



**Family
Handbook
2018-2019**

Mission

Our mission is to educate children to be thoughtful citizens of a democratic society by providing an education that is investigative and reflective, encourages choice and expects responsibility and discipline in all areas of learning and social behavior. Classrooms represent the developmental needs of every child as well as their interests, strengths and passions. The community works collaboratively supported by the contributions of parents, children and professional educators to realize the potential of human capacity.

General Information

Phone

212.860.5821

Contact the main office with all questions, concerns, changes or updates.

Website

www.cpe1.nyc

Getting in Touch During the School Day

If it is an emergency or you have to make changes in pick-up or after-school, please call the main office. If you have to make changes in pick-up or after-school plans, the main office can carry a message to your child's classroom.

Teachers are focused on children for most of the school day. They cannot always check email. Children may

bring cell phones for before and after school, but their cell phones are turned off once they arrive at school. The main office is the best way to get in touch.

Blue Cards/Emergency Information

Every child must have emergency contact information on file. Families must indicate how to get in touch in an emergency.

Blue Cards are available to fill out on-line via the link below:

Also, be sure to update emergency and pick-up information as necessary with the main office.

Please complete and submit forms the first week of school.

Medical Forms

All children need an updated physical on file. Please submit a copy of your child's updated physical as soon as you take them for their annual check up. These forms are kept in their file and a copy is sent to the nurses office.

Daily Schedule

7:45am: Breakfast begins – breakfast is *free* for all students.

8:30am: School day begins (classes meet in the cafeteria). Children are marked late after 8:35.

11:45am-12:45pm: Recess and lunch – school lunch is *free* for all students.

3:00pm: School day ends (dismissal in the courtyard)

Attendance and Lateness

At 8:30, children are picked up from the cafeteria and the school day begins.

If your child arrives in class after 8:35, your child will be marked late.

At 8:30, the cafeteria doors are locked. Please escort your child upstairs through the front entrance. If you arrive before 9:00 and have your child with you, our school safety agents will send you right up. If you don't have a CPE1 or you arrive after 9:00, you'll be asked to sign in, with photo identification.

If you expect your child to be absent for one or more days, please notify us in writing prior to the absence. If your child will be absent for more than one day, please notify Shelly in our main office (212.860.5821 x 2040 or mharrington2@schools.nyc.gov).

Sick Children

If your child is showing symptoms of illness (e.g., vomiting, fever), please keep him or her at home. It is uncomfortable for the child and exposes the entire community to the illness.

Please notify the school of infectious illnesses (e.g., strep throat, pink eye) so that we may notify other families to watch out for symptoms. Your child's name will not be used.

Dismissal

Our school day ends at 3:00pm. Students are dismissed from the courtyard on Madison Avenue.

If for some reason the adult responsible for picking up a student is running late, be sure to call the main office or email Najah or Shelly as early as possible (212.860.5821).

Children who have not been picked up by 3:10 are brought to the main office. If you arrive after 3:10, you will have to sign in at the main entrance.

Children may not talk about it, but they definitely notice when they haven't been picked up on time. If you are often late, your child will remember the feeling of being left to wait. They care when you're late.

Early Pick-Up

Please send a note in with your student if you're picking up early. Students **must** be signed out in the main office.

Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave CPE before 3pm, unless he or she is picked up by a parent, guardian or an adult authorized in writing by the child's parent. Any change in your child's after school routine or schedule requires notification to the school in writing.

Half-Days

There are several half/days throughout the school year. **Half-day dismissal is at 12:00 noon.** Students are dismissed from the courtyard. School lunch is available to all students prior to dismissal.

School Bus & Metro Cards

Information regarding yellow school buses can be obtained from Shelly in the main office. Information regarding MetroCards can be obtained from Najah, our parent coordinator.

Eligibility for yellow buses and MetroCards is based on age and distance from school. Students 5 years and older may be eligible for full or half-fare metro-cards. Children may either have a bus route or a MetroCard, but not both. This

regulation is strictly enforced by the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT).

Children taking the yellow bus home are escorted to the auditorium before they board the bus. Please be sure to send a note with your child if they will not be riding the yellow bus on a certain day. If your child's bus plans change during the day, please contact the office *before* 2:00pm.

Classroom Cooking

Cooking is considered an integral part of each child's education at CPE, combining a variety of skills in a fun and productive way. Each class prepares its own snack every day. Cooking techniques become more sophisticated as children move up through the grades.

Each class uses recipes that work with any allergies children in the classroom have.

CPE provides supplies for all our classrooms. Families are asked to help subsidize the cost of cooking and classroom materials through a yearly monetary contribution.

Food in School

Every day, children make snack for their whole class. Families should not send separate snacks.

School lunch is available for free for *all* students. If your child prefers to bring lunch from home, please send

healthy options. Soda, candy, chips, and glass bottles are not allowed.

