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**GLENSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

*Home of the Bears*

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# **New Student FAQs**



# Key Contacts

Attendance / Child Check (Late/Absent/Sick):  
[215-881-6442](tel:215-881-6442) / [GEattendance@cheltenham.org](mailto:GEattendance@cheltenham.org) /  
[swissmann@cheltenham.org](mailto:swissmann@cheltenham.org)

Michelle Robinson (Principal):  
[mrobinson@cheltenham.org](mailto:mrobinson@cheltenham.org)

Gabe DiBernardinis "Mr. D" (School Counselor):  
[gdiberardinis@cheltenham.org](mailto:gdiberardinis@cheltenham.org)

Susanne Wissmann (Building Secretary):  
[swissmann@cheltenham.org](mailto:swissmann@cheltenham.org)

Dr. Renato Lajara (Director of Elementary Education): [rlajara@cheltenham.org](mailto:rlajara@cheltenham.org)

Anna Sappington (P.A.W.S. President):  
[anna.sappington@gmail.com](mailto:anna.sappington@gmail.com)



Introducing the CSD  
Mobile App!



# GLENSIDE ELEMENTARY



215-881-6440



215-881-6316



215-881-6440

[geattendance@cheltenham.org](mailto:geattendance@cheltenham.org)



@glensideP.A.W.S.



@CSDGlensideES

## Orientation

Thursday, Aug 22, 2019 from 5-6:30p

## Playdates

Meet new friends and catch up with old ones  
at one of our playground playdates!

BTS Popsicle Party: Thu Aug 15, 5:30-7p  
New Kindergarteners: Sun Aug 18, 4:30p-6p

## P.A.W.S.

Parents **At Work** in our **School**

Subscribe to the Newsletter to stay up to date:  
([www.cheltenham.org/domain/194](http://www.cheltenham.org/domain/194))

Join the Facebook Group:  
[@glensideP.A.W.S.](https://www.facebook.com/glensideP.A.W.S.)



# Volunteering

## ★ What do I need to do to volunteer in the school?

The School District greatly values and appreciates its volunteer base. Volunteers enhance scholars' educational and extracurricular experiences. Those who are interested in volunteering must comply with clearance requirements and provisions of Board Policy #916 - Volunteers. The below link will take you to the township's Volunteer Policy and Clearance Information: <https://www.cheltenham.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=2619>

*Additional information and FAQs can be found at the back of this packet, or [here](https://www.cheltenham.org/Page/446) (<https://www.cheltenham.org/Page/446>)*

## ★ What role does P.A.W.S. play, and how can I get involved?

First - please add your email to our listserv to receive all up to date information! You can do so by emailing Anna Sappington ([anna.sappington@gmail.com](mailto:anna.sappington@gmail.com)) or signing up on the website here: <https://www.cheltenham.org/Page/444>

P.A.W.S. meets regularly to brainstorm ideas that will enhance the overall experience at Glenside Elementary. We would love to have you attend the first meeting of the year - which usually occurs in the third week of September. If you sign up for our newsletter, you will get a helpful reminder at the beginning of the year! The Newsletter will also contain important information about events and meetings throughout the year. **Get involved!** – it makes all the difference.

Feel free to contact P.A.W.S. President Anna Sappington by phone: [215-200-4445](tel:215-200-4445), or email: [anna.sappington@gmail.com](mailto:anna.sappington@gmail.com) with any questions.

*Teachers, administrators and other parents are open to your questions, so please don't hesitate to ask. Hope this list of FAQs and answers helps with some of the most common issues that pop up. Good luck!*

# Communication

★ **I've received mountains of information and I'm finding it overwhelming. Where do I go with specific questions about the school, or my child's issues, or if I have a suggestion or complaint?**

Depending on the information you need, you can contact the following people. All contact information can be found on page 1 or on the district website:

- **Classroom**-related questions: Please reach out to your child's teacher
- General **School**-related questions: Contact the building secretary, Mrs. Suzanne Wissmann, or Principal Robinson via phone calls, email or written notes.
- School **adjustment**, or emotional/social/behavioral questions: The school counselor, Mr. Gabe DeBernardinis, can be reached via phone or email to help you or your child.
- School **District** Questions: Contact Principal Robinson or Dr. Renato Lajara (Director of Elementary Education)
- **General** Questions, that might be answered by other parents, or anything related to P.A.W.S.: Reach out to P.A.W.S. President, Anna Sappington.

★ **How do I alert the teacher and the school if my child will be late, absent, sick or leaving school early? What about a change in bus schedule?**

All notifications to the school about your child's attendance and bus status should be made in writing to your child's teacher, and by email to [geattendance@cheltenham.org](mailto:geattendance@cheltenham.org), and [swissmann@cheltenham.org](mailto:swissmann@cheltenham.org). This includes **Bus schedule changes**, such as if you are going to pick up your child from school rather than having them take the bus.

If your child will be **late or absent**, you need to call Child Check (215-881-6442) and leave word for your child's teacher in addition to emailing the people noted above.

