



Forest Avenue School

Parent Information Guide

Forest Avenue School

118 Forest Avenue

School Phone Number..... (973) 571-6754
Attendance Line.....Press 2
Main Office.....Press 3
School Nurse.....Press 4
Child Study Team Office.....Press 5
Fax..... (973) 571-6770

Dear Parent,

The purpose of this guide is to share information about the offerings, procedures, and organization of Forest Avenue School. In doing so, we hope that you will better understand our school and thereby be able to use our services more effectively.

No written communication can answer all questions, so we invite you to visit our school office and become acquainted. We look forward to sharing in a partnership for your child's education.

Sincerely,

The Forest Avenue School Staff

Table of Contents

District Mission Statement –	page 3
Board of Education –	page 4
School Hours –	page 4
Extended Care –	page 4
School Calendar –	page 4
Student Drop-Off / Pick- Up Procedures –	page 5
School Security –	page 5
Emergency Closing –	page 5-6
Code of Conduct –	page 6
Instructional Program –	page 6
Kindergarten Registration / Program –	page 6-7
Grades 1-4 Program –	page 7
Field Trips –	page 7
Report Cards/Conferences –	page 7
Attendance Regulations –	page 8
Homework –	page 8
Cafeteria Facilities –	page 8
Home Instruction –	page 8
Verona Summer Enrichment Academy –	page 9
Communications / Forest Avenue SCA –	page 9
Pupil Insurance –	page 9
Class Pictures –	page 9
Cultural Arts –	page 9
Child Study Team –	page 10
Verona Pre-School Program –	page 10
Special Education - Resource Center –	page 10
Special Education Classes –	page 11
Speech Therapy –	page 11
Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS) –	page 11
Formal Testing Program –	page 11
Health Services –	page 11-12
Nutrition Procedures –	page 13
Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation –	page 13-14



VERONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dedicated to Developing Healthy Habits of Mind, Body and Heart

Verona Public Schools Mission Statement:

In partnership with a supportive community, we inspire our students to be creative, critical thinkers and compassionate global citizens through dynamic teaching, meaningful curricula, and enriching experiences.

Verona Schools Website

www.veronaschools.org

Board of Education

121 Fairview Avenue

Superintendent’s Office/Business Office..... (973) 571-2029
Fax..... (973) 571-6779

The Verona Board of Education normally holds its regular public meetings on the second and last Tuesday of each month at 8:00PM in the Verona High School library. The Board of Education is an elected, five-member board of Verona citizens.

School Hours

Kindergarten Morning Session.....8:30 a.m. – 12:35 pm
Lunch/Recess.....12:35- pm- 1:20 pm
Afternoon Session.....1:20 pm – 2:45 pm

Grades 1-4 Morning Session.....8:30 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.
Lunch / Recess11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Afternoon Session.....12:30 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Students should **not** report to school before 8:15 am. Supervision is not provided before this time.

Extended Care Program

Extended care services are provided by the Montclair YMCA for the students until 6:00 p.m. Please inquire for registration of these services in the school office or contact the Montclair YMCA directly.

District Calendar

The district calendar is available online on the Verona Public Schools’ website (www.veronaschools.org). Any changes made to the calendar during the course of the school year will be reflected on that calendar.

Forest Avenue School Calendar

Forest Avenue School maintains a detailed calendar on the school website. All events, vacations, trips, school lunches etc. are included.

Verona Public Schools Joint SCA Program and Calendar Booklet

From the beginning of the school year, all families will be able to access this booklet via the Genesis Parent Portal, our student information system. This online booklet includes the district/school staff directory, school and SCA calendar of events as well as a list of SCA committees, committee membership and contact information.

