

The ABCs of Haymarket Elementary!

Parent Handbook

2025-2026

Welcome to Haymarket Elementary School, Home of the CUBS!
8 Dens, 1 Forest

A

Advisory Council: The HMES Advisory Council generates community input through parent members and teachers. It meets on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM via Zoom.


Administration: The Principal, Nicole Mills, and Assistant Principals, Brooke Shore and Dan Seymour, are the instructional leaders who supervise the safety and security of all, instruction, and manage the building. Brooke Shore and Dan Seymour, the Assistant Principals, are Special Education, Intervention, and 504 Administrators. With instruction, safety and security being the most important of the school day, please be respectful of time by pre-arranging meetings as needed.

Arrival Time:

School Hours

9:10 AM-4:00 PM	School is in session
9:20 AM	Tardy bell rings
8:30 AM-4:30 PM	Front office hours
6:00 AM-6:30 PM	School Aged Childcare hours (SACC)

Students should not be dropped off outside unattended. If you arrive after 9:20 AM, you should plan to park and come into the building with your child to sign your student in the office. A sign in the car lane will be posted when the time has passed for arrivals.

Attendance: Under Virginia Law, students are responsible for attending school every day that school is in session. Absences, tardies, and early dismissals must have documented approval from parent and school personnel. A doctor's note is typically needed following an extended absence due to illness. The division truancy office monitors attendance and will notify parents when a student develops a pattern of absenteeism or tardiness. Please call to leave a message if your child will be absent from school and follow up with a doctor's note or written excuse with your student when they return. **You may contact our school office during the day or leave a message after hours at 703-468-2800.** Absences can also be reported through **ParentVUE**. Once you log into ParentVUE click on the highlighted blue Report Absences link at the top right . Please be mindful when you send the teacher or the office staff an email about a child's absence. They may not always see the email if they are not at school, or our email system is down. There are times when the teacher is out sick, and the substitute will not be able to access email accounts. Please contact the front office when planning a vacation which will result in an extended absence for your child. Make note: In keeping with division regulation, a planned or unexplained absence that extends beyond 15 days will result in automatic withdrawal from school. Parents will be expected to re-enroll the student(s) upon re-entry.

B

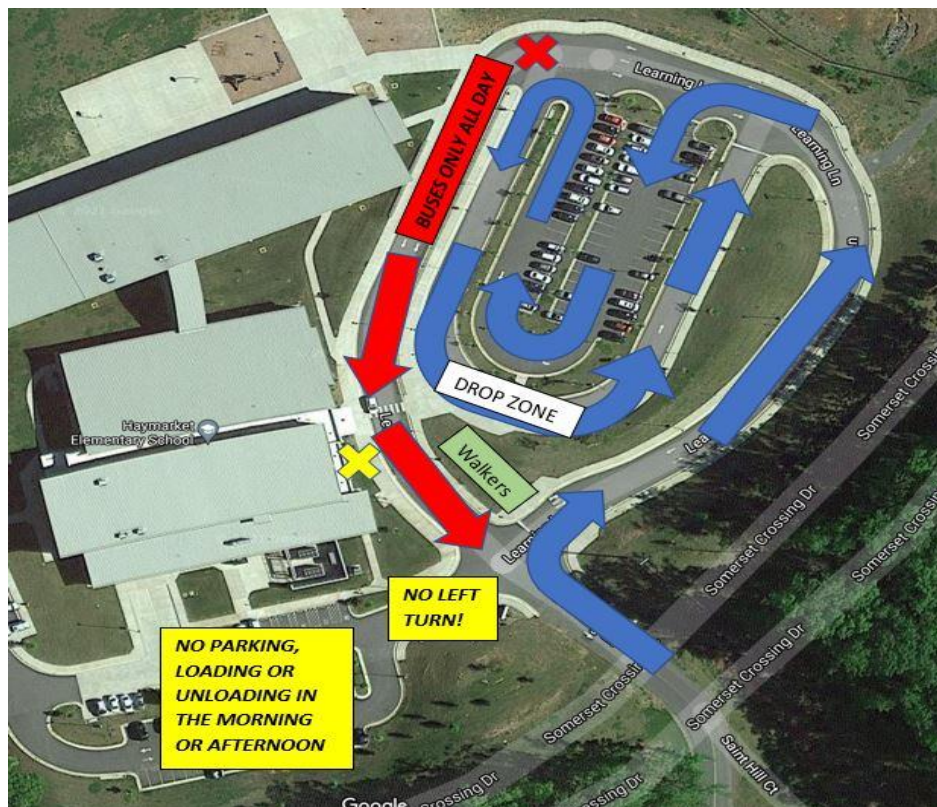
Birthdays: To celebrate our students and ensure we are allergy friendly, HMES encourages non-food options to celebrate birthdays, such as an extra recess, reading a book to the class, or goody bags that do not contain food items, including candy.

