

The Laurel School



Family Handbook
2019-2020

WELCOME

The Laurel School is a small, independent, nonprofit, nonsectarian school offering an academically rich program for preschool through elementary age children. Our curriculum and environment are designed to promote your child's growth and development – cognitively, socially, emotionally and physically. We are pleased that you have chosen us and we are proud to be part of a strong learning tradition.

The following pages describe our policies, procedures and guidelines. They are designed to ensure that our children receive the best education and experience possible. Please take a few minutes to review this information so that you are familiar with the policies and guidelines. Please retain this handbook to use as a reference source for the future. Please complete and return the Acknowledgement of Receipt Form (see last page) prior to your child's first day of school.

Our faculty and staff provide a positive learning environment for each child. They welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss your child's progress, growth and development at any time. Please feel free to share your ideas and suggestions with us.

We are looking forward to getting to know you and your family and to provide a rich learning experience where all our children develop to their full potential. If there is anything we can do to improve our program or services, or if you have any questions, please feel free to speak to our faculty or administrative staff. Our doors are always open.

OUR MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

A Creative Path to Academic Excellence

Laurel's mission is to encourage children to discover their unique talents through exploration, critical thinking, and intellectual discipline which help them to become responsible architects of positive change in the world. To accomplish these ends, we engage in a total human development approach to education with a focus on the arts, music, nature, and service

OUR PURPOSE

- Provide a strong academic base, enhanced by the inseparable integration of the arts.
- Inspire a lifelong love of learning, a cultural appreciation and environmental sensitivity.
- Emphasize thoughtful resolution, positive reinforcement, awareness of differences.
- Promote a sense of community.
- Grant teachers the responsibility and freedom to teach creatively.
- Foster self-esteem.
- Provide a supportive atmosphere for encouraging public speaking and performance.
- Enable each child to develop the skills, the creativity and poise to become a responsible individual capable of enriching his or her self and community.

YOUR FIRST DAYS

The first day in a new environment can be challenging for any child. We make every effort to be aware of the circumstances that can produce anxiety during the first few days and we partner with you and your child to help ensure a smooth adjustment. We encourage parents/guardians to call any time during the day to see how their child is adjusting. For the younger children, some separation anxiety is normal and expected. We find that children make the adjustment quickly but we are sensitive to the challenge.

PERSONAL, HEALTH, AND MEDICAL RECORDS

We adhere to state licensing regulations regarding medical examination and immunization records for your child. Health forms, medical examination, immunization records and Lead Screening for all Children under 6 years must be provided upon your child's enrollment start date and kept current.

ILLNESS ABSENCES

In the case of extended or excessive absence due to illness, the child's health takes priority. We will try to accommodate every situation by providing homework for our elementary students but each situation is individually assessed. Depending on the child's condition and support, we will determine an illness absence program. It is important to remember that elementary attendance remains on your child's record as they continue on to secondary school. All absences exceeding 14 days per semester are considered excessive and require a meeting with the Head of the School. At the end of the school year, the Head of School may recommend repeating the year or summer tutoring if the required school work is not completed.

ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION

Children need to be in good health in order to get the most of their day but occasionally children become ill during the day or may show signs or symptoms prior to arrival. In order to reduce the spread of illnesses, please do not send children to school with any of the following conditions:

- A reportable condition that the local health department or physician determines to be contagious and has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the risk to others.
- An illness or symptom that prevents participation in routine daily program activities.
- An illness that results in more care than we can provide without compromising the health and safety of others.

SYMPTOMS OR SIGNS REQUIRING EXCLUSION

If a child becomes ill while at school, we will notify you immediately. Children may not return to school for 24 hours and/or symptoms or signs are treated or the child is symptom free. **If prescribed, children should be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning the school.** The following symptoms or signs of illness may prohibit your child from participating in our program:

Blood in stools	Diarrhea	Eye Drainage	Fever	Infestation
Mouth sores	Rash	Runny nose	Vomiting	Respiratory distress
Persistent abdominal pain	Unusual color of skin, eyes, stool or urine			
Unexplained irritability, lethargy, and/or persistent crying				

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES and ISOLATION

In the event that a child, faculty or staff member becomes ill at school and we suspect a highly contagious disease, the child, faculty, and/or the staff member is isolated from others. In the case of a child, we notify the parent/guardian and require you seek medical attention.

NOTIFICATION TO HEALTH DEPARTMENT

When a contagious disease is confirmed, the local health department is immediately notified. The local health department directs our notification process and may act as a resource for information regarding transmission of disease, procedures to take to reduce the spread, symptoms, complications and the length of isolation.

SEVERE ALLERGIES

Children with severe allergies such as allergies to bee stings, peanuts, tree nut products, milk allergies and others items, may be at risk of a serious allergic reaction in a school setting due to contact with or ingestion of the allergen. Depending on the nature and severity of the specific allergy, we may determine it is in the best interest of the child to restrict the allergen from being brought into the school. However, if we restrict a particular allergen from school, it is advised that we cannot guarantee that the allergen will never be present or that it will not be unknowingly introduced.

