, and believe that truth is available to each of us. In the classroom, truth is reflected in an open-minded approach to curriculum and teaching, and in an emphasis on critical thinking skills. We guide children to practice scientific investigation and to express themselves creatively and effectively in conversation, writing, and the arts. We use silence and reflection as ways to deepen understanding and extend the search for truth.

## Governance

Friends School of Portland (FSP) is independent, non-profit, tax-exempt and is governed by a board of directors with a wide range of business, legal and educational experience. At least fifty percent (50%) of the Board members are active attenders or members of a Quaker meeting. Board meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday of the month and are open to the public. Please contact the office for more information if you are interested in attending.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

The Friends School of Portland is a community of learners who are guided by the Quaker belief that there is that of God in all persons and who are strengthened by the rich diversity of the world. To prepare our students for life and leadership in a complex and diverse world, we welcome students, families, faculty, staff, and directors with differences based upon (but not limited to) race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, family structure and economic background.

The School does not discriminate on the basis of religion, race, color, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, employment, financial aid programs, and other school-administered programs, except special consideration may be given to members of The Religious Society of Friends with respect to admissions, financial aid, and hiring of faculty and staff. In our classrooms, every child will be treated equally regardless of religious affiliation.

## Academics

### Multi-Age Classes

In a multi-age classroom, a large topic is often presented on several levels. With this approach, students can all engage in every activity at a level that is appropriate for their development. FSP believes that multi-age groupings are important for many reasons. Students at various times benefit both from being the older leader and the younger learner. Since each child's development proceeds at an uneven pace, being in multi-age groups offers a child the chance to be themselves amongst wider range of peers, some of whom will be at a similar stage of development. Students and teachers also build a multi-year relationship which means that teachers can track a child's development and growth more accurately and thoroughly. Multi-age classrooms require teachers to approach each child from a developmental perspective, focusing on each child's next steps.

## **Placement**

During the school year, at the request of parents or the school, a child's placement in a particular class may be reviewed. If the school determines that the change is in the best interests of the child and the school in general, the child's scheduled class may be modified.

## **Learning Styles**

The faculty at FSP recognizes that students learn in different ways at different times. Teachers seek to understand each student's learning style and make an effort to present material in a variety of ways to tap into the strengths of all learners. In its admission process, FSP attempts to determine that it can meet the educational and emotional needs of each student. In order to make necessary judgments concerning special needs, faculty and students are best served when parents share whatever assessment information they possess at the time of admission and parents are, therefore, expected to share the results of assessments prior to and after enrollment.

## **Educational Consultants**

In the event the FSP teachers observe behaviors that are indicative of a developmental delay, a learning difference, or a behavioral or emotional problem, we may recommend or require a diagnostic evaluation. The Falmouth School District provides some educational evaluation and funds for supporting services and we can help families find independent evaluators if preferred. In order to remain enrolled at FSP, the results of this evaluation must be shared with the school so that we may ascertain how to best meet the student's needs. As with all student records, assessment reports will be kept confidential.

In consultation with the classroom teacher, educational specialists or consultants engaged by parents may come to school to work with a student. Such arrangements are coordinated by the Director of Studies in consultation with the Head of School and Learning Specialist. Students may also be assessed by the school's Learning Specialist. At times, the school may require a meeting with parents, teacher, all specialists, and consultants to review the progress of the student and to determine the best learning program for the student. The intent of such a meeting is to provide a unified plan and a team approach to supporting the student. Parents who agree to have specialists or consultants working within the school are also agreeing to have confidential information shared amongst the professional team working with the student.

## **Procedures to Address Concerns**

The following are policies and practices for addressing concerns about a student which question the suitability of FSP for that student, or for responding to behavior that interferes with the learning atmosphere, endangers the child or another, or is incompatible with community values. We have found that early intervention and working in partnership with parents help to find effective strategies for addressing the concerns. Occasionally it happens that over the course of a year, we may find that a child's needs are beyond the resources that the school can provide.

### **Learning or Developmental (Academic) Concerns**

When a developmental or learning issue is suspected, the teacher will:

- Confer with the Director of Studies or Head of School. An observation may follow.
- Notify parents. If there is written communication by e-mail or letter, the Director of Studies and Head of School will be copied. A copy will be placed in the student's file.

A meeting for support, convened by the Director of Studies or Head of School, consisting of teacher(s) and parents, may be convened by the Director of Studies or Head of School to:

- Seek clarity about the expected behaviors or outcomes for the student
- Explore supportive and/or remedial steps
- Provide written summary of the meeting
- Determine a timetable for reviewing progress

### **Behavioral Concerns**

Teachers may address behavioral concerns in several ways.

- Utilize the "Peace Place" for negotiation between students and/or for quiet reflection.
- Ask for another adult to observe the student in class.
- Send the student to the school office, especially when there has been a pattern of disruptive behavior or if the behavioral event is significant. A student reflection form will be used, if appropriate to the situation and child's age. The student may meet with the Head of School.
- Notify parents of significant or repetitive behavior. If there is written communication by e-mail or letter, the Director of Studies and Head of School will be copied. A copy will be placed in the student's file.