Breakfast: Breakfast begins at 9:10 AM. Breakfast is available daily for the price of \$1.60.

Buses: Bus drivers always maintain safety and positive behavior and will communicate student Code of Behavior transgressions to administrators to ensure our students maintain our standards of behavior while riding in PWCS (Prince William County Public Schools) vehicles. Riding the school bus as a general education student is a privilege. Bus stop information can be found in [ParentVUE](#). For questions regarding bus transportation, please call McCuin Transportation Center at 571-402-3902.

C

Car Riders: Each family who wishes to provide their own transportation and pick up their student(s) from school in the Car Rider Lane will register and receive one numbered tag, but more are available upon request. You will need to complete the registration form and show your ID in the front office to receive a tag with a designated number. Your number is assigned to your family for the entirety of the time your child is a student at HMES. Parents dropping students off are expected to use the car rider line at the front of the building or park in the front parking lot. The side parking lot is reserved for staff, handicapped and van and bus riders. Parents are asked to have their child exit the car on the passenger side for safety reasons.



Code of Behavior: Please carefully read the [PWCS Code of Behavior](#) available online from our school web page. These are reviewed with all students during the first quarter. It is the family's responsibility to follow all county policies that are outlined in these documents. The signature of the

parent and child on the back of the emergency card is our indication that you have read and agreed to the Code of Conduct. Please remind your children that any look-alike weapons (as described in the Code of Behavior) brought to school will result in disciplinary action. Please also speak with your child about making verbal or physical threats to other students or staff. Such actions create serious situations and consequences.

Communication: All our upcoming events and essential information can be found on our web site and/or Facebook page:

[Haymarket ES Website](#)

[Haymarket Facebook Page](#)

Counseling: Our school counselors provide support to students, parents, teachers, and staff that involve counseling, consulting, and coordinating classroom guidance lessons. They support and instruct students using a guidance curriculum that includes social and peer relationship skills. You may contact our school counselors to share concerns about your child or ask for help for your family.

K & 2: Ms. Criser

1 & 4: Ms. McLees

3 & 5: Ms. Schenck

D

Dismissal: Dismissal time is very busy! Please respect this time of day and do not request an early release after 3:30 PM. If your student is going home a different way than usual, please contact their teacher AND the front office as soon as possible. Kindergartners need to be picked up at their bus stops with an ID and this person must be listed on the [Kindergartner's Authorization form](#).

Dress Code: Student dress and overall appearance must meet the basic standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and decency. The Prince William County Schools' Code of Behavior has addressed several areas that are considered improper dress in any Prince William County school. If violated, students will be offered other clothes, and a phone call home will be made. [PWCS Code of Behavior](#)

E

Emergency Contact information: Emergency contact information and phone numbers must be accurate and on file for each student. All possible telephone numbers to reach a student's parent/guardian should be included, as well as e-mail addresses. Please advise the office if there is a change in the information on your child's emergency contact information at any time during the year.

Encore: Every student at Haymarket ES receives Art, Music, Library/Guidance, Drama, and Physical Education. Homeroom teachers will provide a copy of the class and encore schedule. We rotate on a 6-day system except for 2nd, 3rd and 4th graders who will be on a 7-day system, with P.E. meeting twice during this rotation. The Encore teachers can be reached by email and welcome your communication.

G

Gifted & Talented: SIGNET (Students Involved in Gifted Needs in Education Today) is Prince William County's program for identified gifted students in the 4th and 5th grades. Identified primary (K-3) children participate in the START program. Please contact our Gifted teachers, Mrs. Phillips

(grades 4&5), or Mrs. Kidwell (grades K-3) with additional questions if you would like more information about these programs. [PWCS Gifted Information Page](#)

Grading for Growth: Students will receive a report card at the end of each quarter in [ParentVUE](#). Please check [ParentVUE](#) regularly for daily updates on your child's current progress. Please contact your child's teacher if you have concerns or would like a conference to review your child's progress. For questions regarding PWCS grading, please refer to PWCS Assessment and Grading Practices, [PWCS Regulation 661-1](#). Parents are encouraged to access [ParentVUE](#) to review their child's grades.