If your child is **sick**, a written note explaining the absence should accompany the child within three days of their return to school. Absences without a note within three days will be documented as an unexcused absence.

If you are planning a **vacation** and would like Educational Credit to excuse the absence, you must request the form from your teacher and turn it in within **2 weeks prior** to the planned absence.

# Settling into Kindergarten

- ★ **Is my child the only one who is having trouble adjusting to kindergarten? How do teachers handle it when a child is crying or upset and is having trouble settling?**

No, your child is not the only one taking their time to adjust. They all take their time, and some have a harder time than others. Our kindergarten teachers have seen it all, and are experienced at reaching out to every scholar and making them feel welcome and special. When a child is upset in the classroom, the teachers and aides take the child aside and try to help them work through whatever is causing them to be unsettled. Our school counselor, Gabe DiBerardinis, is also available to help in such situations. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their child's teacher about any ongoing issues.

- ★ **How long does it take the average child to acclimate to the new routine of kindergarten? What extra help does the school provide to children who take longer to settle into the routine?**

Every new kindergartener, in their own way, takes time to adjust to the newness of the big school routine. Some take longer than others, but the average is about two weeks. After that, the routine seems to become more, well, routine, and children settle into their classroom, make friends, and start feeling more confident. If a child needs extra help settling in, teachers, aides and the school counselor are there to help..



# Before School Starts / Drop-off

## ★ What happens after drop off in the morning, before the school day officially begins?

Scholars may arrive at school as early as 8:40am. On nice days, children line up on the playground behind their room number, under the supervision of aides. On rainy, snowy or extremely cold days, the children will go to the gym, grouped by grade and class. The gym is also supervised by aides.

## ★ What if my child doesn't want to enter the school alone during the first few days/weeks? Can I walk them into school/onto the playground?

You are not alone! Some children need extra help getting acclimated and a parent walking them to their line on the playground gives them security in the first few days, when everything is so unfamiliar. Some need it longer, and this is okay too. There is no set "rule" about this, although it is generally advised that parents try to say goodbye to their children at the car or bus stop. However, parents are welcome to walk their child to the playground if this helps the child feel more secure as they start the school day.

## ★ When my kindergartener insists they doesn't want to go to school, and they clings to me at the school entrance, what is the best thing for me to do?

Ah, the clinging. We remember it well. This too shall pass, and yours isn't the first. Other parents can commiserate, and are happy to talk if you are finding it a challenge; contact P.A.W.S for support! Try to make mornings as positive as possible, and if they needs your support walking into school for a while, that's okay. You might plan to meet up with a friend or classmate at the entrance, so that they can walk into school with a buddy. If the problem persists, your child's teacher and Gabe DiBerardinis ("Mr. D"), the school counselor, are available for advice and guidance, and you are encouraged to work with them.

## ★ What are the rules concerning drop off by car when I'm driving my child to school in the morning?

There are two entrances, one for buses and one for cars. Children being dropped off at school must be dropped off in the car drop-off line, which is the second driveway on Harrison Avenue, coming from Limekiln Pike. If it is between 8:40 and 9:00, you may pull up, let your child out and go. Please do not park your car or leave it unattended in the car drop-off line. Also, please do not enter the bus drop-off circle.

If you intend to walk your child to the playground, you must park your car in the parking lot or along Harrison Avenue or Limekiln Pike.

# The Routine, part 1

## ★ What happens at school each day? What is the routine?

School starts at 9:00 am. Your child’s teacher will share their schedule with you on the first day of school. While each day progresses in the same order, the activities change from day-to-day. For example, on one week, on Monday at 2:00pm, your child may have P.E., and on Thursday they have art at that time, Friday it’s music. But each day, your scholars can count on a specific flow, so that it becomes predictable and routine. The teachers post the schedule in the classroom and send a copy home so that children and parents know what’s coming up next.

## ★ What are “Specials” and who are the Specials Teachers?

Specials are the classes that happen outside of the classroom: art, music, physical education, library & guidance. Specials are scheduled for each class and they happen at set times. They occur on a four-day rotation, so one one week, your scholar may have art twice, and the next week, it’s music or P.E. They look forward to their specials classes—be sure to ask them about what they are learning! Post the schedule at home to help your child anticipate which special is coming up, they will need to wear athletic shoes and comfy clothes on P.E. days, and return any library books each week.

### Sample Specials Schedule

Art: Mrs. Connolly  
Music: Mrs. Berkowitz  
Physical Education: Mrs. Nathan  
Library: Miss Williames  
Guidance: Mr. D

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Music	Art	Gym	Library	Music
Art	Gym	Library	Music	Art
Gym	Library	Music	Art	Gym
Guidance	Music	Art	Gym	Library

## ★ What happens at recess? Do I pack a snack for my child?

Kindergarteners have two recesses: one right after lunch and another in the afternoon. Weather permitting, they have recess outside on the playground. All kindergarteners recess together, which means your child is able to play with friends from other classes. Aides supervise during recess. Snacks are a good idea, and you can pack them in your child’s backpack along with a water bottle.