There is a vending machine in our school building's cafeteria. This machine is for the high school only. CPE1 students may not use it.

Toys, Games, Electronics & Money

If you are sending money for a trip or school contribution, please seal envelope that is clearly marked with your child's name, teacher, and the purpose of the payment.

Learning to hold onto valuables is part of growing up. Children do lose money. If your child needs money for an afterschool activity, it should be zipped in a backpack, with a reminder to your child not to take out the cash. CPE1 cannot be responsible for lost money.

Toys, games and equipment should also be left at home. Children naturally like to show special items to their friends, which means those items can be lost or broken. Most children have a hard time focusing in class if they know a favorite toy is just outside in their cubby.

The classrooms and playgrounds are well equipped. It's important for children to socialize with each other and the equipment they all can share.

Cell Phones

Children are allowed to bring cell phones and other electronic devices to school. As soon as children arrive on school grounds, cell phones must be placed in their backpacks and turned off.

Children may not use their cell phones during the school day. Cell phones may be confiscated and returned to your child or you at the end of the day or at a later date if there has been more than one incident.

If you have to get in touch with your child, please call the main office. Do not call or text your child's personal phone.

What Children Should Wear

There is no school uniform at CPE; we do ask that clothes are neat, appropriate, comfortable, and modest. CPE1's tradition is that hats and hoods are not worn inside.

Much of the day may be spent sitting on the floor or working with sometimes-messy materials. Informal, comfortable, washable clothing is the norm.

Children should be able to run, skip, jump, and climb. Flip-flops and slides should not be worn.

Children need to be outdoors. We go out when there are puddles and ice and snow. That means children of every age need a change of dry clothes in their cubbies. In

winter, hats, mittens, boots, and snowpants are needed; sledding, ice-skating, and playing in the snow are part of our community.

Families and School

Family Involvement

The interrelationship between teachers, families, and students has been the bedrock of CPE1. Parental involvement is strongly encouraged.

Family communications include frequent letters from the principal, written updates from teachers, and twice-yearly family conferences. If your child is new to a classroom, teachers will set up parent interviews in September or October. Written narrative reports are sent home twice a year.

Communicating with Teachers

We understand that you may need to speak with teacher during the school day, when they are mostly focused on children. As tempting as it may be to engage teachers at drop-off, children lining up or in the classroom also expect teachers' attention.

The best way to get in touch with teachers is to call the main office (212.860.5821) or reach out via email. Teachers will get in touch again at a time when they are not with their class.

Have a Concern?

Concerns and questions should be addressed first with your child's teacher. Feel free to send a note or email, or leave a phone message via the main office.

You may also reach out to Najah if you feel like you need support in approaching your child's teacher or need another ear.

Our community is a thoughtful one, so please allow some time for thought and care to be considered before you receive a response. Also know that confidentiality will always be respected.

Families' concerns often bring up important considerations. It's important to our school to hear perspectives

Coming to Workshops

Evening workshops are a special part of our community. Parents and guardians gather with staff to learn about our practices here at CPE1. We gather and break down a specific area of practice for the evening. You will learn about what we do the same way that your children experience learning in the classroom. This is also an

important part of community building for us. Join us in learning, growing and making connections.

CPE1 Parent Association

You *are* the parent association. Every parent and guardian is automatically a member. You don't need to join; you just show up.

The CPE1 parents association meets once a month to discuss school policy, fundraising, budgeting, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities and provides the space to learn more about CPE1's curriculum.

Family Coffees

About once each month, you're invited to an informal discussion on Friday mornings. These coffee-with-the-principal events are social and casual. Families are invited to ask questions about the life of the CPE1 and to talk about whatever is on their mind. The principal offers some answers, and participates in these free-flowing discussions.

Monetary Contributions

CPE1 families donate their time, expertise, and money to support learning in our school. The parent association raises money to support such activities as ice skating, daily snack in classrooms, and graduation. To cover these costs, the parent association suggests a donation level to help with learning opportunities for *all* children, in every class.

The parent association believes it's not how much you can contribute, but that every family contributes what it can. The goal is full participation of all families.

Other Contributions

Our school values all kinds of contributions. The time and skills you can give to our school will be very appreciated.

Teachers sometimes request extra adult help, such as on field trips. If you wish to volunteer your time and talent in other ways, please reach out to Najah, our parent coordinator.

CPE Directory

The CPE1 school directory allows families to get in touch with each other. The directory is published once a year.

When you go to www.cpe1.nyc to fill out your child's emergency contact blue card, you also will choose the information (e.g., email address, phone number) you wish to have included in the directory.