H

Homework: Our teachers follow [PWCS Regulation 663-1](#) regarding all assigned homework, which states that the purpose of homework is to provide:

- Pre-learning opportunity to organize new information or build interest in an upcoming topic, or unit of study
- Practice for applying new knowledge and skills
- Revisit knowledge and concept for review
- Prepare for an upcoming assessment

You will receive information from your child's teacher for individual homework information. Homework will not be assigned over any holiday break from school. Reading for 10-30 minutes a night with a family member is very important.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Daily Guidelines</u>
Kindergarten	Monday - Thursday	10 to 20 minutes Teachers encourage parents/guardians to either read to their child or listen to their child read. Teachers may also provide parents/guardians with activities to follow up their child's learning in other content areas.
First-Second	Monday – Thursday	10 to 20 minutes
Third-Fifth	Monday – Thursday	30 to 50 minutes

I

Illness: If your child becomes ill while at school, we will notify you by phone to pick up your child. We will contact the parent listed as #1 first. It is the expectation that students will be picked up in a timely manner. If a child has a fever, please keep the child home for 24 hours until the child is fever-free.

Insurance: Many parents without insurance coverage worry about protecting their children in the event of an illness or injury. Optional student accident insurance is an inexpensive way to provide medical coverage in such events. Affordable student accident insurance is available for purchase

through a group rate. For more information, please refer to PWCS homepage, click parents at the top right and there is [a link for insurance](#) under Health and Safety.

K

Kindergarten Arrival and Dismissal: Kindergarteners are given assigned seats in the front of the bus and will only be released to a parent, guardian, babysitter, or older sibling at the bus stop. All kindergartners that are not picked up at the bus stop will be brought back to school at the end of the route. Parents will be expected to come to the school to pick up their kindergartener when this occurs. [Kindergarten Authorization form](#). For questions regarding bus transportation, please call McCuin Transportation Center at 571-402-3902.

L

Lexia: Lexia is a PWCS purchased resource that your child can access through Clever. PLEASE have your child work on this INDEPENDENTLY as it gives us data to guide our instructional practices.

Lost & Found: Our school has a Lost & Found. Parents are invited to check the Lost & Found as often as needed. The items left unclaimed will be donated to an area charity at least two times per year.

Lunch: Sometimes parents like to join their student for lunch on a special occasion. Please keep in mind that we will not interrupt learning to pull a sibling from their class time to join the parent and brother/sister for lunch. Our priority is to maintain learning momentum, classroom structure, and appropriate supervision for all students every day! Please sit with your student at the extra tables in the café on the stage.

Each class has two tables. One end of a table is designated as allergy friendly. Students who buy school lunch may sit at either table. Those students who pack their lunch or if outside food is brought in, we ask that you do not sit at the table that is allergy friendly. Please check in with an ID at the front office if visiting, before going to lunch. We are requesting that lunch guests **refrain from coming in for lunch on Fridays**. Our office experiences a high volume of early dismissals on Fridays. Thank you for your cooperation.

Lunch Accounts and Meals: PWCS lunch prices are set for \$2.60 unless informed otherwise. Lunch is served daily, regardless of dismissal time. Students may also be able to purchase milk a la carte for 1.00. If students wish to purchase a second lunch, it will be available but at the price of \$4.50. If financial assistance is needed, please complete an application on the PWCS School Food and Nutrition Website. The website also contains nutritional information, Menus and more!) [PWCS School Meals Information](#). Lunch balances should be paid in a timely manner.

M

Media Center: All children visit our school's library during their Encore block rotation for story times, library skill classes, book swaps, and research. Ms. Zenoniani, our librarian, likes the library to be busy with students actively engaged in finding the next reading adventure to build their love for reading. The library will host two book fairs during the year, so keep an eye out for the fliers!

Medication: Every effort should be made for students to take their medications at home. If taking medicine at school is necessary, parents must deliver the medicine to school in the prescription

container, and it must not exceed the expiration date. PWCS policy does not permit students to transport medication to and from school. [A PWCS Medical Authorization form](#), signed by a physician, must be completed for school staff to administer prescription medication. This form is available in the school clinic and in the link above. Please contact our school nurse, Ms. Stevens, if you have any questions or concerns.

MTSS: Multi-tiered system of supports: At HMES, we provide tiered differentiation, support, and extensions to support learning success. Our intervention team meets regularly with our AP's, Mrs. Shore, and Mr. Seymour, to review student progress and academic and/or behavioral data to ensure we are steadily moving towards our goals. Teachers meet regularly in collaborative teams with the principal and assistant principals, to benchmark progress for all students. Our parents are important members of the intervention team and will be invited to all intervention meetings for their child. If you would like to schedule an intervention meeting, please reach out to our Assistant Principals as well as your child's teacher.

