Westover Elementary School

School Community Handbook

2019-2020

**Westover Elementary School**

401 Hawkesbury Lane

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

[www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/westoveres](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/westoveres)/

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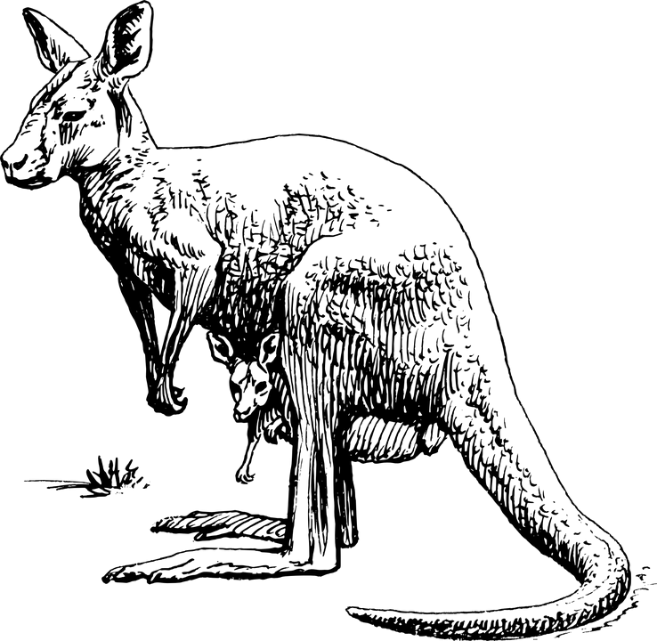
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*School Colors*: Blue and White

*School Mascot*: Wallaby



**Westover Elementary School**

**Vision:** At Westover Elementary School, we collaborate to inspire our students to be creative problem solvers and lifelong learners. We promote a respectful, equitable atmosphere that elevates academic excellence and social emotional growth for all.

**Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)**

**Vision:** We inspire learning by providing the greatest public education to each and every student.

**Mission**: Every student will have the academic, creative problem solving, and social emotional skills to be successful in college and career.

**Westover Elementary School Staff**

**2019-2020**

**About Our School**

**Autism** The Elementary Autism classes at Westover are self-contained classrooms. Students served by this model have a diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder and need significant learning and social supports as a result of their disability. The classrooms offer a highly structured school day and individualized learning opportunities. Curriculum is modified as appropriate to support student strengths and needs. There is a continuing emphasis on the development of language, social skills, and student independence. The teaching procedures are based on Applied Behavior Analysis. Students participate with non-disabled peers as appropriate.

**Pre-Kindergarten Speech/Language** The PreK Speech/Language classes at Westover serves students with communication disorders involving articulation, fluency, oral language, or voice. Services focus on oral, gestural, and/or augmentative communication skills, reflecting consideration of best practices in the field of speech-language pathology. Services are individualized for each student, are based on the student's total educational program, and take into account the range of ability and performance of students within the school setting.

**Grade-level Curriculum** Montgomery County Public Schools brochures providing guidance related to each grade level’s curriculum are available in the Westover Elementary School office and online at: http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/elementary/guides.aspx.

**Extra-Curricular Highlights**

Students have many opportunities for extracurricular activities before, during, or after school which include, but are not limited to:

* **Safety Patrols** Safety patrols are on duty at our school every day to help keep all of our students safe. Some safety patrols are assigned to buses and areas of the building and grounds. Students serving as safety patrols primarily come from the 5th grade classes. Safety patrol members are recommended by teachers, principal or by self-nomination at the end of their 4th grade year. Applicants receive final approval from the patrol teacher sponsor. Patrols are expected to model a high standard of behavior for their peers. Lapses in meeting behavior standards result in demerits and, subsequently, removal from the patrol force.
* **Leadership Opportunities** We have many more responsible students than we have patrol duties to fill. Additional opportunities to demonstrate their leadership skills are school announcers on WNN, Recess Rounders, Welcome Wagon members, or School Energy Recycling Team (SERT) members.
* **Student Government** Student Government members are elected by their peers in the fall. Representatives are chosen by their peers and teachers and the group is directed by a teacher advisor during periodic lunch/recess meetings. Student officers are elected by the representatives with direction from the advisor. As a group, they use leadership skills to discuss school needs, suggest ways to help the school community, and plan special days for our school community. As past examples, student council collected “Pennies for Patients.” They also plan spirit days for students.
* **Chorus** Every fifth grader at Westover experiences singing in an all-inclusive chorus, during the school day. The repertoire of songs includes rounds, partner songs, and often a piece in another language. Fifth graders may elect to meet bi-weekly in the fall and perform at the end of the first semester.
* **Instrumental Music** Instrumental music lessons are available to fourth and fifth grade students. Classes meet weekly during school hours. Beginner level is taught in a small group of like instruments. Advanced level meets in larger, instrument family groups. Students provide their own instruments, although the school does have a few instruments for lending if needed. There is no charge for classes. A spring concert will be held in May based on the level of student programming. Students who choose to learn to play an instrument will miss some class instruction and, thus, must be prepared to make the effort to find out what is missed and make up work. Playing an instrument is a yearlong commitment.
* **National Elementary Honor Society** Every Grade 4 and Grade 5 student is invited to be a member of the Westover Chapter of the National Elementary Honor Society. At the end of November, the Westover Faculty Council will meet to review each candidate’s form and determine eligibility. Additional information will be available in the Fall.