If your child has a severe allergy, prior to your child's first day of attendance, you are responsible for explaining the nature of your child's allergy, including:

- Events/substances that may trigger an allergic reaction.
- With respect to food allergies, limitations on the child's food consumption.
- Symptoms of the allergic reaction.
- When and how to administer treatment for an allergic reaction.

MEDICATION

Medication will be administered in accordance with state licensing regulations and school policy.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS RESPONSIBILITIES

You are encouraged to dispense medication prior to arriving or after leaving school and to request from the physician or pharmacy for prescriptions with 12-hour dosages.

You accurately complete a Medication Administration Authorization Form or such other forms as required by the applicable state licensing authority, to authorize the dispensing of prescription, topical, and non-prescription medication, indicating the number of days and frequency the child is to receive the medication.

- Provide information on possible side effects of the medication.
- Bring medication to the office in a clear bag, labeled with your child's name.

- Do not store medication in lunch bags, back packs or any other personal belongings.
- Take unused medications at the end of the day or by the end of the day on Friday from the office.
- You may come to school and administer medication or submit a separate written authorization for emergency contact people listed on the enrollment form to administer medication to your child.

AUTHORIZATIONS

Prescription Medication

- For all medications, you must complete a Medical Administration Authorization Form
- For all prescription medication, physician’s approval is required.
- All medications must be in original containers including a prescription label with specific dispensing instructions and a current date

Non-Prescription Medication

- For any child under 3 years of age, physician’s approval is required for all non-prescription medications. Obtain a dated and signed note by the child’s physician approved for six months duration listing all over-the-counter medications that can be administered with specific instructions for each listed medication.
- For any child over the age of 3 years, provide written authorization for staff member to administer non-prescription medication in accordance with written instructions that correspond to the manufacturer's directions on the label.

Topical, Non-Prescription Medication

- Physician’s approval is not necessary for topical non-prescription medications (example: sunscreen and insect repellent).

OUTDOOR PLAY

Our daily schedule includes at least one outdoor period. Children who are well enough to attend our program must be well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Please be sure your child has adequate outdoor clothing and footwear for all weather conditions.

REST

Preschool children have a mandated, rest period during the afternoon. Some children want to sleep but others may prefer to spend time doing quiet activities such as, puzzles, books, or listening to music. Please supply a clean blanket, sheet, and pillow. Since our storage space is limited, please consider a small size blanket, pillow, and sheet (small enough so that all belongings fit in a standard size pillow case). Please take home and wash rest items every week. Older students may rest during the day, if needed.

SNACK AND LUNCH

All classes have a scheduled time for snack and lunch break. Snack and lunches should be balanced and nutritious. Good choices could include the following: cheese, fruit, vegetables, cereals, soups, yogurt, pasta and high protein sandwiches, such as tuna, egg salad, meat and/or cheese. Because we try to model good eating habits, we prefer that candy, donuts, and other sweet treats be saved for after school time meals. Lunches and snacks should be sent with a cold pack or heated items in a thermos. We do not have the ability to heat or keep food cool and we discourage you from delivering “fast food” for lunches.

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays and celebrations are important cultural events. We invite you to join us to help recognize a special day. Although we like treats, we are mindful that many of students have food allergies and/or restrictive diets. Please check with us to determine what food items (please consider healthy treats) or non-food activities that meet our healthy food standards. In the spirit of inclusion, we ask that you do not distribute invitations in our classrooms (you may use our family mailboxes) and we do not distribute class list information unless we have permission to do so.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

CHILD GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE POLICY

We believe that guidance and discipline steps should bring a new awareness and a method to change negative behavior. Our goals are for the child to be aware of his/her potential to display outstanding character and an ability to develop a sound mind and body. A child’s educational experience should give him/her a sense of pride in achievement and self-dignity. Our steps to guide and discipline include the following:

- Discipline will not cause embarrassment or loss of dignity; no child will suffer degradation in any way or form.
- Preschool children will not be disciplined for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. Children will not remain in soiled clothing or on the toilet for excessive amounts of time.
- Corporal punishment, the withholding of food or privileges, or verbal abuse will not be used as forms of discipline.
- A portion of recess time for elementary school students may be used to complete school work missed because of a disciplinary situation.

- Teachers are expected to reinforce positive behavior consistently.
- The word “no” is avoided rather we encourage what to “do” as optional behavior. Examples include: “You may leave the circle...” Older students may be given a choice to remove themselves from the group until they feel they are able to behave appropriately.
- A child may, on occasion, be guided gently and firmly away from an undesirable activity to a desirable one.