Practices and Traditions

A CPE Education

Central Park East has a well-respected and nationally recognized history in education. CPE1 has been a pioneer in innovative nurturing, progressive learning for all elementary school age children. Founded in 1974 as a part of an initiative to create smaller school communities, CPE1 has a clearly defined philosophy and mission.

CPE emphasizes learning by doing. Our integrated curriculum emerges from children's particular interest and passions.

The school is made up of mixed-age classrooms, extensive exposure to the arts, and an intensive exploration of continually evolving educational practices. This approach addresses the social, physical, intellectual, and aesthetic aspects of learning. Collaborations between teacher, parent and child are encouraged to understand better how children make sense of the world and how to nourish their development.

All students attend weekly classes in music, visual art, and movement and theater. Snow, cold and light rain do not keep us indoors. From November through March all children ice skate at Lasker Rink in Central Park. We take

regular trips around the city. Robust participation in the arts and outdoor exercise help children grow and discover beyond the walls of their general classroom.

Topics and issues which arise are explored during class conversations. All children are given an opportunity to participate in the discussion, share their experiences, and hear other children's comments. Each child's opinion is elicited and respected, fostering positive self-expression. This develops logical thinking skills and the ability to process information.

CPE *always* has had a philosophy of inclusion. The school encourages children to learn from each other, to appreciate differences, and to be sensitive to limitations while emphasizing talents and strengths. Teachers are also experienced in working with children with physical as well as developmental or emotional needs.

Work Time

Worktime (and project time in the upper grades) is a vital part of CPE1 learning. During worktime, children gather to select their work for the day. Most of the materials are open-ended. This enables the child to investigate, experiment, revise, question, cooperate and think deeply.

Worktime is full of choices, negotiation, and responsibility. Children choose to work together or alone. They communicate with peers and teachers, developing language skills that are critical for academic and social

development. Children expand themselves through inquiry and relationships.

All-School Sing

Each Monday at 8:30, all students and staff come to the auditorium to sing as a group. We sing songs of freedom and joy, including old favorites that CPE1 has been singing for decades.

You are invited, too. Please sit behind classes, and sing loudly and proudly. Because this is a time to be together as a community, we ask all adults to put their phones away so that they can be fully present with the group.

Open House

The first event of each school year is our open house. This event brings parents and families to CPE for an assembly and visit to their child's classroom. In the classroom, families hear their teachers' plan for the upcoming year. Families also interact with each other and get to know each other better.

Fall Festival

The CPE1 Fall Festival takes place on a Saturday toward the end of October. Our schoolyard opens up for the whole community.

Each class prepares a game to play and a craft to sell. There is also a large rummage sale on the sidewalk,

and food table on which parents often place a signature dish from their cultural. Face painting, craft tables, nail art, and pumpkin decoration, and spending time with new families are among the highlights of the day.

Families pitch in organizing, donating items to rummage, preparing food, helping with set-up and clean-up, and manning booths.

Ice Skating

From November through the end of March, every child at CPE ice skates weekly with classmates at Lasker Rink in Central Park. This is a program that began over 30 years ago and is an important part of your child's physical education.

The school will loan skates for the season to any child who does not own a pair. Families are encouraged to support the CPE Skating Program by chaperoning and serving on the skating committee.

Festival of Lights

The Festival of Lights is held in early December to celebrate cultural traditions of the winter season. A potluck dinner is held. All are encouraged to bring their family's traditional foods to share. After dinner, families gather for singing and storytelling. Everyone has an electric candle representing the light of the season.

Concert & Art Show

CPE1 children perform at the spring and winter concerts. Children sing chorally, and students who participate in Opus 118's violin program perform with their instruments. Art is on display in the lobby area outside the auditorium. Every child rehearses for the concert, and families support everyone's hard work by making sure their child is present and prepared.

Book Exchange

Most schools have a book fair that charges children to go home with something new to read. At CPE1, we want to make sure every child gets equal opportunities, at no cost to families.

Each winter, families donate their gently-used books to book exchange. Children browse and take home several books for free.

The parent association is always happy to have organizing help for book exchange. It's a great way to keep great books being read.

Staff Appreciation

In mid-June, families are asked to contribute a salad, main course or dessert to the staff appreciation luncheon. This luncheon is scheduled on the citywide clerical holiday in June. Volunteers help set-up, serve, and clean up. This is

families' opportunity to thank all the CPE staff for their work throughout the year.

Family Picnic

The CPE1 family picnic takes place in Central Park at Tarr Family Playground, at West 100 Street and Central Park West. On the final Friday of each school year, families lay out blankets, bring a picnic lunch, and come together as a community. New families are invited to picnic and play.

Graduation

Our entire school attends graduation. This ceremony marks the formal end of fifth graders' time at CPE1. Fourth grade families host the graduation reception in the courtyard. It's a celebration of fifth graders who are leaving school, and fourth graders who will be preparing to come back for their own graduation the following year.