**DAILY SCHOOL PROCEDURES**

**Arrival and Dismissal**

**School Routines**

* School hours are from **9:25 a.m. to 3:50 p.m**.
* Westover Elementary behavior expectations and rules exist across the school property and while on field trips. (See *School Behavior Policies* section of this handbook for more information)
* Students may re-enter the building, with adult supervision, to retrieve forgotten items until 4:15 p.m.

*ARRIVAL/MORNING ROUTINES*

Arrival Procedures

* Students should ***not*** arrive before 9:05 a.m.
* All students should line up at the designated areas.
* Students should be in their respective classes promptly by 9:25 a.m. each morning--seated and ready to learn.
* Students will be marked “tardy” following this time.

Breakfast Procedures

* Breakfast is served from 9:05 – 9:20 a.m. in the cafeteria.

*DISMISSAL/ AFTERNOON ROUTINES*

The school day ends each day promptly at 3:50 p.m., except for early dismissal days which dismiss at 1:20 p.m. (October 4, November 8, November 11, November 12, November 27, January 24, February 28, March 27, and June 15).

*Dismissal procedures*

Students will proceed directly to one of four destinations:

1. “Walkers” will proceed to the primary blacktop/playground to meet with an adult listed on the release form completed by parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year.
   * 1. Parents, guardians, and caregivers should not enter the building, but should remain outside in the designated area to wait for their child(ren).
     2. Parents, guardians, and caregivers who are walking should use sidewalk and parking lot area closest to the bus circle to retrieve your child. -- Do not cross the parking lot near moving vehicles entering and exiting the pick-up circle. Use the crosswalk.
2. “Kids After Hours (KAH)” (Before-After School Care program) students will proceed immediately to the All Purpose Room and be released to the program.
3. “Bus Riders”
   1. Bus students will line up and dismiss from the bus line up areas in the APR.

Notes: **For safety reasons, WRITTEN PERMISSION MUST BE GIVEN FOR** anyone not listed on the child’s emergency form to pick up the child. Also, students may not ride any other bus than the one to which they are assigned.

4. “Car Riders” To facilitate safe drop off and pick-up of students riding in cars, please adhere to the following guidelines established for the safety of students and staff:

* Enter the car loop within designated arrival and departure locations.
  + Do not use the lane designated for school bus traffic OR the parking lot to drop off children at any time.
* Drive slowly in the parking lot for the safety of your child(ren) and others.
* Drivers should remain alert when driving through the school property (cell phone etiquette).
* Pull up as far as possible next to the curb/sidewalk in the car loop and let your child out of the car safely on the school side of the car.
* **Remain in the car** while in the Car Loop.
* Drivers should remain in their cars to receive your child(ren).
* Car must be in “park” to load or unload passengers.
* Follow the direction of the student patrols and the volunteer and/or staff on duty at the car loop.

**MCPS Attendance Policies**

1. **Parents/guardians are expected to contact the school** if a child will need to miss school Parents can report absences by calling the office or through the school’s website.

2. **Parents/guardians are required to accompany tardy students (after 9:25 a.m.) into the building in order to sign them in at the office.** State attendance laws require a written explanation of each absence from the parent/guardian.

3. Requests for students to leave school at a time other than regular dismissal time may be made in writing by the parent/guardian.