The following additional steps may be taken at a teacher's request, in consultation with the Director of Studies or Head of School, if a more extensive response from the school is necessary:

- To decide the appropriate response, the school will convene an Advisory Group that will include the classroom teacher, an administrator (Head of School or Director of Studies), at least one additional adult from the FSP staff, and possibly the student(s) involved. Parents may be invited to attend at the school's discretion.
- Based on the circumstances, the school will seek restorative solutions that benefit the student and the community.
- There may be occasions when a separation from school is required. The Advisory Group will determine the length of separation and the requirements necessary to return to school.

### **Continuation at School**

If continuation at the school is in question for behavioral and/or academic reasons:

- The student's status will be presented by the classroom teacher to the entire faculty and administrators.
- That group will reach unity on whether or not to allow the student to continue at the school.
- The decision will be communicated to the parents by the Head of School. In some cases, the school may counsel parents to seek another learning environment for the child and will be as helpful as we can in assisting the family in locating the proper setting.
- Parents may appeal decisions in writing to the Head of School. The Head will reconvene the group or make a final decision.

### **Homework**

Older children will likely have more homework than younger children. Homework may serve several purposes when assigned judiciously. First, it can provide extra practice in key skills. Second, it can help children develop study habits and independence. Third, it can help parents stay aware of their children's learning. However, research and our experience suggest that excessive amounts of homework are not effective at these ages.

All of our teachers do send one important message about homework: the best academic gift you can share with your child is reading together each day. Our teachers are happy to recommend or share books that your child may like.

Additional purposes of homework:

- For students to prepare for the next day's school work (i.e. interview a family member, collect materials for a project, write a rough draft, read an article that will be discussed)
- For older students to develop their own perspective on new material (i.e. write a reflection on science observations, list their questions about a new topic)

Amount of time, unless you and your child's teacher arrange otherwise:

1 <sup>st</sup> -2 <sup>nd</sup> gr.	15-20 minutes once or twice a week
3 <sup>rd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> gr.	20-30 minutes two or three times a week
5 <sup>th</sup> -6 <sup>th</sup> gr.	Up to 60 minutes total, nightly, Monday-Thursday
7 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> gr.	Up to 60-90 minutes total, nightly Monday-Thursday

Long-term projects will be assigned enough in advance that students can work on them on school nights. However, some students may choose to work on weekends. Occasionally a short assignment may be given to older students over a weekend.

Responsibilities:

Teachers –

- to introduce the assignment thoroughly and clearly
- to send home clear directions for work that can be done with basic supplies and resources
- to check that homework is handed in on time and let parents know if it is not
- to regularly check with parents about how things are going

Students –

- to make sure you fully understand the assignment before you leave school
- to keep an organized assignment sheet or notebook
- to bring home all the needed materials
- to ask a classmate for clarification if needed
- to get down to work without your parents reminding or refocusing you
- to try your best to do it all and do a good job
- to hand it in on time and bring back to school books or materials you will need
- to check with your teacher about assignments if you have been absent

Parents –

- to create a consistent time and a quiet work place for your child that is supplied with paper, pencils, and a dictionary for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up.
- to help your child with time management strategies

- to allow your children to work independently and be self-reliant, even if it means less than perfect work (See next page for suggestions and examples.)
- to communicate with teachers right away if an assignment is frustrating, unclear, or took substantially longer than the time allotted.

## **How to Help Your Child Do Homework**

### **Create a routine of uninterrupted time and a quiet place**

- The routine aspect is important – the same time, same place, and same conditions means that your child doesn't have to spend time and energy figuring out when, where, and how to get started.
- Be nearby, but not necessarily in the same room. If you hover and check frequently you may inadvertently give the message that you don't think your child is capable of doing this on his or her own. Being nearby allows you to hear what's happening and casually stroll in once in a while. Sometimes being occupied with your own activity in the same room works. You are not focused on your child, but you are available to answer a question or gently nudge.
- Help other family members be busy somewhere else or quietly engaged in their own activities.

### **Assist minimally in getting started**

- At the start of the school year, you may need to teach your child the routine, but you should gradually back out of that role.
- Help your child talk through how to plan his or her time. For younger children who might be asked to read for 20 minutes, talk about what they will do and where. For older children who might have two or three assignments, listen to them consider what makes sense to do first, second, and third, and why. Gently support their ideas or offer an idea, but leave it up to them to decide. Your child might want to set a timer to allot time for all assignments.
- If your child is blocked, ask them to explain the assignment to you. Clarify what you can. Composition assignments sometimes need a 5-minute "rehearsal" time of generating ideas aloud and talking over or jotting down what to write first, second, etc.
- Have your child call one or two classmates if things are unclear. If things remain unclear, **CALL YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER AT HOME**. We would rather clear up confusion in the evening than have a child feel stress all evening or arrive at school the next day without the work at least attempted.