If a child is not responding to corrections or suggestions, if the child physically or verbally assaults another child, or the child is unable to maintain self-control, the child will be given the opportunity to calm down, regain composure outside of the classroom and/or meet with the Head of School. The Head of School meets with the child and teacher to determine appropriate next steps. Usually, the child and/or children, faculty, and Head of School resolve the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved, the family and/or families will be contacted.

MINOR INCIDENTS

Incidents which will result in a meeting with the Head of School and possibly a parent/guardian conference include but are not limited to:

- Throwing rocks, sticks or other objects that could endanger another child.
- Hitting, scratching, kicking, pushing, shoving, and biting another child.
- Continuous disregard for playground or classroom rules.
- Cumulative failure to complete assignments and/or homework.
- Continuous inappropriate language.
- Continuous abusive or disruptive behavior.

The teacher documents the incident in writing describing the behavior or action of the child and/or children and the resolution. A copy of the report is sent home with the parent and a copy given to the Head of School and a copy placed in the child record. If the situation continues, parents/guardians are asked to meet with the Head of School and teacher. If the behaviors continue after the above steps, s/he may be excused from the program for a day or longer, especially in cases where the safety of the child or other children cannot be assured.

NO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR ELEMENTARY GRADE STUDENTS

Violations which will result in suspension and students will receive a zero for any work that is missed or graded during their suspension period.

- Frequent dishonesty.
- Intentional plagiarism
- Bullying, harassing, making fun of, humiliating or embarrassing another child.
- Deliberate and continuous verbal or physical assault on another child.

Violations which will result in immediate suspension or dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- Possession, distributing or selling any illegal substances or alcohol on school grounds or at a school sponsored event.
- Behavior that is dangerous or intentionally abusive to another student or staff member.
- Serious threats.
- Possession of any type of weapon on school grounds including pocketknives.
- Intentional vandalism of school property or another person’s possessions.

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL

- In these cases, the following procedures will be followed:
- Student meets with the Head of School and teacher.
- Parents/guardians are called and asked to meet with the Head of School immediately.
- Observations and incidents are reviewed with parents/guardians and filed in the child’s records.
- Parents/Guardians will be provided with information and referral for other services if necessary.
- Student will meet with the Head of School and teacher before returning to school.
- No tuition refunds are granted for suspension time or dismissal.

CHARACTER BUILDING /BULLYING PREVENTION

Every year we present a character building/anti-bullying program for our elementary age students. The program includes review of positive character traits; incorporates art, creative writing and design, dramatic enactments; and information and resources for families.

Bullying, teasing, and intimidation are unfortunate developmental behaviors that begin in early school years. In the past, teachers and administrators could help manage and guide these negative behaviors in a school setting. With the expansion of technology, bullying, teasing, and intimidation follow children as they get older throughout their day, particularly through

texting and social networking. Our program helps our students recognize how developing positive character traits can impact negative behaviors and support positive behaviors. The curriculum uses a positive approach that is aligned with our school culture. Teaching students kindness, tolerance, and good sportsmanship is part of our day-to-day lessons and culture.² There are many tragic stories circulating in the news and school circles and we want to prepare our students in a safe and nurturing environment to help minimize fear and give them tools to cope at their level. We adhere to our No Tolerance Policy and we take immediate action regarding any violation.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

We encourage students to be comfortable at school yet we require our students to wear appropriate attire at all times. Our guidelines include:

- Neat, well-fitting jeans, no holes.
- T-Shirts with appropriate words, symbols or pictures.
- Sneakers or other soft soled shoes.
- Blouses, shirts, dresses, slacks, shorts.
- Sandals – sport or leather with low heels/ rubber soles and heel straps.
- Children should be dressed according to the weather. Most days, weather permitting, recess is outdoors and students are expected to participate.
- Outer clothing and other personal property should be marked with their name.
- Children in younger grades may wear slippers during the day.
- Hats and sunglasses are for outside use only.
- Temporary hair dye and face make-up are permitted only on special occasions such as school spirit days and some holidays.
- No gum chewing is permitted anywhere on school grounds.
- For our younger children:
 - Send an extra set of clothing, labeled (with indelible ink or name labels).
 - In hot weather dress your child with hats, visors, and tightly woven clothing.
 - In cold weather, appropriate layered clothing to create insulation including: mittens or gloves; caps or hoods or hats; sweaters or sweatshirts; socks; and warm or waterproof outerwear.

Not permitted:

- Torn or soiled clothing
- T-Shirts with aggressive, violent or inappropriate graphics or language
- Construction boots, rubber boots (for outdoor use only)
- Flip flops, cowboy boots, hard soled dress shoes
- Oversized baggy pants
- Any clothing where undergarments are visible
- Any clothing that does not cover the midriff
- Spaghetti strapped shirts, unless layered with another shirt on top
- Oversized Sweatpants
- Pocket chains

Students, who are not attired properly, will be reminded of school policy and asked to follow the school guidelines. After the first reminder, parents/guardians will be called for appropriate replacement garments. We are not responsible for lost, stained, soiled, or torn clothing.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please do not bring toys or personal belongings from home. Children's personal space is limited and it is distressing for children and staff members when belongings are lost or misplaced. Unfortunately, we cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any belongings.