* A student will be called to the office *after* the parent/guardian arrives to release them.
* **Students will not be called to the office for early dismissal at 3:30 p.m. or later.** These students will be dismissed using the usual dismissal procedures at 3:50 p.m.

The classroom teacher is responsible for taking student attendance. Each school submits its attendance data electronically to MCPS. Each reporting period, a student’s school attendance (i.e. absenteeism and tardiness) information will be clearly detailed numerically on the student’s report card. Students with excessive absences will automatically receive an MCPS letter advising parents of the number of absences as it impacts education. When these issues persist, a referral will be made to the school’s Pupil Personnel Worker for additional follow up/action as appropriate.

***MCPS Attendance Policies***

* Students are recorded as *a.m. absent* if they arrive at school more than one hour late.
* Students are recorded at *p.m. absent* if they leave school more than one hour early.
* Students are recorded as either *a.m. absent or p.m. absent* if they are absent from school for more than one hour during the school day.
* Students are recorded as *absent* for a full day if they are present for one hour or less of the school day.

***Excused Absences*** According to state regulations, students enrolled in public schools are considered lawfully absent from school, including absence for any portion of the day, only under the following conditions:

* Death in immediate family
* Illness of the student (The principal shall require a physician’s certificate from the parents/guardians if a student is absent for illness for consecutive days or frequently)
* Hazardous weather conditions
* Observance of a religious holiday
* State emergency
* Suspension
* Lack of authorized transportation

***Making up Student Work*** Students have the responsibility of making up missed school work regardless of the reason for the absence. When excused absences are occurring, the teacher has an obligation to assist the student in making up the class work missed within a timely manner.

If the office receives a request for work for a student who is absent, the request will be passed on to the teacher and fulfilled within 48 hours. Parents/Guardians should call ahead before coming to pick up requested work. Students who will be out for an extended period for a reason that the state designates as “unexcused” will not be provided work to take with them during the absence.

***Makeup Work Requests*** When asking teachers to prepare work for a child who will not be in school, please keep in mind:

* Long-range instructional plans can change, requiring teachers to make daily instructional decisions which might alter from pre-prepared work packets.
* New skills are continually being taught and reinforced on a progressive basis.
* Children need to attend school on a regular basis to benefit from daily instruction.

Consequently, there is limited value for children to complete a large number of work papers or assignments on their own without teacher instruction or directions, and interactions with peers.

**Extended Vacation Assignments** If you choose to take an extended vacation, other than those scheduled on the school calendar, your child will miss a great deal of important instruction. Rather than sending home assignments prior to the planned vacation, below is a list of recommended activities your child can do during the period of time that you are assuming responsibility for his/her education.

These activities include having your child:

* Keep a daily diary, journal or travel log. This will encourage your child to use and expand his/her language skills. Your child will need your help and guidance to make this a worthwhile experience. The work can be brought to school and shared with the teacher and classmates.
* Interview a relative about what school was like for them.
* Make collections of items or artifacts unique to the area. Children can also research other found items in order to broaden their knowledge in that area.
* Make graphs and/or keep records (i.e. gas mileage, routes taken, miles traveled, etc.).
* Record visits to historic sites- talk about how it relates to topics covered in school.
* Read books to stimulate interest and to strengthen reading skills. We encourage you to read to and/or with your child on a regular basis.

**Birthdays** Birthdays are celebrated at Westover with a pencil distributed from the main office following morning announcements. Classroom birthday parties MUST be scheduled in advance with the teacher; we typically offer party times twice a month—one to celebrate all birthdays occurring in the beginning of the month and one to celebrate all birthdays occurring toward the end of the month. Celebrations are to be no more than 15 minutes, with a simple treat to be shared with all students in the class. All food items must be store bought.

***Note: Personal birthday and party invitations may not be distributed during the school day.***

**Bus Safety** Students are expected to be respectful, responsible and safe at the bus stop, when riding the school bus to school and/or on field trips as this is considered an extension of the school property. More specific information to review with your child is available at:

<http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/uploadedFiles/departments/transportation/rules/put_safety_first.pdf>

Westover’s contact information for transportation is as follows:

* West Farm Depot - 240-740-1854

**Cell Phones** MCPS policy does not allow elementary school students to carry cell phones, except under extenuating circumstances and with prior approval from the principal. Parents/ guardians must write an annual letter to the principal requesting permission and the student must keep the phone in their home materials during the instructional day. If a student is found with an unapproved cell phone, the cell phone will be turned into the main office. Administration will assume responsibility for contacting the parent/guardian and coordinating the return or pick up of the cell phone. (MCPS Policy COG-RA).