### **Provide small doses of help when asked**

- Be a memorization partner with flash cards or spelling words.
- Except for spelling tests and final drafts of written work, teachers are first interested in the ideas being expressed in a writing assignment. A child who is frequently asking for help with spelling will lose the whole point of what he or she is writing. Better to get the ideas down, then go back over for readability. For infrequent requests for spelling, help your child sound out a word when writing or use a dictionary if old enough.
- When asked by your child or the teacher, help him or her assess whether an assignment is done "well enough." Have him read to you the criteria one by one and then ask how well he thinks he has done on each and what evidence he has. If you strongly disagree, start by telling what is well done, then ask more questions or offer what you think the teacher will say with one or two parts that seem poorly done.
- The main idea is for children to internalize a sense of quality work and the confidence that comes with knowing that they can tell for themselves when they have done a good job. If we adults do their work for them or are always telling them what we think about their work, they rely on us for approval instead of developing their own standards.

**Contact the teacher early if you have any concerns. We don't know what happens at home and most children don't tell us when something was too hard or took too long - they don't want to look bad to us or their peers. We need your feedback.**

## **Assessments**

Assessment is a dynamic process. Effective teachers never stop observing children and adjusting what they do to meet the needs and opportunities the children offer at any point in time. Assessment also happens at planned intervals using a variety of strategies – conversations, quizzes, samples of student work, oral presentations, projects – scored with rubrics that show benchmarks of skill development. Student work in grades 1-8 will come home regularly with key samples selected to stay in a year-long portfolio of learning.

Parents will receive a written report from teachers at the end of each of term. Should you have concerns about your child's progress, please call your child's teacher or the school to arrange an appointment.

## Student records

FSP keeps an individual file for each student, including a permanent record card and copies of all school reports and correspondence. In compliance with the Family Education Rights to Privacy Act, any parent of a student in good standing may, in writing, request to see that student's records at a mutually convenient time and place. Records will be reviewed in the presence of a FSP staff person.

FSP will not send any records of any student to a third party, agency, or school without written permission from the parent of that student. FSP will not send reports or records unless all financial obligations have been met.

## Textbooks

For many subjects, FSP provides textbooks for students. Tuition also covers skill workbooks and supplies that become the property of the students. Students are responsible for keeping track of personal supplies and textbooks and maintaining them in good condition. We will require students to replace, at their expense, school-issued equipment, supplies, and textbooks that have been lost or destroyed through mishandling.

## Computers

FSP provides computer access to its students and staff for the pursuit of educational goals of the community. The school believes the educational benefits of computer use and Internet access outweigh the potential risks. Acceptable use of FSP computer resources includes any activity that is consistent with the school's educational mission. Any activity that is illegal, malicious, or violates the privacy of others is unacceptable. Any material promoting violence, pornography, or discrimination is inappropriate. In addition, members of the school community are expected to exercise care in treating equipment and using resources. Despite the school's precautions, the possibility remains that students may encounter inappropriate or hurtful material. Such cases will be addressed as they arise.

## Guidelines for Use of Electronic Technology (Written with input from the 7-8 class of 2008-09)

The purpose of the following is to provide guidance to students, faculty and staff for using electronic technology for legitimate and authorized academic use and for enhancing friendly communication within our school community. Though not strictly prohibited, there is no need to bring cell phones, iPods, or gaming devices to school. Urgent phone calls may be made from the school office, and the office will deliver phone messages to students. Other devices, such as iPods and electronic games, are generally distractions unless a teacher has a specific use for them in a class or Aftercare. Cell phones should not be used during the class day (8:15-3:00).

### Technology covered includes:

- Computers & Networks
- Email
- Posting to Blogs/MySpace/Facebook
- iPods/mp3 Players/Discman/etc
- Digital Cameras
- Cell phones
- Gaming devices

### Appropriate uses:

- Research
- Publication
- Word processing
- Sharing Projects
- E-mail
- Other uses only with teacher permission

### Rights & Privileges

- Equal access – All members of the School Community are granted free and equal access to the electronic technology under the guidance of individual classroom teachers.
- Privacy – Users may expect privacy in their use of electronic technology; however, if a violation of community guidelines is suspected, an administrator may need to inspect private files.
- Safety - To the greatest extent possible, users will be protected from harassment or unwanted contact. Users are instructed not to give out their home address, phone number, or password. However, making the Internet available to students carries with it the potential that users may encounter information that some have identified as controversial and of potential harm. Because information on the Internet appears, disappears, and changes, creating a "safe environment" is impossible, and implying that it is being done is a disservice to community members and parents, though there is a robust content filter provided by the MECDHH access to the Internet. The school's focus is on providing the understanding and skills needed to use electronic technology in ways appropriate to students' educational and recreational needs rather than on controlling the environment.
- Intellectual Freedom (freedom of opinion & expression) – Students are encouraged to express their own opinions within the guidelines listed below.