SPECIAL SERVICES AND REFERRALS

PARENT REQUEST

When a parent/guardian has a concern about their child's social, mental, educational, or medical wellbeing, we refer them to appropriate services that would benefit the child (See Referral List).

STAFF REFERRAL

Whenever a teacher is concerned about a child's development or behavior and feels that an evaluation is necessary, the teacher will review their concerns with the Head of School. If the Head of School agrees, the teacher will be asked to complete an

observation report and review the child's record prior to contacting parents to request a referral.

REFERRAL PROCEDURE

The Head of School maintains and distributes a list of current referral resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. This list includes the contact person for Early Intervention Program referrals.

The Head of School or the teacher schedules a meeting with parents/guardians to notify them of the school's concern and prepares a list of possible resources. At the meeting, the Head of School provides the parent/guardian with a written statement recommending a referral for additional services, a brief summary of the school's observations and any efforts the school may have made to accommodate the child's needs.

The Head of School or teacher will follow up the referral, with your written permission, and contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the school. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from this agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the school reviews the child's progress at school to determine if another referral is necessary. If it is determined that The Laurel School is no longer able to meet the child's needs, the Head of School will help the family in locating another school. The Head of School maintains a written record of any referrals, including the parent/guardian conference and results.

REPORTING ABUSE AND NEGLECT

According to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 119, all administrators of schools, child care centers, licensed family child care providers, and their employees (teachers, aides, and assistants) are *mandated reporters*. As such, they are required to report suspected abuse or neglect to the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS), or to the Head of School. The Head of School immediately reports suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. The Head of School is also required by the Department of Early Education and Care regulations to notify the EEC immediately after filing a 51A report or learning that a 51A report has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child.

The state does not require that the reporter have proof that abuse or neglect has occurred before reporting. The law specifies reporting *suspected* incidents and includes the phrase "reasonable cause to believe." *Reasonable cause* means that, after examining all the facts in a particular situation, most people with training and expertise would also suspect abuse. This is the "reasonable person" standard commonly used in the law - it is saying you should use your professional knowledge of the child to make an informed decision. Incidents must be reported as soon as they are noticed, since waiting for proof may involve grave risk to the child. Some situations are clearly reportable; others are less clear. Whenever unsure about what to do, we call DSS and speak with a trained social worker about our concerns. The social worker can then advise us whether or not it is appropriate to file an actual report.

MANDATED REPORTER

A mandated reporter must file a report if s/he has reasonable cause to believe that:

- A child is suffering from physical or emotional injury from abuse, including sexual abuse
- A child is suffering from neglect, including malnutrition
- A child is physically dependent upon an addictive drug at birth

COMPLAINT FILED AGAINST A FACULTY/STAFF MEMBER

If a complaint is filed against a faculty and/or staff member, we will notify EEC and we will cooperate in all investigations. The Head of School will gather information and contact the Department of Social Services to file a 51A. If the suspected incident of child abuse or neglect is filed, the faculty and/or staff member will not be permitted to have contact with the children until the Department of Social Services and EEC complete an investigation. Pending the outcome of the investigation, the administration will determine what action to take.

STUDENT ARRIVAL

For elementary school children, please drop your child at our front door by live parking in the circle. We are trying to develop a sense of independence for our older students so; faculty and staff members greet children upon arrival and help guide them to their classrooms. Students arriving after **8:15 AM** are considered tardy and will be marked late. If your child arrives late, please check-in at the office and a faculty or staff member will escort your child to their locker and classroom.

For our younger students, we offer two arrival options. You may drop your child at the front door by live parking in the circle. Faculty and staff members greet children and guide them to their classrooms. This option may be convenient when you are balancing other children, busy schedules, and/or inclement weather. Please do not leave your car running in the circle or park in our around the circle sides, while you walk your child to the classroom. Otherwise, you may park and walk your child to class. Please notify the front office if your child is going to be tardy.

Arrival Times

Morning Enrichment	7:30 AM
Elementary	8:00 AM

DISMISSAL

When you arrive to pick up your child, please use our front door. All students are dismissed at the classrooms or students may be brought to you. You are welcome to wait outside your child's class until the teacher dismisses the class or student. Families may request to have preschool children escorted to the front circle for your convenience. Please call the office when you arrive at our circle.

Dismissal Times

Toddler, Preschool & Pre- Kindergarten Half Day	1:00 PM
Toddler, Preschool & Pre- Kindergarten Full Day	3:00 PM
Elementary	3:00 PM
After-school Enrichment Program	5:00 PM

CHILD RELEASE

You should feel secure and confident when faculty and/or staff members are aware of who may or who may not pick up your child. Upon enrollment, you complete our enrollment forms authorizing specific individual permission to pick up your child, as well as emergency contact persons whom may also pick up. You are responsible for maintaining accurate, complete, and current information.