**Clubs and After School Activities** Each year, the Westover PTO offers a selection of after school activities. Examples over the years have been: basketball, chess, Girls on the Run, coding classes, and foreign languages. Typically there are fall, winter and spring sessions. Information will come home in advance of each session with a description and an opportunity to register on a first come, first served basis. Students must be picked up on time. Failure to do so will result with a warning the first time but, if repeated, would mean removal from the activity.

**Deliveries from Home** A parent drop-off area has been established in the main office. In the event that a student has forgotten his/her lunch, homework, instrument, etc. and a parent is dropping the item off, the item will be available to the student at lunch or recess. *We will not interrupt instruction to deliver forgotten items.*

**Emergency Procedures** Westover Elementary School is prepared to effectively and efficiently respond to a multitude of emergency/crisis situations that may impact students, staff, and parents or guardians. A school emergency/crisis plan enables staff to respond to and manage a multitude of emergencies/crises. Each year the emergency/crisis plan is updated, then reviewed and approved by the Department of School Safety and Security. Fire evacuation and other emergency drills are practiced throughout the year. Should you arrive at the building during one of these drills, you may find the doors locked and you will *not* be admitted until the drill is complete. Each year an on-site emergency team (OSET) composed of school administrators and staff receive basic and enhanced levels of emergency/crisis preparedness training, conducted by the Department of School Safety and Security. A Parent/Child Reunification plan is also reviewed and updated annually. Staff is trained to implement this plan in the event of an emergency.

1. ***Lockdown*** is defined as an alert status indicating imminent danger exists to all staff and students. During a *lockdown*, staff and students must remain within their classroom or within a secured area. If students are in the hallways, they must quickly move to the nearest classroom or to a secure area, remain quiet and follow staff instructions. Staff should secure their immediate area and account for students. Students should also be kept away from doors and windows.
2. ***Shelter*** is a term used to alert staff that an emergency/crisis exists at or near an MCPS facility. It requires all students to be accounted for and under supervision. Administrators may activate the On-Site Emergency Team (OSET) and set up a command post when appropriate.
3. ***Evacuate*** is a term used to quickly alert staff that everyone is to exit the building, similar to a fire drill. In rare cases, the evacuation may need to include walking the students to a safe, secure location away from the campus. Our identified evacuation site is the Robin Hood Swim Club located at 225 Mowbry Road Silver Spring, MD 20904. A plan has been established to safely reunite students with parents at that site and, should it be necessary, MCPS would send buses there.

**Food Services** Wholesome and nutritious meals are offered daily in our cafeteria. Meal costs are shared at the beginning of the school year in the summer mailing or school handouts. A variety of items are offered to meet each student’s needs and preferences. School lunch menus will be distributed monthly and are also available through the MCPS website:

<https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/food-and-nutrition/>

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, a student may be entitled to receive menu substitutions or texture modifications under the school lunch program. This entitlement occurs when a doctor determines that a child has a disability, which substantially limits one or more major life activity. A signed statement from the student’s doctor must verify the existence of the student’s disabling condition and an indication that the disability restricts the student’s diet. If the disability prevents the student from eating the regular school meals, the doctor must indicate the substitution that should be provided to the child. If you believe your child needs substitutions because of a disability, please contact our office.

* Meal Prices: Breakfast is $1.30
* Lunch $2.55
* Lunch (reduced-price) $0.40

**Applications for free and reduced-price meals must be completed each year. This year applications can be completed online. Please contact the office if you need assistance with this process.**

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/foodserv/farms/application.shtm>

***School Cafeteria Account Information*** The cafeteria continues to offer the convenience and flexibility of a computerized cash register system. The computerized cash register system is operated by individual PIN numbers assigned to students, providing the convenience for parents of not having to give their child(ren) cash on a daily basis to pay for lunch. Instead, the children merely input their PIN numbers into the system for debiting from their accounts. The PIN number for most returning students and students transferring within MCPS will remain the same. New students will receive their PIN number on the first day of school.

Payment to your child’s account can be made at any time in the form of cash or a check, made payable to Westover Elementary School. This payment should be given to the cafeteria manager at the start of the school day. When making a deposit by check, please write the student’s complete name and the name of the child’s homeroom teacher on the front of the check. To make a combined deposit for family members at this school, please indicate the deposit amount for each student next to the name and the name of the child’s homeroom teacher. Returned checks will be subject to a $25.00 service charge. Even if you choose to pack lunches for your child, it is a good idea to maintain a minimum balance in your child’s account, so that a lunch can be purchased should your child forget or misplace his/her lunch.