**Risks/Dangers of use:**

- Spreading gossip, hurting feelings
- Distractions from academic work
- ID theft, Cyber-Stalker, loss of privacy
- Loss of valuable personal property
- Spam, pop-ups, viruses, inappropriate sites
- Sending unintentional email to a group instead of an individual or sending a thoughtless response

**Do & Don't Statements:**

- Do use appropriate language : Don't write mean or hurtful statements
- Do identify yourself when communicating with members of the community : Don't be anonymous
- Do guard your privacy : Don't share personal information such as address, user name or password
- Do respect others' privacy : Don't read another's computer documents without permission
- Do use the internet for approved research : Don't visit inappropriate sites
- Do cite the information that you download or copy : Don't plagiarize
- Do respect equipment, keep it clean : Don't have food or drink near the computers
- Do respect the settings : Don't change the settings
- Do respect the software : Don't download software without permission or use pirated software

**Reminders:**

- Nothing is 100% private; anything on the internet can be viewed by others
- Use a password that cannot easily be guessed by others, do not share it with anyone, and remember it!
  - Include numbers and/or capital letters
  - Make it at least 6 characters long; 10 characters is probably too many for convenience & memory
- Read your email and who it will go to *before* sending it
- **FOLLOW THESE RULES** to avoid losing the privilege of using a school laptop or other electronic devices

**Service Learning**

The faculty will coordinate service learning projects between classes and within the whole school, generate ideas, make decisions about what projects are adopted by the school, create criteria by which these decisions are made, and collect ideas generated by other teachers, parents, staff and community members for classroom and future use.

For a project to be considered for adoption by the whole school, it must support one or more of the following:

- The FSP mission and Quaker values
- Class curriculum and student learning
- Connections with the FSP community
- Local community needs
- Exchange of learning and cultural awareness

Priority will be given to projects that encompass several of these criteria.

The project must be achievable with available staff/faculty/volunteer time and energy.

Classes may select their own individual projects and teachers will be asked to report on their activities.

**Community Life****Meeting for Worship**

In the tradition of Friends, students, faculty, and visitors engage in a period of silent worship called Meeting for Worship every Monday morning at 8:25 a.m. (or on the first school day of any week). Please feel free to join us. This gathering is simply a time to sit quietly and reflect upon yourself, your friends and family, and the world around you. Someone may set the tone for Meeting by reading a story or poem or by asking a question. In the tradition of Friends General Conference, Friends School of Portland does not seek to proselytize or convert others to follow the Quaker faith. It is our goal to encourage each student to seek the Inner Light however that may manifest. In the context of silent worship and a focus on universally held religious values, students with a wide variety of religious backgrounds will feel honored and respected at FSP.

For those parents who wish to know more about the Quaker underpinnings of our school, pamphlets and other reading materials are available on the bookcase in the office. Quaker Meeting for Worship is held 10:30 every Sunday at the Portland Friends Meeting at 1837 Forest Avenue, Portland. A library is also located in the Meeting House. When there is sufficient interest, the school will schedule a midweek, adults-only Meeting for Worship and discussion at the school which will include members of the Portland Friends Meeting Resource Committee.

## **Mackworth Island**

We are blessed with a unique location resplendent with natural gifts. It is important to remember that we are guests of the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and should be respectful of the long history that Deaf culture has established on this island. We also need to be mindful of the rules established by the Department of Conservation. In particular, dogs must always be on a leash, and are permitted only on the trail, not in or near school buildings.

## **Celebrations**

Our students represent a wide spectrum of religious and cultural backgrounds and we are interested in helping children understand, appreciate, and respect diverse cultures and the national and religious heritage of others. For this reason, we encourage families to come forward and share with the rest of the community their specific family rituals and holidays. In addition, we plan to celebrate holidays and traditions from around the world. As a school, we will also establish our own traditions as they relate to various holidays.

Each class will establish guidelines about celebrating birthdays at school. Students and parents should be sensitive to exclusion/inclusion issues when planning birthday parties outside of school. Invitations should be extended by phone or mail, not at school, unless all students in the class are invited.

## **Food**

Each family is responsible for providing a morning snack and lunch daily for their child. All food should be simple and nutritious and should not require refrigeration or re-heating as such services are not available for students. For safety, all food should be packed in unbreakable containers. Candy and soft drinks are discouraged.

## **Playground Guidelines**

- Children are expected to treat others safely, kindly and respectfully at all times. That includes finding ways to welcome others in their play.
- Children do not climb the staircases to the buildings or climb up the slides.
- They may play under B Building, on the climbing structures and swings.
- Children do not wrestle with each other, pull on other people or their clothing, jump on or otherwise run into someone on purpose. Piggyback is okay as long as both parties agree.
- Children may throw pine cones or snowballs at trees if no one is in the way. They may not throw them at people.
- Children follow the directions of any adult without argument or stalling.
- Children who bring toys or equipment outside are to bring them back inside.
- Generally, we do not eat snacks on the playground.
- Consequences for unsafe or unkind behavior range from spending a few minutes out of play beside a teacher to going inside to seeing the Head of School and calling parents, depending on the severity. Deliberate unsafe behavior or violence is serious and should be shared with the homeroom teacher and Head of School.
- Friendly, creative play behavior deserves praise!

## **Bullying**

FSP is opposed to bullying behavior, including, but not limited to harassment based on race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. A student who is the target of bullying or harassment, or who witnesses such behavior, should tell the perpetrator to stop. If the behavior persists, the student should seek assistance from a trusted teacher or administrator. A student who is bullying or harassing others will be subject to a school response as outlined in Behavior Concerns on p. 2 above.