Written authorization must be on file prior to your child's release and we ask that you notify us when you are not picking up your child. Please inform those individuals listed on your enrollment forms that they may be asked to verify their identity with photo identification for anyone who is not positively known to them and that they should stop by the office prior to going to your child's classroom. We will not release a child to anyone younger than 16 years of age.

EARLY DROP OFF/LATE PICKUP

Please make every effort to drop off and pick up your child on time. If a late pick up is unavoidable, please let us know as soon as possible that you will be later than expected. After the above dismissal times, preschool and elementary students join the afterschool enrichment program automatically. Enrichment Program fees apply to all students after **3:15 PM**.

If your child is not picked up after our scheduled closing time and you have not notified us, we adhere to mandated guidelines as follows:

- Attempt to contact you or person(s) authorized to pick up the child.
- If no contact has been made with you or other authorized person, we determine whether and when the police or appropriate authorities should be contacted.
- If police or appropriate authorities are contacted and they place the child into protective custody, a note in a sealed envelope is posted on our front door advising you that the child has been taken into protective custody and provides the contact person's phone number.
- We will make every effort to contact you while keeping the child calm and comfortable.
- Late pick up fees described as extended rates on your tuition schedule apply.

Starting school promptly is important and limits disruptions to late arrivals. Please make every attempt to have your child at the school 5-10 minutes before the start of school.

WEAPONS

Parents, legal guardians, guests, and students are prohibited from possessing firearms or other weapons on our property and at events sponsored by us. For persons authorized to carry concealed weapons, we respectfully request that any/all weapons be locked in your vehicle during the short period of time when you visit our school.

EMERGENCY/EVACUATION PLANS

Parents/Guardians are contacted when any emergency occurs. Emergency contact names and numbers are maintained in each child's file. Please keep emergency contact information current.

Emergency Preparedness Plan includes roles and responsibilities and is written to maximize our ability to protect children and employees in emergency and/or evacuation situations.

The Head of School provides basic guidelines for all emergency situations including the following:

- Keep current and readily available emergency contact information for faculty and families;
- Maintain a working phone (mobile, cell, and/or portable)
- Develop and communicate a plan to notify and reunite families in the event of an emergency

requiring complete evacuation of the school and school grounds;

- Develop a plan to obtain information from local authorities to determine whether to evacuate off premises or to shelter in place, particularly important for natural disasters.
- Communication plan;
- Escape routes for evacuation; and
- Designated meeting place outside and away from the school and/or school grounds. Our meeting place is at the cul de sac of Scarborough Road, Brewster, MA.

Faculty and administration members are responsible for the following:

- Post evacuation plan (primary and secondary routes in each classroom and by all exit doors);
- Keep and take updated emergency contact and attendance records during evacuations;
- Supervise students under their charge and direct students to the designated location;
- Take emergency medications and supply bag during evacuations;
- Take attendance when class relocates to an outside area or evacuates to another location.
- Report missing students to administration staff or Head of School;
- Render first aid if necessary and
- Have phone (mobile, cell, and/or portable) charged at all times.

Family responsibilities:

- Encourage and support school safety, violence prevention, and incident preparedness programs within the school:
- Provide the school with requested information concerning the incident, early and late dismissals, and other related release information; and,
- Understand family responsibilities during a school emergency

When parents/guardians cannot be reached, we will call the names listed on your enrollment form. If we are unable to reach you or any of your contact names, we will take the necessary emergency action. If the situation is critical, we will call 911 for medical assistance. Children may be transported by ambulance when necessary. A faculty member will travel with the child in the emergency vehicle if the parent/guardian is unable to get to the school in a timely manner.

Fire and Smoke Evacuation Procedure

In the event of a fire and/or smoke detection, evacuate the building following the safest evacuation route. Faculty and administration members evacuate the children; take emergency information and emergency student medication bag (if needed), go to the designated meeting location and wait until the fire department gives permission to re-enter the building. Designated persons comb the building for any remaining children or adults.

In the case when not permitted to return to the building, faculty and administration staff contact and direct families for student pick-up.

Emergency/Hazard/Intruder Evacuation

In the event of an emergency requiring complete evacuation from the school and school grounds, the following plan is followed:

- Head of School, designated administrative staff, or any available personnel calls 911;
- All employees and students evacuate the school and school grounds;
- All employees and students meet at the off-site designated meeting location;
- Take attendance and report missing students to designated person;
- Notify emergency personnel, contact families, and arrange for pick-up.