In the event that your child has insufficient funds, alunch will be provided to your child and you will be notified. (Our cafeteria manager sends written notices when account balances are low and monthly Connect-Ed phone messages will be sent.) Please send a payment promptly to rectify your child’s account should this situation arise. If you are unable to rectify the account, please contact the principal or school counselor. Any money left on a student’s account last school year, WILL be available for spending this year. Prepayment to student accounts may be made prior to the start of school.

**Breakfast/Lunch** Breakfast is served to students from 9:05 am to 9:20 am in the APR. Lunches are served between 11:40 am to 12:50 pm.

**Snacks** Depending upon their class’ lunchtime during the day, some teachers at Westover allow their students to bring snacks, for personal consumption, during the school day. Your child’s teacher will inform you if snack time will be a part of the class schedule.

* Healthy, non-candy, snacks are permitted and should be a type that can be easily consumed, without preparation or utensils (i.e. fruit, pretzels, cheese, goldfish crackers, and raisins).
* A beverage is not necessary since every class has a water fountain.
* Snacks are not for consumption around the building at other times of the day.

**Food from Other Sources (Outside of School)** Due to allergic reactions and dietary restrictions, all food requests for school-based activities within the classroom must be store bought. These foods will then have an ingredient label thus making it easier to identify potentially hazardous ingredients and in the absence of nuts to support students and staff with allergies.

**Grading and Reporting** Grades are an essential way to communicate student progress. As such, grading and reporting practices must include the following:

1. Meaningful feedback on student achievement to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the school system. This feedback should provide relevant information for instructional purposes.
2. Alignment with the Montgomery County Public Schools curriculum.
3. Consistency within and among schools.
4. Accurate reflection of student achievement compared to grade level or course expectations outlined in the curriculum as demonstrated on assessments and teacher designed tasks.
5. Fair representation of a student’s performance on a variety of measures over time.
6. Clear and timely communication to parents and students as to the grading criteria and the components.
7. Commitment to school attendance as an essential component of a quality learning experience.
8. Summative assessments, which may include research projects, end of unit tests, and presentations, as reflections of a student’s mastery of grade level or course material.
9. Opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of grade level or course expectations outlined in the curriculum through a variety of methods.
10. Regular and frequent information to all students and parents about the student’s progress.
11. Interims and report cards will be sent home following the established MCPS schedule.
12. Formal parent teacher conferences will be held in November following the established MCPS schedule.
13. Consistently high expectations of all students across all courses and programs.

**Homework** Research studies have shown that the amount of time devoted to learning is related to achievement in a subject. Homework, therefore, is important in a child’s overall educational program. It gives children an opportunity to practice, reinforce and/or extend the skills and concepts taught in the classroom. Additionally, teachers can provide feedback (oral and/or written) on new skills. Homework also helps to establish good work and study skills. The teacher will consider individual differences/needs and determine the nature and length of homework assignments.

Homework assignments may include:

* Reinforcement or extension of skills
* Enrichment opportunities
* Independent work
* Long-term projects
* Unfinished classroom work

Homework Guidelines

* Homework is intended to be used for practice and is not part of the student’s grade unless it has been identified and communicated prior to the assignment.
* Children will be assigned homework 3 to 5 times per week in accordance with MCPS policy.
* Length of homework assignments will vary from 15 to 90 minutes, depending on the grade level.
* Teachers will review assignments, procedures for accomplishing the work, due dates, and methods of evaluation.
* Teachers will give feedback on homework that is assigned to practice new skills. Feedback can be given in writing or by talking with students individually or in groups.
* Homework can be made up with teacher assistance when necessary, i.e. when the student is absent because of illness, other excused reasons or school-related activities.
* The individual child should assume the major responsibility for obtaining and completing homework assignments.
* Homework will not be assigned preceding or following designated religious holidays.
* Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's homework by reviewing the assignments nightly, providing an area which is conducive to studying, assisting the student with oral drill and practice, providing access to reference materials and by being supportive and positive.
* If a child is unable to complete the work or does not understand the assignment, the parent should write a note to the teacher explaining the difficulty or reason the homework was not complete.
* Whenever specific assignments are not given, children should use homework time to read, study their spelling or basic math facts, expand their writing skills through journal entries, solve real-life significant problems and/or participate in community activities.