### **What is bullying?**

- Bullying is an intentional and unprovoked act. The child who bullies wants to harm the victim; it is no accident.
- Bullying involves repeated occurrences. Bullying is not generally considered a random act or a single incident. Rather, a child is repeatedly picked on by another child or is the target of harassment from a whole group of children. It is the repeated nature of bullying that causes anxiety and apprehension in victims, such that the anticipation of bullying becomes as problematic as the bullying itself.
- Bullying is a form of *violence*. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying may be *physical* (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), *verbal* (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or *emotional* (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, extorting, or intimidating).
- Bullying can occur face-to-face or indirectly, including electronic acts. An "electronic act" is defined as transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means

of an electronic device, including but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager.

Sources: <http://www.education.com/special-edition/bullying/schoolbullying/>, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/se/bullyfaq.asp> & National School Safety Center

## Recycling

FSP recycles papers, cardboard, glass, and plastics by collecting them in a mid-hall container. They are later deposited in an EcoMaine container in Falmouth. We are eager to create an environmental education program that teaches about the interconnectedness of all things and people. Each family can help by packing lunches and snacks in reusable bags or boxes.

## Clubs and Community Resources

FSP encourages after school clubs and sports that fulfill student interests. If you are willing to sponsor a club or coach a sport, please talk to the Head of School. Because FSP is small, we are unable to offer certain programs available at larger schools, including large-scale athletics, drama, or instrumental programs. For those students who wish to participate in such activities, we recommend that parents consider the many excellent programs that are available for children in their community. Activities have included Music Ensemble and Outing Club all year, plus:

### Fall

XC running interscholastic team  
Developmental soccer  
Frisbee golf  
Floor Hockey

### Winter

Developmental basketball  
Drama Club  
XC ski club  
Aikido

### Spring

Diamond sports  
Ultimate Frisbee  
Bocce  
Cricket

## Parent-School Partnership

We hope that parents feel welcome at the school and encouraged to discuss their child's experiences at FSP. Inevitably, questions or concerns will arise about their child's academic experience or a school policy. The faculty and administration want and need to know your thoughts. From time to time, there will also be situations in which parents disagree with a teachers' or an administrator's actions. In the spirit of our Quaker roots, we encourage any person who is having a difficulty to address the difference directly with the other person. It is our expectation that such a discussion would take place at a mutually agreed-upon time and that the parties involved in the discussion would be respectful of each other's opinions, point of view, and feelings. Additional resources are available to the school community to resolve differences. Please contact the school office for more information.

## Parent Opportunities

In 2011-2012 Friends School parents will have the opportunity to participate in the life of the school and their children's classrooms in a variety of ways.

A **Steering Committee** of parents will provide overarching support for the development of Community Forums and the organization of Point Parents. The Steering Committee will also help organize parents for school wide community building events, fundraising projects to support the school, and to provide a communication link between the FSP administration and parents. Kim Simmons and Helen Muther have volunteered to co-clerk the Steering Committee for the 2011-2012 academic year.

Friends School **Community Forums** will provide monthly gatherings around topics related to education and child development as they pertain to our school community. Slated for fall are discussions about parent-teacher communication, the role of the arts in our children's lives, and parenting in a digital age. Forums will be organized by a sub-committee and may include age-specific break out groups, guest speakers, or other modes for promoting discussion. Quaker values will inform the organization and facilitation of these programs.

Each classroom will have a designated "**point parent**" to help facilitate social gatherings among families, to help coordinate volunteer opportunities within the classroom, and to strengthen teacher-parent communication. Point parents will help promote a strong sense of classroom community and will help foster effective communication between and among parents, teachers and FSP administration.

To participate on the Steering Committee, the Community Forum planning sub-committee, or as a point parent, please contact Kim at [kcs@maine.rr.com](mailto:kcs@maine.rr.com)

## Supervision of Children at FSP Community Events

When parents are at the school, either for drop off or pick up, or at a community function, parents should always assume the responsibility for their children, being mindful of the school's usual expectations for behavior: be safe, respectful, friendly and ready to learn. It is important to allow teachers to have time to interact with others at community events without the responsibility of monitoring all of the children. Of course, all adults, including teachers, will step in, as necessary, when a child's behavior is inappropriate.

In general, behaving appropriately means that we do the following:

- **Walk inside, do not run.**
- **Use furniture and equipment respectfully.**
- **Use inside voices.**

These specific guidelines also apply at those times:

- Parents need to know where their children are at all times. Children who go outside need to be accompanied by parents/guardians.
- When Carter Hall is used for an event, children should stay in Carter Hall, the lobby or the main hallway as far as the handicapped bathroom.
- The stage, enclosed corridor leading to GBSD and classrooms are off-limits.
- On some occasions, such as movie night, classrooms are used. Permission for classroom use must be arranged ahead of time with the teacher and at least two adults need to be in the room with the children.
- When the GBSD cafeteria is used, children need to stay in that room or another designated room. The kitchen, stairs, and railing next to the stairs are off limits.
- Children who do not follow guidelines will be taken to their parents by any adult who is concerned that safety and/or friendliness are in jeopardy.

We all look forward to enjoying our time together at these special events. It does take a village!