Inclement Weather-Blizzard/Hurricane/Loss of Water/Heat/Electricity (Non-evacuation)

In the event of a non-evacuation situation, we:

- Cancel school if we have accurate indicators;
- Plan for early dismissal if school is in session;
- Determine if problem (loss of water, heat, or electricity) can be rectified within a few hours;
- Contact families and arrange pick-up process if school is in session;
- Notify Brewster Police Department if situation becomes an immediate danger, and/or
- Follow Brewster Police instructions and notify families.

Missing Child

In the event a child is determined missing from the inside the school, outside from the play grounds, or on a field trip, we:

- Call 911.
- Call family, guardians, and/or other approved pick-up or drop-off people.
- Continue to search for the child throughout the facility, playground, or field trip areas.
- Keep other students comfortable and occupied.
- Maintain communication with the Head of School, with other faculty members, police & family.
- Follow police instructions.

CHILD INCIDENTS AND INJURY REPORTS

Although many precautions are taken to ensure a safe environment, occasional incidents do occur. If an incident or injury occurs and first aid is administered, we complete a Child Incident Report and provide a copy for you.

If your child is injured at school and treatment by a physician is needed, we will make every effort to contact you and/or the physician you have chosen to treat your child. In the event of an emergency, we will make sure that your child receives the necessary emergency treatment until we can reach you. Upon enrollment, you complete authorization for emergency treatment as part of the enrollment package. Please update the information on this form when necessary and at a minimum, annually.

SECURITY

The primary mechanism for ensuring the security of our school is strict adherence to established procedures for arrival and departure procedures. Please use our front door for arrival and departures, alert us when a new person is picking up your child, and be aware of strangers or strange cars in our parking lot. We do not allow unknown people beyond our front entrance and we request all visitors to stop by the front office and introduce themselves.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS

TRANSPORTATION

Parents/Guardians provide transportation to and from The Laurel School. You may choose to car pool and make other arrangements for your child's transportation. Please complete the Transportation Plan and Authorization section of the Enrollment Agreement.

FIELD TRIPS

The Cape Cod Classroom Van allows the children to explore all the natural resources that Cape Cod has to offer. Our Students in Kindergarten to Grade 4 will use this van often. We still from time to time will hire a student bus service to transport children for elementary school field trips. On occasion, we ask parents/guardians and faculty to chaperone and transport children for small group trips. You may give permission to allow other parents/guardians or faculty to transport your child on field trips if you are unable to participate. We give you advance notice for all field trips.

PARKING

Parking guidelines include:

- Park in the side parking or behind the circle area.
- Carpool during special events to help with limited parking availability.
- During school wide special events, we extend our parking lot into our playing field area.
- To conserve parking spaces, we request larger vehicles (pickup trucks, vans, large SUV's) to park on the basketball court. Open the gates to gain access.
- Avoid parking in the circle, on the right side of our incoming driveway (please do not block our neighboring house's driveway), and/or on Route 137.
- Allow clear access for fire equipment so that they may respond to emergencies.

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

Our Family Handbook is incorporated by reference in many forms, so please read thoroughly to have a clear understanding of guidelines, policies and procedures. All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend. To begin school you must complete and sign our application and pay a one-time application fee, our enrollment agreement and pay a non-refundable security deposit. Other enrollment forms include our Health Authorization Form, health

and immunization information, developmental history, and other state specific forms. Please be sure to update all emergency information as needed, including address, home and work telephone, cell phone numbers, e-mail addresses, any changes in your child's medical information and changes of authorized individuals, annually at a minimum. All other financial agreements must be paid prior to your child's start date.

A change in a student's schedule or additions must be made to Courtney Mills, Director of Operations and Admissions in writing for approval. We will not accept verbal requests, or requests made through teachers or other faculty members.

NON-DISCRIMINATION/CONFIDENTIALITY

The Laurel School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or marital status in the administration of its academic policies, admission policies, or other school-administered programs. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Toilet training is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment.

TUITION

Your tuition fees are payable according to your choice of payment plan. Quoted tuition is based on payment by the date due. Failure to pay tuition by the date due will result in late fees and/or termination of services. Please refer to our tuition schedule for specifics. Any arrangements and/or financial agreements are confidential and between The Laurel School and the family.

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNTS

When multiple children from the same family attend, a discount from the core tuition fee is granted once second and/or subsequent children begin attending. See our tuition schedule for specifics.

STATE LICENSING REGULATIONS

We comply with the applicable state licensing regulations and requirements. These cover aspects relating to staff qualifications, facility, playground, nutrition, health and safety guidelines/procedures, record-keeping and child to adult ratios. We are subject to inspection by state and city health, fire, licensing and building agencies.

Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE) ACCREDITATION

Our programs are consistent with the guidelines of a variety of educational accreditation organizations overseeing early childhood and elementary education. As an independent school of early childhood specialists and elementary educators, accreditation sets standards of excellence in the areas of learning programs, classroom environment, curriculum and activities, staff qualifications, health and safety, administration and other areas. We are proud of our AISNE Accreditation and welcome you to review our AISNE literature.