**MCPS homework resources:** <http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/students/homework.aspx>

**Inclement Weather Procedure School Closings** MCPS may decide to close schools in emergency conditions such as severe weather. An announcement will be made if the decision is to close school. Parents are encouraged to sign up for MCPS Alerts. This service is part of Montgomery County’s Alert Montgomery and provides MCPS families with emergency information from the school system via SMS text or email. Sign up for Alert MCPS at

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/emergency/alertmcps.aspx>

* If schools are closed, all school and community activities in the public facilities are cancelled for the remainder of the day.
* Private daycare providers housed in schools (e.g. KAH) may elect to stay open if schools are closed but administrative offices are open.

***Delayed School Opening*** When conditions dictate, a two-hour delayed opening may be instituted by MCPS. Morning pre-kindergarten and field trips will be canceled, as well as other activities and programs that begin at 10:30 a.m. or earlier. All other activities will be held as scheduled. Delayed openings will be announced by 6:00 a.m. via the MCPS systems and established procedures listed in the Closed School section above.

In the case of a delayed opening, Westover opens its doors for students at 11:05 a.m. Instruction will begin at 11:25 a.m. Please do not drop students off earlier than 11:05 a.m.

***Early Dismissal - School Closing*** Schools will be notified of early dismissal by 11:00 a.m. Weather conditions that develop during the morning may cause an early dismissal. Lunch will be provided for all students.

**Lost and Found**

Westover keeps a lost and found for items found “around” the school in the APR. All remaining items are donated at the end of each semester.

**Pets on Property**

For safety purposes, please note that family members with dogs must wait ***on the sidewalk outside of the primary blacktop/playground*** instead of coming into the busy arrival/dismissal area.

Source: According to Maryland Law- as directed by MCPS

Sec. 5-203. Public nuisance and other violations. *(7) Allow a dog to be on public school grounds on a day when school is in session, or in a public recreation area during an organized activity, unless the dog is controlled by a leash or similar restraining device. This paragraph does not apply to a dog participating in a qualified activity if the agency controlling the school or area gave permission to the owner of the dog or the sponsor of the qualified activity.*

**School Visitation and Conferences**

Westover welcomes all visitors to participate in our children’s educational experiences. However, to ensure the safety of all children and staff, it is imperative that all visitors (including parents, guardians, and caregivers) report to the office **to identify themselves with a valid state picture ID** and share the purpose for visiting before going further into the building. All visitors must obtain a “visitor” identification sticker and be signed into the visitor system located in the school office. Visitors not bearing the proper “visitor” badge will be stopped, and asked to return to the main office. Volunteers **MUST** complete the MCPS online training in order to be allowed to be with students. Please email or send in a copy of a confirmation of completion. For more information, go to:

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/childabuseandneglect/>

*MCPS School Visitors: Key Points*

* Visitors to any Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) school site during the designated student day are required to sign in and out of the building using the Visitor Management System, or as otherwise directed, secure consent upon arrival and prior to initiating any school-related business, and to wear a visitor identification name tag at all times.
* Permission to visit the school may be rescinded if the visitor does not comply with the stated purpose of visit or violates any policy or regulation.
* Classroom visits and/or conferences by parents/guardians must be arranged in advance.
* Classroom visits and conferences must be conducted in such a manner that the visits and/or conferences do not interfere with the classroom activities of any student in the class.

Source: MCPS Regulation ABA-RB

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled for students at the end of the first marking period in November. The November conference is the only scheduled conference of the year. However, you may request a conference at any time you feel it is necessary by contacting your child’s teacher or the principal. Staff is committed to responding to phone messages, e-mails or notes within 24 hours of their receipt. Conferences may involve the parent, teacher, counselor, other designees, and/or an administrator.

**School Supplies**

The suggested school supply list is available in the office and on Westover’s website. Some supplies may need to be replenished throughout the school year. School website: http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/westoveres/

**Staff Gifts**

Generally, an MCPS employee may accept a gift only if it is unsolicited and valued at $20 or less. A gift in excess of $20 may be donated to the school. Gift cards and other items can be donated to the school to be used for student needs or as door prizes for staff appreciation events.