Student Drop-Off / Pick-Up Procedures

The following procedures are in place for the orderly and safe drop-off/pick-up of the students of Forest Avenue School. **It is very important that each family review and agree to adhere to these procedures which will ensure the safety of the children.**

DROP-OFF

Each morning, the children should assemble on the blacktop behind the school and line up behind the cone designated for their class no earlier than 8:15 am. On inclement weather days, students will line up in the gym. **The yellow curb** area in front of the school is for drop off only in the morning. This area is a **no parking/no standing zone**. Parents should pull up to the curb, drop their child(ren) off and pull away. Parents should not park at the yellow curb and walk their child(ren) up the driveway. If parents want to walk their child(ren) up the driveway to the blacktop, please park in a legal location before walking them up. It is requested that parents not pass through the building with the children but say their good-byes on the blacktop or in the gym. If parents need to come into the office they must come around and enter through the front door.

PICK-UP

In the afternoon, the yellow curb area in front of the school is a no parking/no standing zone. **No cars should be in front of the school at dismissal time.** Children will be dismissed at the bottom of the “up driveway”. Teachers will not release students to cars that pull up to the driveway apron or in the street. They will not release children to parents who are standing across the street. Children and parents must use the crosswalks to cross Forest Avenue. For the safety of the children, crossing guards are located at both Morningside Road and Marion Road.

Under no circumstances should anyone be driving up the driveway to drop off or pick up a child. Please note that dogs are not permitted on school property during drop-off in the morning or at dismissal in the afternoon.

It is also important to remind anyone who may be dropping off or picking up your child(ren) of these policies.

School Security

All visitors to the Verona Public Schools are required to have their license scanned and checked against the sex offender data base in order to enter the buildings. If the visitor does not have a license, a government issued photo ID (e.g. passport) must be presented. A visitor can enter the premises of the school only if he/she is cleared by the system. Anyone coming to the buildings without ID will be denied entry. Once you are cleared a photo will be taken and a badge with the photo will be printed. Visitor badges must be worn at all times.

Emergency Closing

If it becomes necessary to close, delay the opening, or shorten the day of the Verona Public Schools because of extreme weather or other emergency conditions, parents will be notified by the computerized calling system via phone and text message. Messages will also be posted on the district website.

Each fall, parents will be requested to complete the Verona Public Schools Family Contact Form online. Information from this form will be used to contact you through the computerized, email and texting system. It is critical that this form is completed prior to the first day of school.

DELAYED OPENING

Delayed opening procedures may be used as an alternative to the regular full-day closing of schools for emergency weather conditions.

K-4.....10:00 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
Supervision begins at 9:50 a.m.

EARLY DISMISSAL

Early Dismissal Hours – K-48:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
No lunch is served on early dismissal days.

Code of Conduct

The elementary schools focus on academic achievement but recognize the importance of growth and development of the whole student as part of the larger community. Student actions contribute to the school’s environment and go a long way in creating a positive atmosphere for learning and socializing. Therefore, the Verona elementary schools have established a Code of Conduct for all students to promote appropriate behavior as well as support for each other. The document posted on the Forest Avenue School page on the district website (www.veronaschools.org) expresses our values through behavioral expectations and responsibilities. Through the combined efforts of students, staff, parents and administration, it is our goal to prepare students to be contributing and supportive members of the school and community.

Instructional Program

The Verona School District has established a philosophy of education, a set of goals, a detailed elementary curriculum and a scope and sequence which is published and available for review on the district website within the “Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment” tab menu under the “District Overview” link.

The Board of Education has final approval in determining curriculum. The professional staff regularly evaluates existing curriculum and makes recommendations to the Board on revisions and improvements reflecting current trends in education and the instructional needs of Verona students.

Kindergarten Registration / Program

A child must be 5 years old on or before October 1st for admission to kindergarten. January is designated for kindergarten registration. Specific dates are published in the local newspaper and announcements are distributed through the schools. Parents are requested to complete and return an enrollment form and present the child’s birth certificate and proof of residency during the month of January. When you register you will be given a packet of health forms and a Pre-Kindergarten Questionnaire which should be returned by a specific date.

A kindergarten orientation for parents will be held after registration. At this meeting, an overview of the school with an emphasis on the kindergarten program will be presented.