# The Routine, part 2

★ **What happens when it rains? What activities are available indoors during recess?**

When it rains, recess is held in the classroom. Teachers as well as P.A.W.S provide games, paper and writing/drawing materials. Please note: things that are of value to your child should be kept at home.

★ **What is the procedure for lunch? How do I manage my child's lunch account?**

Your child can bring lunch (an insulated lunch bag/box is recommended), or order lunch from the cafeteria. Each child has a lunch account, into which parents may put money for their child to draw upon. Children are given an account PIN number – they punch in their code like using an ATM machine. The teachers and aides will help the children in remembering and using their PIN. The charges for lunch (and any other items, such as: milk or another drink, cookies, ice cream, popcorn, etc...) are debited from the account as they are used. When the account is low, a notice will be sent home in the homework folder, letting you know to send in more money for the account. You can manage your child's account online at [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com). **If you have any questions, contact the Cafeteria Manager at 215-881-6444, or by note.**

★ **How do I know what my child is purchasing with the lunch money in their account? Is there a way to put a lock on the account so that they only purchase a certain number of "extras" (i.e., popcorn, ice cream, cookies) per week?**

Everything your child purchases is tracked and can be viewed online once you set up an account at [www.schoolcafe.com](http://www.schoolcafe.com).

★ **I'm concerned about my child eating unhealthy, overly processed foods at lunch. What healthy choices are available each day on the lunch menu?**

Glenside Elementary's cafeteria offers plenty of healthy options for lunch each day, including well-rounded meals with protein, carbohydrates, fruits and/or vegetables, as well as milk, water and fruit juices to drink. Everyday choices include a salad platter; a half sandwich and yogurt; grilled cheese; hot dog; or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. You can view the current offerings here: <https://cheltenham.nutrislice.com/menu/> All lunches include milk and fruit, and some include vegetables as well. Every effort is made to have healthy choices which comply with high nutritional standards.

# Dismissal, part 1

## ★ How does dismissal work?

**BUS:** Children who ride the bus are lined up in the school according to bus number and are supervised by aides & staff members. When their number is called, they are walked by an aide out of the school to where their bus loads. Kindergarteners are lined up together and remain in the front of the line. During the first week of school, they are also given a necklace to wear with their name, room number and bus number, so aides and teachers can help them get to where they need to be. Children should be met at their bus stop by a parent, guardian or other designated adult. There have been situations where a student returned to school because no one was there to meet them.

**CAR PICK-UP:** Children who are car riders will be dismissed to the library and called when the parent or designated guardian is next in the car line. An aide will assist your child in getting into your car so the line of cars can keep moving. *Please do not get out of your car in the car line.*

**WALKERS:** Children who walk are brought to the front of the building and are released to their parents or other designated guardian.

All changes to your dismissal routine should be communicated with a note to your child's teacher, as well as an email to [geattendance@cheltenham.org](mailto:geattendance@cheltenham.org) and the building secretary, Mrs. Suzanne Wissmann ([swissmann@cheltenham.org](mailto:swissmann@cheltenham.org))

### Dismissal changes include:

- your child is going home with a friend, or a neighbor or grandma is picking them up instead of their normal guardian
- Mode of pick-up is changing: walker to car-rider, bus to walker, car-rider to walker
- Picking up earlier than normal dismissal
- Emergency that results in a change to your normal dismissal plan [*Must also call the main office*]

\*\*Please note that the friends *cannot* ride the bus home with your child. Only children who are designated to ride a certain bus can ride that bus.

## ★ What if I am late picking up from school?

You must contact the school office (215-881-6440) as soon as possible to let them know you are running late. Children who are not picked up within 10 minutes or so of dismissal are brought back into school and wait in the lobby with supervision until parents or guardians are contacted. Please be mindful that there is no supervision available after 4:10pm and every effort should be made to pick students up on time.

# Dismissal, part 2

★ **I work and am not home during the day. How do I designate plans for my child in the event of an emergency dismissal?**

You will fill out lots of paperwork at the beginning of the school year, and it will ask you for this information (and much more), all of which is kept on file in the school office. It is extremely important that the school has updated information if your contact numbers change. The district does have an automated system that can call multiple numbers per household in the event of an emergency or early dismissal, but the numbers have to be accurate and up-to-date.

Glenside Elementary and the Cheltenham School District rely heavily on email to communicate with parents and guardians about upcoming events and important notices. Principal Robinson will send a weekly newsletter via email, P.A.W.S. has a weekly newsletter and the District sends out a NewShare as well. We encourage all parents to sign-up for the email listserv on the district website. Please visit: <https://www.cheltenham.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=151>

★ **Is there an extended care program?**

Yes! Extended care is provided at Glenside Elementary School through C.L.A.S.P. The morning program begins at 7:00 am and goes to start of classes. The afternoon program begins at the end of classes and goes to 6:30 pm. Please visit the Cheltenham District website, [www.cheltenham.org/clasp](http://www.cheltenham.org/clasp).

You can also call the Glenside Elementary School CLASP Director:  
Lesley Katz, at 215-886-6819(office) or 267-421-3358(work cell).