**Student Dress**

Students are expected to wear appropriate clothing at all times. Exceptions to the guidelines below will be considered for religious affiliation and/or health reasons:

* Shorts, skirts, and dresses should come to at least the finger tips when standing straight and hands are at one’s side
* Shirts/blouses will be properly buttoned
* Undergarments must always be covered
* Clothing that is provocative or promotes and/or glorifies alcohol, drugs, gangs, or contains sexually explicit or implicit innuendo is not permitted
* Coats, hats, and other headgear should not be worn during the school day

**Student Health/ Medication Guidelines**

Westover Elementary School will make every effort possible to protect the health and safety of your child. Cooperation of parents in helping to fight the spread of communicable diseases is of great importance. Children should be fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school from illness.

1. No medication will be administered in school or during school-sponsored activities without the parent’s/guardian’s written authorization and a written physician's order. This includes both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medications.
2. The parent/guardian is responsible for completing Part I and obtaining the physician’s statement on Part II of the Montgomery County Authorization to Administer Prescribed Medication. This is required every school year for each new or continuing order or if there is a change in dosage or time of administration during the school year. (A physician may use office stationery or prescription pad in lieu of completing Part II). Information necessary includes: child’s name, diagnosis, medication name, dosage, time of administration, duration of medication, side effects, physician signature, and date.
3. The medication must be delivered to the school by the parent/guardian or, under special circumstances, an adult designated by the parent/guardian. School or Health and Human Services personnel will not administer medication brought to school by a child. Medications may not come on the bus under any circumstances.
4. All prescription medication must be provided in a container with the Pharmacist's’ label attached and delivered by the parent/guardian to the health room. Non-prescription OTC medication must be in the container with the manufacturer’s original label. Physician samples must be appropriately labeled by the physician.
5. The first day’s dosage of any new medication must be given at home before it can be administered at school.
6. The parent/guardian is responsible for collecting any unused portion of a medication within one week after expiration of the physician’s order or at the end of the school year. Medication not claimed within that time period will be destroyed.
7. Self-administered and /or non-medically prescribed medication are entirely the responsibility of the parent/guardian and not that of either Montgomery County Public Schools or Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. Medications without accompanying physician’s orders and parental consent will not be stored in the health room.
8. When your child is sick, please keep him/her home from school for 24 hours. This not only benefits your child, but other children and staff at the school.

Parents should keep their child home from school when s/he exhibits such symptoms as:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Temperature more than 100 * Nausea or vomiting * Stomach ache * Diarrhea * Pale or flushed face * Headache * Cough | * Earache * Thick discharge from nose * Sore throat * Rash or infection of the skin * Red or pink eyes * Loss of appetite * Loss of energy or decrease in activity |

1. If any of these symptoms develop at school, a parent or guardian will be notified. Your child will be kept in the nurse’s office away from all other children until you pick them up. In keeping with this policy, parents should notify the main office if the child contracts a contagious disease. The principal will in turn notify other children’s parents of the possibility of exposure.
2. If your child is injured at school, a parent or guardian will be informed immediately, and proper emergency medical procedures (i.e. ambulance called, etc.) will be implemented. For all injuries, the child’s teacher or other staff member that witnessed the occurrence of the injury will complete an incident report. This report will be made available for the parent or guardian.
3. Current immunizations are required of every Westover pupil. Additionally, updated student immunization forms are required to be on file for every Westover student. It is the responsibility of every parent/guardian to ensure that this information is accurate and current for their child. Our school health technician can provide information regarding required immunizations and where they can be obtained.
4. Students who have nits or lice are excluded from coming to school. If nits or lice are identified at school, the child will be kept in the nurse’s office away from the other children until a parent or guardian can come to take the child home. Students should not return to school until treatment has been administered and no nits or lice remain. Upon returning to school, children must first see the school nurse who will determine whether the child is free of lice or nits.
5. When a child has a contagious rash such as ringworm, the rash must be covered at all times while the child is in school.

**School Behavior Policies**

Self-discipline is learned, and should be taught, in the home, school, and community. As students mature, they should be given increased responsibility consistent with their developmental level and social maturity. Westover Elementary School’s approach toward discipline at school emphasizes positive, appropriate behavior. The focus of this policy is on recognizing and praising appropriate behavior, rather than on controlling or punishing inappropriate behavior.