The SCA will hold workshops for incoming kindergartners to help with the acclimation of the students to their new school. Scheduling of these workshops will be determined.

The kindergarten program reflects a balance between formal and informal activity. The daily schedule allows the child to participate in individual, small group and total class activities. The program involves self-directed activity, group discussion and teacher directed activities in language arts, reading readiness, mathematics readiness, social science, science, artistic expression, environmental and affective education. Special subject instruction in the areas of music, art, physical education, health and safety and library are provided by special teachers to all kindergarten pupils.

Grades 1-4 Instructional Program

The elementary curriculum includes instruction in the areas of listening, reading, speaking, writing, spelling, handwriting, and in the disciplines of mathematics, social studies and science. There are uniform standards and requirements for curriculum and materials at each grade level. All curricula meet the requirements of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Special subject instruction in the areas of vocal music, art, physical education, health and safety, library and Mandarin, are provided to all students by subject matter specialists. Fourth grade students who are interested may choose to participate in instrumental music.

Field Trips

Field Trips are scheduled to enrich and extend the school's curriculum. In September all parents/guardians will fill out a local field trip permission slip online. This permission applies to visits to in-town sites of interest by walking or school bus. Parents are informed of other field trips by a notice. Transportation is provided by the school. All school buses are fitted with seat belts. A parent's signature on a trip permission slip is required before the child is allowed to board the bus. At times, an admission charge is required for an activity.

Report Cards/Conferences

The school year is divided into trimesters. In order that home and school may work more effectively for the education and training of children, a parent/teacher conference is scheduled right after the end of the first trimester. Report cards are issued three times a year and parents can access a child's report card through the online Parent Portal.

The dates of the fall parent/teacher conferences are found on the district calendar and in the Joint SCA booklet. Prior to the fall conference dates, parents will receive a parent/teacher conference letter indicating the date and time they are scheduled. The form should be signed and returned to the classroom teacher. If the time is not convenient, it should be noted on the form and the teacher will contact parents to arrange a mutually convenient time.

Attendance Regulations

Children are expected to be in school every day for all sessions unless ill or excused for State approved religious holidays. A youngster who has any indications of fever, chills, sore throat, etc. should not be sent to school since such symptoms may indicate the beginning of a contagious illness, and it would be neither fair to the child who is ill nor to the children with whom he/she has contact.

Parents are required to contact the school by phone at 973-571-6754 ext 2 before 8:30 a.m. to report the absence of their child from school. If a child is absent and the parent has not called the school, a call to the home will be made by the school office.

Each year the Verona Public Schools publishes a school calendar indicating school vacations, testing and other important dates. Parents are requested to schedule family vacations during district vacations. If students are taken out while school is in-session, please do not ask teachers to provide missed work in advance of the absence. Work will be made up upon return to school.

Homework

Homework is assigned to extend and reinforce the learning experience of school. It provides children practice in the mastery of skills and experience in data-gathering. Homework helps to develop independent work skills and recognizes the role of the parent to help a child carry out assigned responsibilities. Homework is clearly assigned and carefully evaluated. The amount of homework is based on students' needs and takes into account other activities which make a legitimate claim on students' time. Homework assignments are posted online on individual teachers' web pages found on the Forest Avenue teacher page which is linked to the www.veronaschools.org webpage.

Cafeteria Facilities

Students may bring in their own lunch and beverage. The SCA offers special lunches throughout the year at a minimum cost on Mondays. The district food service provider offers food options that may be pre purchased Tuesdays through Fridays. Students are under supervision of lunchroom aides during lunch/recess. Students eat for 20 minutes and have recess for 20 minutes. Every effort is made to have outside recess, weather permitting. Please be sure to send your child to school with appropriate clothing for outside play.

Home Instruction

Home instruction is available, with the approval of the Board of Education, to any child who is absent from school a minimum of two continuous weeks due to illness subject to the receipt of a doctor's note indicating the diagnosis, the length of time out and that the child is well enough to receive instruction. A certified teacher will be sent to the student's home for up to five hours per week to continue the educational program the pupil was receiving at school. The child may return to school once the doctor has certified that the student is ready to return.