N

Newsletters: We place a high value on communication with parents. Our monthly newsletter, called Haymarket Happenings, is sent via email through School Status to all of our families. It is also posted to our school's website. Look for your child's teacher to send out newsletters, calendars, and emails to keep you informed this year. In addition, frequent Facebook posts share news, updates, and highlights.

P

Parent Engagement: We want our Haymarket families to be more than involved at Haymarket; we want our families to be engaged here! Parent Engagement involves positive two-way communication that encourages a sharing of ideas and leadership to support students. Some ways to be engaged at Haymarket include PTO leadership positions, Advisory Council, and volunteer opportunities. Please check out the link on our website at the top navigation bar entitled "Parent Engagement" or contact the main office at 703-468-2800.

Parent Involvement: At Haymarket ES, we encourage Parent Involvement, or opportunities for parents to participate in school activities, such as the PTO, attend class activities, such as plays, book fairs, musical productions, Back to School Night, Open House and more. Please join us throughout the school year and contact your child's teacher, social media/school website, or the front office for information about upcoming events and become more involved at Haymarket ES.

Parent Liaison: Haymarket is grateful to have Karla Chavarriaga join the Haymarket team as the Parent Liaison. Her focus as the Parent Liaison is to encourage connection, engagement, and sustain communication between parents and the school community. She will be connecting parents and students with the resources and information that is needed, such as ParentVUE, Canvas Parent, school policies, procedures, etc. We, at Haymarket Elementary, want to engage you in your child's education by sharing information that contributes to their success. A student's success depends on the partnership of parents and the school community. Active parents promote positive education and healthy behavior habits among children by being active partners in their child's education. For a successful year at HMES, we highly encourage parents to devote time to their child's education. You can contact her at 703-468-2800 or via email at chavarkc@pwcs.edu.

Parent Teacher Organization (PTO): The PTO is a unified non-profit organization whose primary purpose is to promote the welfare of children through educational means. PTO meetings take place on the third Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM via Zoom. Activities organized by the PTO include, but are not limited to:

Spirit Nights at area businesses
Student Enrichment Program Fall and Spring
Staff Appreciation Week
Family Bingo Nights

Back to School Event
Boosterthon Fun Run
Family Dance
Breakfast with Bear Cubs

Please consider signing up to volunteer for one of these awesome events.

Visit the PTO Website for more information about events: [PTO Website](#)

ParentVUE: [ParentVUE](#) is PWCS Parent Portal. Please note that report cards, bus information, up-to-date attendance, tardies, grades, and SOL (Standards of Learning) scores can be found within this valuable tool. Please be sure to log in regularly. If you are new to PWCS and have not received an activation e-mail, please contact the main office.

Parking & Traffic Congestion: Parking is limited during special events and especially during dismissal. If you need to park and come into the building, please do not park along the yellow “No Parking Zone” curbs. Also, personal vehicles should never drive in our bus loop. Car riders should stay in the car rider lane only and exit from curb or passenger side only. During arrival and dismissal, please park in the front parking lot only, as the side parking lot is for handicapped buses, van riders, and staff. **Parking in Handicap spots is not permitted unless your car is equipped with a handicap tag/license plate.**

R

Recess: At Haymarket ES, in accordance with PWCS Regulation, teachers provide thirty minutes per day of unstructured time. Weather permitting, recess takes place on the school playground. If the [weather](#) “Feels like” the temperature is 90 degrees or above and below 32 degrees outside, recess must take place within the school building for student safety.

S

School Photos: Pictures are a vital part of telling the HMES story. According to current policies and regulations, photographs and video images of any student engaged in school activities **may** be produced and used in any School Division program, publication, or exhibit, if deemed appropriate by the principal or other School Division designee. Photos and images may also be authorized for use by external entities, such as the news media and scholarship providers, so long as this is in the best interests of students, the school, and School Division, and complies with other regulation guidelines. Any parent wishing to avoid use of student photos and images by external organizations may fill out and submit an opt-out form to be given to the principal at the start of the school year. The form, along with the complete text of the relevant [PWCS Regulation 790-3](#), can be located on the PWCS website.

School Status: School Status is our online communication system. This system allows messages to be sent to both your email and via a text message. You can reply to the message which will go directly back to the person who sent it to you. If you are having any difficulties receiving messages, please reach out.