**Behavior Expectations** All students are expected tocomply with the **Westover Way** and expectations at all times-

○ ***Be Respectful***

○ ***Be Prepared***

○ ***Be Safe***

We, at Westover, acknowledge and praise appropriate behaviors on a regular basis. Classroom teachers use compliments, specific praise, and positive notes to parents, small awards, and prizes to reward positive classroom behaviors. There are opportunities to participate in special events, privileges, school supplies, materials, etc. Students will receive interventions to help them refocus and learn productive, learning behaviors. When necessary, re-teaching, teacher-student conferences, parent contacts, reflections, parent conferences, and administrative referrals may be utilized to help a student make better choices.

***Town Hall Meetings*** Student accomplishments are also celebrated at the end of each marking period. There is a meeting for all PreK-2 and 3-5, including students in Autism, in the APR. Students are recognized for their efforts to follow expectations and demonstrate positive character. Teachers submit the names of students to be recognized in advance with an explanation of the reason for the celebration. In addition, we use this time to reflect and review discipline data and to set goals for the following marking period.

***PBIS Matrix*** The PBIS Behavior Matrix clearly outlines expected behaviors in all areas of the school. Please review these expectations with your child(ren) so they will be better prepared to start the year on a positive note. Refer to this chart throughout the year to help your child(ren) understand the importance of meeting the behavior expectations for their own success socially and academically, and the success of their peers. To monitor and celebrate students’ behavioral success, we have a school-wide Peace Day program as well as Orange Wallaby Tickets that acknowledges individual success and improvement.

**MCPS School Discipline Guidelines** Westover Elementary School staff is responsible for 1) maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment, and 2) ensuring equitable treatment of our students. To accomplish these objectives, the school staff will respect the rights of the individual while taking appropriate disciplinary action. We expect that students will make appropriate choices. In this way, all students will be able to enjoy a positive learning environment and to avoid the need for disciplinary action.

Montgomery County Public Schools Code of Conduct will be distributed to all students and families. The **Code of Conduct** replaces certain parts of **A Student’s Guide to Rights and Responsibilities in Montgomery County Public Schools**. A revised **Rights and Responsibilities** document will also be published and distributed this year.

It is the expectation of all students at Westover Elementary School to make good choices and to exhibit positive conduct and behavior. We are committed to:

* Making sure all of our students feel safe and secure at school.
* Addressing all behavior that harms or intimidates others or interferes with the learning of others.

We recognize that children will make mistakes. When that occurs, we will use a range of consequences that are appropriate and helpful to students as they learn from their mistakes. These include:

* Giving a non-verbal warning
* Using surface management strategies (such as physical proximity or proximity praise) to help students to self-correct their behavior
* Giving a verbal warning
* Giving students a time-out for reflection
* Assigning a community service task (as appropriate)
* Providing one-to-one conferencing and processing time with the teacher focused on problem solving
* Calling an administrator or counselor to come to the child, to assist the child in transitioning back to the task
* Administering consequences to the child and, if appropriate, communicate the action to the parents
* Noting the incident in the office referral database and in most cases, notifying the parents. Teachers are kept informed of action taken.

The MCPS ***Code of Conduct*** includes:

* A list of disciplinary infractions (including serious incidents identified by their state suspension code) and suggests a range of possible disciplinary responses for each infraction.
* A description of factors that impact discipline decisions and definitions of possible disciplinary responses.
* A hierarchy of five levels of disciplinary response—called a Disciplinary Response Matrix; Note: For each level, numerous examples of possible disciplinary responses are provided.

**It is important that parents review this document with their children. After reviewing this document with your students, please sign and return the attached contract at the end of the handbook.**

**Westover Elementary School**

401 Hawkesbury Lane

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/westoveres/

Phone 301- 989-5676 Fax 301-989-5679

September 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

You should have received the:

* Westover Elementary School - School Community Handbook
* ***MCPS Code of Conduct*** that was sent home with your child.

Please read and explain the rules and routines of Westover Elementary School to your child/children. Then, complete and return the bottom portion of this note to your child’s (or oldest child’s) classroom teacher. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Audra Wilson,

Principal

**PLEASE RETURN TO YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER BY Friday, September 13, 2019.**

**I have read and explained the *Code of Conduct* and the rules and routines found in the *Westover Elementary School – School Community Handbook 2019-2020* with my child/children. Our signatures below indicate that we will support these expectations, rules, and routines. (Please list all of your children who attend Westover on one form.)**

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Parent Name (print) Parent/ Guardian Signature Date

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Student Name Student Signature Classroom Teacher’s Name (print)

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Student Name Student Signature Classroom Teacher’s Name (print)