Verona Summer Enrichment Academy (V-SEA)

V-SEA is a unique learning opportunity for students who are currently enrolled in grades pre-k through middle school. The purpose of the Verona Summer Enrichment Academy is to expand the students' knowledge base, build on their interest and encourage critical and creative thinking. Regardless of students' academic competencies, each child will be challenged through the curricular experience with stimulating and motivating activities. Information, along with a list of course offerings, is emailed home through the schools and is available on the district website found at www.veronaschools.org.

Communications/Forest School SCA

The School Community Association (SCA) publishes a weekly newsletter to provide parents with important information about current school activities. The newsletter is emailed to each family every Wednesday. The SCA also maintains a Facebook on page which they share activities, events and information related to the school. Only school families are permitted access to this page.

The SCA offers opportunities for effective cooperation of teachers and parents to attain the best possible education and training for our children. It is every parent's privilege and duty to become a member of the SCA and participate in its activities whenever possible. The parent, child and the school community will benefit.

Pupil Insurance

Pupil accident insurance is offered to all parents at the beginning of the school year and is optional but encouraged.

Class Pictures

Individual pupil photographs and class pictures are taken within the first two months of the school year. These are offered for sale to parents through the SCA.

Cultural Arts

The SCA provides our school with numerous assembly programs. Science, dance, theater, history, music, character education and many other subjects are explored through these experiences.

Child Study Team

The Child Study Team consists of four members: a social worker, a psychologist, a learning disabilities teacher-consultant and a speech/language therapist. The primary role of the team is to evaluate children who may have a learning and/or an emotional difficulty and to secure supportive services when necessary. When it has been determined that a child needs the support of special services, the Child Study Team works closely with parents and staff in developing individualized programs. The support could take the form of a special class placement or Resource Center instructor while the child attends a regular class. The progress of each child is monitored regularly by the Child Study Team and programs are reviewed and updated annually. A re-evaluation is conducted every three years or earlier if warranted.

Forest Avenue School has an assigned learning disabilities teacher-consultant who maintains an office in the building. Other members of the Child-Study Team have their offices at the Special Services Department (973) 571-2029 ext. 7512.

Verona Preschool Program

The Verona Preschool Program has been in existence for over 30 years. Originally designed as a nursery school experience for children ages 3-5 with special needs, the program currently accepts both general education and special education students. Aligned with the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards and incorporating the HighScope Preschool Curriculum, the preschool program is designed to meet the developmental needs of the individual child. The children are encouraged to explore materials, develop skills and interact in a social setting. The daily routine includes small/large group experiences, circle time, play time, snack, motor activities and language activities.

Located at the Laning Avenue School, the Verona Preschool Program is in operation five days per week and follows the Verona Public Schools calendar. Morning and afternoon classes are available. Morning classes meet from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and afternoon classes meet from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monthly meetings focusing on a variety of topics related to the preschool child are available to all parents.

General education enrollment is on a fee basis, limited to the number of available spaces and determined annually by lottery. Students who meet special education eligibility requirements may attend free of charge and are enrolled on their birthday. Children accepted into the three-year-old program may remain for the four-year-old program. Children turning three years of age or four years of age by September 30th are eligible for the lottery that is held each year in February. Pre-School Office - 973-571-202- ext. 7520.

Special Education - Resource Center

Supplemental and/or replacement instruction is a form of academic assistance designed to reinforce basic skills of children classified by the Child Study Team. The curriculum is developed to coordinate closely with the subject matter being presented in the regular classroom. The Resource Center instructor works with individuals and/or small groups for several periods each week, providing instruction appropriate to the children's needs. Support may be provided within the regular classroom or as a pullout program. The Resource Center teacher maintains close contact with the team members, the classroom teacher and parents in providing an individualized program for each student.