HOLIDAYS AND SCHOOL VACATIONS

Please refer to our school calendar for school closing holidays and vacations. Calendars are posted on our website.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS

In rare occasions, particularly inclement weather conditions, we must cancel school. Cancellation guidelines will be canceled due to inclement weather. Tune to Radio and/or Television stations running Channel 4 (WBZ), Fox 25, Channel 7(NBC(and Channel 56(CW). Our school maybe listed as "The Laurel School" or "Laurel School". Please note that we DO NOT follow the Nauset Public School cancellations. We will post our closing on our website (www.laurelschoolcapecod.org) by 7:00 am.

FACULTY AND STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The quality of our faculty and staff members is an important determinant in the quality of our program. We strive to maintain high quality faculty and staff members by providing a variety of in-services and other professional opportunities. At a minimum, the following staff qualifications include:

- CPR and first aid certifications required by state licensing regulations.
- Physician's health form is required for each staff member and kept on file.
- Staff members must meet or exceed state licensing requirements in education and experience.

Background Records Check (BRC) is completed for all new employees, administration staff, volunteers, and student teachers/interns before an offer of employment is made or allowing volunteers to work with students. BRCs are completed during a licensing renewal period, or every two years, or anytime we receive information that may indicate a new BCR is appropriate.

VACATIONS/ABSENCES

We promote times when families can spend time together and recommend vacations be taken during our school breaks. In most cases of short absences, assignments can be made up upon return to school. With extended vacations or absences, our faculty cannot support student work. For our preschool students, core program absences due to extended illnesses (3 consecutive days) may be made up if space is available (availability is not guaranteed and there is no make up for extended care absences). Make up requests must be in writing and submitted to Courtney Mills, Director of Operations & Admissions. There are no credits or refunds for vacations, illnesses, or other reasons for absence. For preschool students, there is no

schedule guarantee if you reduce your schedule for extended vacations/absences. Please notify the front office if your child's going to be absent.

TARDINESS

We are sensitive to family challenges regarding morning schedules. Occasional tardiness is acceptable; however, excessive tardiness is disruptive for all. If you arrive late, please stop at the office so that we may escort your child to class.

WITHDRAWALS

Withdrawal procedure includes:

- Submit a dated letter to The Head of School with the reason(s) and expected withdrawal date
- Request release of student records and transcripts. All financial obligations must be made.
- Meet with the Director of Operations & Admissions to review and settle any account balances.
- Tuition payments are due through the month of withdrawal and no credits or refunds are given.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

We reserve the right to terminate services at any time as deemed necessary or appropriate with or without notice.

YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION and CURRICULUM

All our students learn by doing. They learn by playing, experimenting, exploring and testing. Learning is meant to be a natural, joyful experience. Children flourish when the process of discovery is lovingly encouraged and gently reinforced. Our curriculum fosters individual growth by providing numerous opportunities for exploration, manipulation and student-initiated choices. Our academically rich curriculum is presented to accommodate individual differences in needs, abilities and interests.

TODDER, PRESCHOOL & PRE-KINDERGARTEN LEARNING

Our Toddler, Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Programing embraces the aspects of social behavior and cognitive thinking skills in a full, rich family atmosphere. The children are taught in the areas of pre-reading, writing, mathematics, social studies and science. These subjects are enriched by incorporating creative movement, music and art projects into our daily activities. Through our program, children develop critical skills such as classification, cause-and-effect, sequencing and logical thinking.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

Small class sizes enable our faculty to integrate a broad program that fosters self-confidence, individual thinking and interpersonal skills. Our core curriculum is enriched by the integration of visual and performing arts. While it provides a strong and challenging foundation in academics, it is also designed to support the expression of ideas, perceptions and feelings, and to cultivate both self-confidence and a respectful appreciation of others. A sense of community and awareness of the environment are of primary importance in all aspects of school life. .

REPORT CARDS/PROGRESS REPORTS

Report cards and progress reports are issued three times a year. The first two are issued at the time of Parent/Teacher Conferences. You receive the last progress report card at the end of the school year.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL RECORDS

Information in a child's record is privileged and confidential. During the time a student is attending school, records remain in the office at all times. Records will only be released or distributed with your signed consent. Records may be seen by you upon request. If a student's records need to be sent to another school, complete a Release of Records form.

AMENDING CHILD'S RECORDS

- You have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant material to your child's record.
- You have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in your child's record.
- If you believe that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to have a conference with the Head of School and make your objections known.
- The Head of School, within one week of the conference, render to you a decision in writing stating the reasons for the decision. If the decision is in your favor, steps shall be taken immediately to put the decision into effect.

PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

FAMILY ORIENTAION & PICNIC

We schedule a family orientation day for all families prior to the beginning of the school year. Faculty and staff are available to answer questions and to help orient families and students to our school and specific, grade-level guidelines.