## Parent Volunteers

In order for all the work of the school to get done, each parent is encouraged to share their talents with the school community. Opportunities for parent involvement regularly include assisting with school mailings; helping with school admissions events; offering a workshop or presentation for students or parents; reading aloud on a regular basis with children; coordinating special class events; participating in curriculum-related field trips; organizing holiday observances; serving as a buddy family to a family new to the school; supporting fundraising activities; and brightening the classrooms with art work. Please feel free to talk with your child's teacher if you have other talents that you would like to share. We are finding the need to be more reliant on parent-organized transportation for field trips. If you are volunteering to drive, you must sign a form affirming your license, insurance, and driving record information.

## Annual Giving

It is often surprising to families who are new to independent education when they are asked to contribute to a school's annual fundraising campaign. The fact is that most independent schools fund only about 75% of their operating budget through tuition. The rest of the funds necessary to provide an excellent educational foundation for their children are provide by generous gifts from all members of the school community – faculty, board members, parents, grandparents, and other friends. While FSP will continue to seek grants and contributions from donors in Maine and beyond, each family will also be invited to provide a tax-deductible gift to the annual fund each year to the extent that they are able. Contributions of professional services, supplies, and equipment are always welcome, as are administrative and clerical help with the school's annual fundraising campaign. We also ask that parents let the Head of School know of any family members, family friends or members of the larger community who might be willing to support the school.

## Arrival, Departures, Absences, and Aftercare

### Morning Arrival

Students should arrive between 7:55 and 8:10 a.m. each school day unless other arrangements have been made. The school day begins promptly at 8:15 a.m. for grades 1-8 and 8:45 for preschool – kindergarten students who may arrive between 7:55 and 8:40 a.m. **Please make sure your child is on time** so that he or she does not miss the important opening moments and so your child and all other students in the class can settle easily into the day.

## Traffic Flow and Parking Passes

As there are many of us in the Island community occupying a restricted space, it is necessary that all of us observe proper traffic patterns around the school. Some parents prefer to organize carpools and FSP will provide all parents with a school directory which includes the names of children in your area.

Each family will be issued two parking passes that will enable you to quickly move through the Mackworth Island security gate on school days. Please help us all by displaying your pass on the driver's side dashboard where it can be easily seen. Additional or replacement parking passes can be obtained by request in the school office. During vacations and summer, FSP families will be required to park in the visitors' parking lot by the security gate, if space is available, unless you are attending a FSP event.

**All drivers should drop off their student passengers by bearing right at the traffic loop. The counter-clockwise traffic pattern allows parents to drop off children at the curbside. If the driver is escorting a child into the school building, please park in the field adjacent to the traffic loop and use the pedestrian crosswalk. Please be courteous of other cars dropping off students or bringing employees to other facilities on the island.**

## Dismissal

At the end of each school day, our staff must prepare for the next day and take care of personal responsibilities. Please help us to maintain an orderly end of day. Dismissal is 3:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 1:45 p.m. Friday. All drivers picking up students in grades preschool – 4 at the end of the day should park in the field, come into the building, and wait in hallway to meet your child outside of the classroom. Children in grades 5 – 8 will be escorted by teachers to meet parents outside. Any child who is not picked up by 3:10 will go to Aftercare and a fee for Aftercare may be charged. Each child will be granted one unexpected stay in Aftercare. Each time after that, \$5 will be charged for each fifteen minute interval the child is in Aftercare. (See Aftercare below)

We ask that families make after-school plans before leaving for school in the morning. Children's feelings can be easily hurt if they see other children or their parents making arrangements to get together after school. If your child has been invited as a guest, is having a guest after school, or is leaving school by any alternate transportation plan, please write a note to the teacher or call the school early in the day. If we do not have a note or have not received a phone call, we will assume that the usual dismissal procedure will be followed.

## Absences

If you know that your child will be absent or late to school, call the School Office at 781-6321. It helps to know before 7:30 a.m. so that teachers can be informed at the morning staff meeting. Please feel free to leave a message on the school's answering machine if no one is in the office. The school will attempt to contact parents after that time if they have not called. We discourage parents from taking children out of school except for illness, injury, or family emergency. Regular attendance is necessary for academic success.

Please follow the following **procedures for late arrivals or early departures:**

If you are inadvertently late, please accompany your child into the building and sign in at the **attendance notebook** which will be on a desk in the hall outside the school office, then escort your child to class.

If you are picking your child up early, please sign out of the **attendance notebook** and notify the teacher. Please sign in when you return if you are taking them out for part of the day for an appointment.

## Appointments

Parents are asked to schedule doctor, dentist, and other appointments for students after school or during vacations in order to avoid missing classes and other school activities. If an appointment must be scheduled during school hours, please let your child's teacher know what time your child will be away from school. Please be sure to sign out in the office as you leave and sign back in when you return.

## Family Vacations

We ask families to schedule family vacations as much as possible during our school vacations so that children don't miss out on important classes and curriculum related activities. If a family vacation is scheduled when school is in session, it is the responsibility of the family and student to make up missed assignments. We would also like to be notified in advance of parents' going away on a trip when your child will be left with friends or relatives for any length of time.