Special Education Classes

Occasionally the Child Study Team, in cooperation with the child's parents, determines that a placement in a special education classroom is the best setting for a child's education. Much consideration is given to the particular program and classroom location. If an appropriate special education classroom is not found within the Verona school district, an outside placement is sought. Parents are involved at each step of this decision making process.

Speech Therapy

Therapy in the area of speech and language is offered to children who are experiencing difficulty in the articulation of sounds and/or in the reception or expression of language. The speech and language specialist will assess students to determine if they are eligible for services. The therapist provides instruction, individually or in small groups, up to several times a week depending on the needs of the students. Close communication is maintained with the parents through the use of a speech folder.

Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS)

The Intervention and Referral Services Committee (I&RS) is a state-mandated, building-based, multidisciplinary, problem-solving team that addresses adult concerns regarding a student's learning, behavior and/or health needs. The committee meets monthly and provides direct assistance and support to staff members and/or parents who have concerns about a student, and the final outcome of interventions ought to result in student improvement. The I&RS committee can address concerns regarding general education and special education students. However, services for students identified as eligible for speech and language or special education services can only be considered in specific circumstances and must be coordinated with the student's IEP team case manager.

Formal Testing Program

In the spring of each school year, the third and fourth grade student population will be involved in a series of standardized testing experiences. The third and fourth grade students will participate in the NJSLA test (New Jersey Student Learning Assessments).

Health Services

Health services are provided by registered nurses and a school doctor. The purpose of health services is to aid in the early detection of health defects, to refer children for services when necessary and to promote good health habits and attitudes.

Communicable disease prevention needs everyone's cooperation. The best way to control a disease from spreading throughout the school is to keep your child home when he/she is ill. If your child is to be absent, we request that when you report the absence, you inform us of any communicable disease. Knowledge of the incidence of disease can help us in detection and prevention.

Management of head lice: When a case of active head lice has been identified by the school nurse, all parents of students in that grade level will be notified by the school. Included in the notification will be information on

treatment, prevention and a link to the policy (Verona Board of Education Management of Pediculosis (Lice) Policy). The school nurse will perform head checks of all students in the grade level where an active case of lice or nits was found. Additionally, the school nurse will perform head checks of students whose siblings were found to have head lice or nits. If the school nurse determines that a student has active head lice or nits, the parent shall be notified as soon as possible. The school nurse will determine, in accordance with the district policy, whether the student can remain in school for the remainder of the day. This determination is based on the comfort of the child, the degree of infestation, and the likelihood of the spread of lice to other children.

Vision and hearing examinations are given yearly as a preliminary survey to identify children who are having visual and/or hearing difficulties. Parents are reminded that these are simply screenings. It is recommended that all children have an ophthalmological exam prior to or upon entering school. This will ensure that your child does not have any visual problems that might hinder him/her academically. If any vision or audiological problems are noted, parents will be contacted.

Heights, weights and blood pressures are taken yearly and counseling is done on an individual basis when necessary.

Immunization records: A medical certificate of immunizations required by the state of New Jersey must be submitted before admission to school. Your pediatrician will have a record of these immunizations. Those excused for medical or religious reasons must submit an exemption form upon admission to school. Mantoux testing is required as directed by the state. Parents are requested to keep the school nurse up to date on any changes to these records.

Maintaining medical records: In order to keep pupils' records up to date, it is incumbent upon parents to supply new medical information to the school as it occurs.

Physical examinations are also mandated by the state for all children upon entering kindergarten. This examination must be done no more than 365 days prior to entry. Physical exams are also required upon transfer into the Verona Public Schools.

First aid services will be administered by a nurse, teacher, principal or administrative assistant. In case of an accident or sudden illness, parents will be notified. Emergency information forms are collected in September each year, to provide us with a parents, guardian or emergency contact that can be reached during the school day. Please consider carefully the people you use for emergency contacts if the school is unable to reach you. These people need to be available during the school day and be willing to pick up and care for an ill or injured child. Please notify the office immediately if any changes occur regarding the information on the emergency form. During your child's day this form is our only link to you.