Parents/guardians receive important school information, schedules, and procedures. If you are unable to attend, we ask that you schedule a conference with your child's teacher. All enrollment documents and required tuition are due on or before the first day of school. As per state law, we must have an up-to-date Health Form before your child may attend school.

PARENT/GUARDIAN AND TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent conferences are held twice during the school year. See our school calendar for specific dates. We post conference schedules and sign-up sheets outside classrooms one week prior to conference day. You are welcome to meet with your child's

teacher any time and hope that you will bring concerns, worries, or questions to us as soon as possible. Please feel free to request a teacher meeting and we look forward to your input.

COMMUNICATIONS

The success of our school is based on establishing a community connection between our families, our faculty, and our staff members. Open and frequent communication among us helps your child have a positive learning experience. We utilize many opportunities to communicate and keep you informed about your child's experiences. Please provide us with your e-mail address and visit our website regularly. We use electronic communications as our preference. Also please visit your teachers virtual classroom blog to receive up to date information about your child's class and schedule

E-MAIL NOTICES AND COMMUNICATION

Most communication will be sent via e-mail to all families. There will be some instances where we will send something home with your child.

WEBSITE

Please visit our website at www.laurelschoolcapecod.org for news, updates, and general information.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

Your involvement is important to us and your participation as a member of a helping committee is a valuable part of the teamwork involved in providing the best education possible for your child. As in most independent schools, tuition and fees do not cover operating expenses. Over the past years families have donated funds, our present building, equipment, expertise and time. There are numerous opportunities to support the school by serving on committees, volunteering for projects, helping with light administration tasks, making donations of funds, materials, and supplies, and/or maintaining the school and grounds.

ANNUAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

All Laurel School families are members of the Laurel Education Center, Inc. As members of the Corporation, parents/guardians are invited to the Annual Board of Trustees Meeting posted on our website. The Accountant's Report of the Corporation is reviewed with the members at this time.

CUSTODY/VISITATION

During the enrollment process, please discuss any custody and visitation situations and include information about the other parent/guardian. We cannot deny access rights for the other parent/guardian regardless of incomplete paperwork. In the case of divorce or custody issues, legal paperwork submitted as part of the child's file dictate child access rights for non-custodial parents/guardians.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

SCHOOL PORTRAITS

We offer school portraits taken in the fall. The portraits generally include two sittings for each child and will be delivered in time for use as holiday gifts. We post the photography dates on our school calendar and we distribute timely information about the program for your convenience.

ART AND LITERATURE FAIRE

"National Parks", "Explore Cape Cod" and "Africa" are samples of some of our past Art & Literature Faire topics. Projects are presented at a school-wide evening event just prior to our winter break. Every year the projects are outstanding and our families and friends enjoy a special cultural event. This event is an Open House all are welcome!

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ART AND MATHEMATICS EXPO

Since 1996 in early spring, our students and faculty present a school-wide Math, Science, and Technology Expo. Our older students decide on a topic, form a hypothesis, design and conduct an experiment, create a presentation board, and present the outcome at the Expo. Our younger students work on group themes and projects. The Expo is an Open House as well and all family and friends are invited to attend.

ARTS FESTIVAL

This event showcases our Arts Program here at Laurel. including Music, Dance, Art and Spanish. All Art thought the year is presented in our beautiful back playground and wooded area. This event is an Open House and one not to be missed. As you move around the campus and look at all the different types of art. You are encouraged to imagine the freedom of true expression. You will see all of the stories your children are telling.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Chain of Command

- Head of School
- Director of Operations and Admissions
- Director of Faculty and Student Services

When the Head of School is out of the building, the Director of Operations and Admissions will be in charge of any needs that may arise and be able to contact the Head of School. In the case where both the Head of School and Director of Operations and Admissions are out of the building, the Director of Faculty and Student Services will assume the management roles with regard to the students, parents, and faculty. The President of the Board of Trustees or the Treasurer shall assume all financial responsibilities, if the Acting Head of School is unable to do so.

Community and Resource Contacts

- Cape Cod Child Development • 83 Pearl Street, Hyannis, MA • 508-775-6240 • 800-974-8860
- Child Care Network • 115 Enterprise Road, Hyannis, MA 02601 • 888-530-2430 • 508-778-9470
- The Children's Place/ Family Resources • PO Box 1935, 10 Forest Ave., N. Eastham, MA • 800-871-9535
- Harwich Family Resource Center • 728 Main Street, Harwich, MA • 508-430-1692
- Nauset Integrated Preschool • 78 Eldredge Parkway, Orleans, MA 02653 • 508- 255 – 8800

State Resources

- Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)
- Department of Public Health
- Federation for Children w/ Special Needs

License and Accreditation Contacts

- Accredited by the Association of Independent Schools in New England
- Licensed by the State Department of Early Education and Care
- Laurel Day Camp licensed by the Brewster Department of Health