## Aftercare

For an additional fee, parents may sign up their children for the Aftercare program from dismissal until 5:30, or any part thereof. The program is carefully supervised and informal and time is allowed for snacks, outside play, and creative activities. While Aftercare is usually contracted on a regular schedule each term, it may be also available on an occasional, first-come-first-served basis for \$8 per hour, if space is available. Please contact the school office as soon as possible to determine whether there is room for your child.

## School Closure

For school closures related to severe weather or other emergencies, FSP will respond in the same manner as the Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH)/Governor Baxter School (GBSD) which follow Portland public school decisions. School opening may be delayed or school may be canceled for the day. These days will not be made up at the end of the year. You may monitor information on the major TV networks and the website: [www.friendsschoolofportland.org](http://www.friendsschoolofportland.org).

## Safety and Security

### Communication

In the event that you need to contact your child, please call the office (781-6321) and leave a message that will be delivered before the end of the day.

Basic information about the school and planned events can usually be found at the school's website: [www.friendsschoolofportland.org](http://www.friendsschoolofportland.org). A weekly e-bulletin is usually sent to all parents Monday afternoon with weekly news and reminders. There is a monthly school newsletter that goes to parents and the larger FSP community. In addition, each teacher will send classroom newsletters on a regular basis. To make sure you receive this important information, please keep the school informed of your current email address.

In the event that a child's parents occupy separate households, FSP will communicate as openly and directly as possible with both parents and step-parents involved in raising the child. We can provide duplicate copies of newsletters and progress reports to both households. Especially in situations where the child is traveling between two households in the course of a week, we suggest that both parents, if possible, meet together with the teacher at conference times to facilitate communication about the child's school experience.

### Medical Issues

A sick child does not learn well and may spread illness to others. A child will recover more quickly if s/he has a restful day at home. A child with a fever; chills; red, watery or itchy eyes; rash; abdominal pain; vomiting; diarrhea; persistent sore throat; enlarged glands; excessive coughing; or stuffy or runny nose should be kept at home. Please notify the school as soon as your child is diagnosed with strep throat, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, head lice, or any other infectious disease, so that we may inform other parents that their children have been exposed. Please be considerate of other children and teachers and keep a contagious child at home.

FSP has contracted with Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MECDHH) to provide nursing services in case of an emergency. State law requires that FSP have on hand certain records for all students. Prior to each school year, parents will receive the appropriate forms which are also available on the website. Please fill out these forms and promptly return them to the school. It is important that all emergency contact information be correct and that the school has permission to provide emergency treatment for each student. Please notify the school if there are changes in daytime emergency contact numbers. Emergency contact information will remain in FSP office. Medical records will be secured in the nurse's office. Please note that students without Varicella or MMR vaccinations will be excluded from school by state law for a minimum of 18 days if there is an outbreak within the school community. **The threat of a pandemic flu outbreak makes it especially imperative that parents keep sick children at home and emphasize good preventative practices: cough or sneeze into your arm, wash hands frequently and thoroughly, keep hands away from your face, stay home if you have flu-like symptoms.**

In the case of an illness that manifests itself during the day, the child will be kept quietly in the school office until a parent is notified and comes to take the child home. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact designated on the medical form will be notified. In the case of a serious illness, the school nurse will be contacted and may supervise the child until the parent arrives or emergency medical services may be contacted.

Students may not take or carry any medicine in school without the school's knowledge. Parents are provided with a form to complete and send in with any medications they are sending to school for their children. All prescriptions must be held by and dispensed by the school nurse or designated staff person. The school may not dispense any prescription without parental approval.

The school office has basic first aid supplies, which can be dispensed with parental permission. If you wish to send in a supply of a specific item for your child, please feel free to do so. Make sure it is in its original container, marked with your child's name and accompanied by a completed student medication form.

## **Personal Belongings**

In all but the most inclement weather, students will be going outside during the day for recess and study. Students are encouraged to wear casual clothes to school. Appropriate footgear is especially important and must be worn for comfort and safety. Children without appropriate clothing may not be able to take part in some school activities. An extra pair of active footwear may be left in your child's cubby along with raingear. Clothing should be appropriate for the weather, and it should allow for comfortable movement in the classroom and on the playground. Classroom teachers may suggest that students keep an extra set of seasonally appropriate clothes in school in case the need arises for a change. All clothes should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

With so many resources available to our students through the school's programs, FSP asks that students limit the personal belongings that they bring to school. Electronic games and devices often limit peer interactions and cell phones and personal computers can distract students from the business of school. The presence of personal belongings in school can also lead some students to feel less than equal to their peers in the area of material possessions. Inappropriate personal items brought to school will be held until a parent retrieves them at the end of the day. In addition, FSP bears no responsibility for personal belongings that are lost or damaged while at school.

The lost and found collection is located in office. Due to lack of space and the need for tidiness, at the end of each month, unclaimed lost and found items will be donated to charity. If you are missing an item, please check the collection immediately.