Administration of Medication Guidelines:

The school will not provide students with any medication unless within district policy guidelines below:

-Children who are receiving medication for a temporary illness should be kept at home and their medication given at home until the child has recovered. No medication can be provided by the school and no medication for temporary illness is to be sent to school.

-When a student requires a prescribed or an over the counter medication to be given during school hours for an extended period of time, an authorization must be sent by the parent empowering the school nurse to administer medication. Medication orders are to be provided to the nurse from the private physician detailing the diagnosis or type of illness involved, the name of the drug, dosage, time of administration and side effects. Medication forms can be accessed on the district website. Medication should be brought to the nurse in the original container, appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. Medication must be hand delivered by the parent to the school. Under no circumstances should medication be carried by the child.

-Some students require prescribed emergency medication to be given as necessary, e.g. for asthma or bee stings. Prior to sending this type of prescriptive medication to school for administration, an authorization must be received from the parent empowering the school nurse to administer medication. Medication in the proper prescription bottle must be brought to the school nurse by the parent with directions from the prescribing doctor.

-Herbal remedies and nutritional supplements are not to be administered in school.

Nutrition Procedures

Class Parties

Class parties held over the course of the school year are Halloween, holiday party just prior to the December break and Valentine's Day. Students will be able to enjoy a treat at these parties, but it will be a treat which their parents send in with them from home. Parties will center on games, crafts, or activities rather than food, although students will enjoy the snack provided by their parents.

Birthday Celebrations

A student's birthday may be recognized in some way by his/her classroom teacher. In keeping with our food procedures, food may not be sent in from home in celebration of the day.

Nut Allergies

Tables have been designated as "nut tables" in our cafeteria. If a child brings food that contains nuts, they must be seated at one of these tables during lunch.

Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation

Elementary students in Verona are taught the Conflict Resolution approach to assist with problem solving any type of controversy or disagreement. Using the New Jersey State Bar Foundation (NJSBF) materials as a starting point, students apply the Win-Win Guidelines when they face any type of opposition. Students are taught that there are various forms of conflict and the necessary tools needed to resolve them. They are also

taught how to solve a problem. In order to reach resolution, we work with students to improve their communication skills. Home-school connections are assigned throughout the school year. Home-school connections require students to review and apply various conflict resolution skills at home. Each classroom including specialists, related services and special education have set up a Peace Place where students can meet to discuss a conflict. The Win-Win guidelines help our students deal with conflicts in such a way that all disputants feel comfortable with the outcome. Various tools such as cooling off techniques, breathing for calmness tips, alternatives to hitting, I-Message scripts and feelings vocabulary are available to all students as resources.

Each elementary school offers a Peer Mediation program. Research has proven that peer mediation is an effective tool that can be used by elementary students to help resolve conflicts. It empowers students to resolve their disputes creatively and cooperatively, while infusing critical thinking skills. Students in grades 3 and 4 may apply to be a trained peer mediator. Peer mediators are required to attend training sessions prior to taking their post. The peer mediator serves as a “third party” that assists the disputants with problem solving. Brainstorming as many possible solutions to a problem is key to the peer mediation process. Our peer mediators work in pairs to assist the disputants as they discuss and solve their problem with the goal of reaching a solution that works for both parties. Peer mediators reference the Win-Win Guidelines while working with disputants. The role of the peer mediator is one of a facilitator encouraging disputants to discuss the problem in a non-judgmental manner while applying active listening skills. Conflict resolution and peer mediation have proven to reduce disputes. Verona elementary students are taught a specific skill set when approaching a disagreement. It also fosters a culture where students develop and apply real life skills that evolve throughout their development. Students recognize that a course of action is possible to solve a conflict. Conflict resolution and peer mediation fosters cooperation where students work together for a common purpose. We take pride in training our students to be peacemakers in our beloved Verona community.

2/27/20