School-Wide Positive Behavior Support – “The Den System”: At HMES, we believe all students and staff should feel safe, comfortable, and respected while at school. We are committed to ensuring that students are not distracted from learning. We work together to create an environment where teachers can teach, and students can learn. The **Den System** is designed to foster a sense of community, teamwork, and school spirit among our students. The Den System is a way to divide our school into smaller communities, or “dens,” each with its own unique color. Every student and staff member are assigned to one of these dens, creating a supportive and inclusive environment where everyone can thrive. Den Points: Students can earn points for their den through good behavior, academic achievements, participation in school events, and more.

Benefits of the Den System:

- Community Building: Students will have the opportunity to interact with peers from different grades, fostering a sense of belonging and teamwork.
- Positive Behavior: The Den System encourages positive behavior and academic excellence through a fun and engaging reward system.
- School Spirit: With den colors and friendly competitions, school spirit will be at an all-time high!

Snacks: PWCS has a Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth initiative. Please make healthy choices when you prepare snacks for your child to bring to school and be mindful of any classroom allergies.

Strings: Strings instruction will be offered to 5th graders at HMES. Please reach out to Ms. Fessner, FessneCJ@pwcs.edu with any questions.

Student Activities: Upper grade students are given the opportunity to participate in many activities: Student Council Association, Safety Patrols, Strings, and Chorus. Students will be given information about each of these different opportunities at school. All our students have an opportunity to participate in our PTO sponsored Student Enrichment Program. Parents will receive information about upcoming sessions, fees, and application deadlines.

T

Tardies: The tardy bell rings at 9:20 AM and children should be in their classrooms before it rings. Students who arrive after the tardy bell has rung (when the sign is posted in the car loop) should be accompanied by a parent to sign in at the front office. Parents will not be allowed to walk their child to class when they are tardy. Students who ride the bus will never be considered tardy for bus-related delays.

Technology: Each student at Haymarket is assigned their own iPad; parents have the option of having their child’s device come home with them each night. If you are interested in this, please reach out to your child’s teacher. By completing the “Digital Device Student Loan Agreement,” parents/guardians shall be responsible for ensuring that their students adhere to all established regulations, rules, and guidelines for take-home 1:1 use of digital devices.

For technical support, you may contact the PWCS Help Desk by calling 703-791-8826 or emailing techsupport@pwcs.edu.

V

VALLSS (Phonological Awareness Literacy Screener): Students in Grades K-3 are required to take the Virginia Language & Literacy Screening System (VALLSS) assessment. It is a reading screener that is designed to show a child's level of risk for developing reading difficulties and provide teachers with information to plan instruction. VALLSS replaces the previous PALS screener. VALLSS includes subtests that measure decoding, encoding, and language, all of which are necessary to develop reading comprehension.

Visiting School: For the safety and security of our children, **all** visitors and volunteers in the building during school hours must report to the office to sign in with an ID. Prince William County Schools require that photo identification be left in the office. You will be given a visitor's badge that must be visibly worn at all times. Your photo identification will be returned to you when you sign out and return your visitor's badge [PWCS Regulation 926-1](#).

Volunteers: We love volunteers at Haymarket ES! All volunteers are asked to prearrange times with teachers in advance. Volunteers should always check in at the office and report only to the classroom where you have prearranged your visit. You must have a photo-id to enter the building. We encourage you to check-in with our parent liaison, Mrs. Chavarriaga. Safety and security in the building remain a priority, and we appreciate your support by always arranging your volunteer time in advance. During volunteering, "surprise" visits to your child's classroom are not permitted to keep the instructional focus maintained.

W

Walkers: There is only one neighborhood that is within the walking zone (the Haymarket Landing neighborhood on the same side of the school). Students who live on the following streets will be walkers unless special education transportation is set up in accordance with a child's IEP: Haymarket Landing Drive, Hunter Hollow Court, Northbourne Court, Stroud Lane, Collin Point Drive. We discourage families from crossing across Somerset as we want to ensure the safety of everyone.

Watch D.O.G.S.: At HMES, our Watch D.O.G.S. (Dad of Great Students) are a huge part of our volunteer community. Please contact our Top Dog, Mr. Sweeney at HaymarketWatchDogs@gmail.com or our Parent Liaison, Ms. Karla Chavarriaga at chavarkc@pwcs.edu.

Website: School closings, delays, and early dismissals that are called by PWCS are also posted on our school web site. Mark our page as a favorite and check our web site regularly! Our web address is: <https://haymarketes.pwcs.edu/>

Y

Yearbooks: Yearbook sales are advertised in the spring. Yearbooks will be distributed during the last week of the school year at the latest.