## **Prohibited Items**

Any illegal items or personal belongings that threaten the safety or well being of oneself or others are strictly prohibited on the Mackworth Island. Prohibited items include weapons of any kind, including knives, lighters, and other implements that, used inappropriately, could hurt someone. Also prohibited are all illegal substances (such as alcohol, medications that have not been approved by a parent and physician, cigarettes, and recreational drugs) as well as everyday substances that, used inappropriately, pose health and safety risks (matches or model airplane glue, for example). Children are not to use heat producing appliances such as microwave ovens or irons unless they have specific permission and are supervised by an adult.

## **Security**

Although it is unlikely that they will have to be implemented, security procedures are in place on Mackworth Island to deal with potentially dangerous situations. All FSP teachers and staff have undergone a criminal background check or fingerprinting as a condition of their employment, and are mandated by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect. In the course of the school day, teachers or staff will accompany students when they are outside of the FSP classroom area. All students are under adult supervision in the building, and they may be given explicit permission to work alone in a separate classroom space. All teachers and staff have also been trained in basic first aid, CPR and precautions for blood borne pathogens. Teachers and staff are mandated reporters for suspected child abuse or neglect and are given specific training about Child Protective Services procedures.

For everyone's safety, state law requires that a specific number of fire drills are conducted each year and classroom teachers will discuss the procedures for a drill early in the school year. MECDDH will schedule fire drills for the entire island campus. Separate fire drills will also be conducted for the Aftercare.

## **Volunteers**

Many members of the greater Portland community have taken a great interest in FSP and are in large part responsible for our initial success. Our continuing success depends on the gift of their volunteer time and talents. For the safety of each child, a volunteer will always be supervised by a teacher or staff member and will not be allowed to be alone with a child. In addition, all regular volunteers will be required to undergo a criminal background check before they work with our students.

## **Re-enrollment**

FSP will offer re-enrollment to all students and families who have demonstrated that they are a good match for FSP. Once offered re-enrollment, each family must return the re-enrollment agreement and deposit by the date stipulated on the agreement in order to reserve a position. After that date, vacancies will be filled from the general applicant pool and waiting list. Any late or delinquent tuition for the current school year must be paid in full before a student may be re-enrolled for the coming year. Enrollment decisions may be reconsidered at the end of the year if academic or behavioral concerns arise in the second half of the school year. FSP reserves the right to withhold re-enrollment contracts from students and parents who present behavioral problems that are destructive to the educational community. The Head of School will make this determination in consultation with the faculty.

**Re-enrollment agreements with deposits are due Wednesday, March 7, 2012.**

## **Tuition and Financial Aid**

Because the majority of our costs are paid by tuition, the prompt payment of tuition is essential to the proper functioning of the school. Failure to pay tuition in a timely manner may result in late charges or dismissal which does not relieve you of your financial obligation. If you encounter an unexpected financial hardship, please notify us as soon as possible so that we can explore possibilities of financial aid or rescheduling tuition payments.

FSP offers three basic tuition payment plans. Under the first plan, tuition is payable in one installment by July 1<sup>st</sup>. Under the second plan, tuition is payable in two installments, one by July 1<sup>st</sup> and the second by the first class day after January 1<sup>st</sup>. Under the third plan, tuition is payable in ten equal installments through FACTS Management Company beginning in May.

A link to the FACTS plan is available on the website: [www.friendsschoolofportland.org](http://www.friendsschoolofportland.org) >>Admissions.

Tuition assistance at FSP is based on need as determined through FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment Service and reapplication is required yearly. A link is available on the website: >>Admissions>>Tuition Assistance. Families already enrolled at FSP will receive priority in allocation of tuition assistance if their applications deadlines are met. The deadline for financial aid applications through FACTS is Wednesday, February 10, 2010.

## Index

Absences	10
Academics	1
Aftercare	10
Annual Giving	9
Appointments	10
Arrival, Departures, Absences, and Aftercare	9
Assessments	4
Behavioral Concerns	2
Bullying	7
Calendar	ii
Celebrations	7
Clubs and Community Resources	8
Communication	11
Community	1
Community Life	6
Computers	5
Contact information	iii
Continuation at School	3
Dismissal	10
Educational Consultants & Specialists	2
Electronic Technology, Guidelines for Use of	5
Equality	1
Faculty & Staff	iii
Family Vacations	10
Financial Aid	13
Food	7
Governance	1
Homework	3
How to Help Your Child Do Homework	4
Integrity	1
Learning or Developmental Concerns	2
Learning Styles	2
Mackworth Island	7

Mandated Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect	12
Medical Issues	11
Meeting for Worship	6
Mission Statement	iii
Morning Arrival	9
Multi-Age Classes	1
Nondiscrimination Policy	1
Parent Volunteers	9
Parents Opportunities	8
Parent-School Partnership	8
Parking Passes	10
Peace	1
Personal Belongings	12
Playground Guidelines	7
Prohibited Items	12
Recycling	8
Re-enrollment	12
Safety and Security	11
Service Learning	6
School Closures	11
School Day Schedule	ii
Security	12
Simplicity	1
Stewardship	1
Student records	5
Supervision of Children	9
Textbooks	5
Traffic Flow	10
Truth	1
Tuition	13
Values	1
Volunteers	12