



Beal Early Childhood Center

Student/Parent Handbook

2017-2018

Christian Girardi, Principal

Mission Statement

We advocate for all children, support family life, and provide a high quality developmentally appropriate educational program.

Core Values

We encourage our students to be respectful members of the community. We cultivate a love of learning by offering a variety of instructional practices that reflect all learning styles.

We provide meaningful multi-cultural experiences that respect the diversity of our students. We value collaboration and partnerships with families and the community

We have high expectations for all students. We encourage them to be self-motivated, independent, confident learners, who are able to make significant progress both socially and academically.

Principal's Message

Dear Beal School Families,

The purpose of the Beal Early Childhood Center Handbook is to provide you with all the information you will need regarding our school policies and procedures. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this document and with the Shrewsbury District Handbook and feel free to ask questions if you are uncertain about anything at all. Most of the information in this handbook has been processed and/or developed by The Beal School Council. The council and I want to ensure that your transition to our school is a smooth and successful one. Also, please review this handbook with your child for pertinent information.

Procedures at Beal that pertain to teacher-child interaction, parent involvement, curriculum, health and safety, and the physical environment of the building are all considered “best practice” and align with current research in the field of early childhood education. Our staff consistently strives to provide an experience for children that is developmentally appropriate, yet challenging.

Frequent communication from school will assist you in understanding all about your child's learning experience. Please subscribe to the principal's listserv located on the Beal School homepage at www.schools.shrewsburyma.gov/beal/ “Join our listserv” is a drop-down located under the heading, “Parents”. Just click on the blue mailbox and follow the instructions. I will communicate with you weekly to give you updated information on all the happenings at Beal.

I look forward to working with you and your children to insure a successful and rewarding year together.

Sincerely,

Christian Girardi
Principal

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All policies and procedures described in this handbook are part of the district wide school policies for the Town of Shrewsbury. A detailed description of these policies and procedures are outlined in the Shrewsbury Public Schools Elementary Handbook.

Arrival and Dismissal at School

School Hours

Morning Kindergarten	9:15 am. – 11:50 <u>am.</u>
Afternoon Kindergarten	12:55 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Full Day Kindergarten	9:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
First Grade.....	9:15 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

The School Calendar can be found on the district website. Please refer to this calendar for Professional Days, holidays, [school vacations](#), and half-days that classes are scheduled.

***** We encourage you to have your child ride the bus. *****

Arrival of students who are not using bus transportation

- Children are not to be dropped off earlier than 8:45 a.m. for the morning session or 12:40 p.m. for the afternoon session.
- Park your car in a designated parking space in the lower parking lot and walk your child to the back door where a staff member is present.
- Do not send children into school alone.
- **PLEASE DO NOT BLOCK THE HANDICAP PARKING SPACE, THE HANDICAP ACCESS RAMP, OR PARK ON THE GRASS OR GARDENS.**

Dismissal of students who are not using bus transportation

- Parent pick-up will take place in the lower parking lot. Please drive in using the entrance furthest away from the school and form a line at the gate near the playground.
- Please be prepared to provide proof of identification.
- **“Parent Pick-Up Note”:** Every child who is picked up from school must have a parent pick-up note **each day**. The only exception is for children who will never ride the bus and will be picked up every day. These children will need only one note for the entire year.
- A member of the Beal staff will escort children to their cars.

Please be patient with us in the beginning of the school year. We realize that it takes time to check identification, however we want to ensure that our students are safe at all times.

Bus Transportation

We encourage you to have your child ride the bus.

Riding the bus to school is a privilege. To ensure safety for everyone on the bus, the guidelines in this Handbook should be observed. Parents and children should review this bus plan carefully. It is important that we all work together to create a bus experience that is safe and comfortable for all children.

- Parents (or their designee) of Kindergarten children are expected to be at the bus stop for both pick-up and drop-off of the children. The School Department cannot be responsible for children before pick-up or once they get off the bus.
- Each child will have ONE bus to school only and ONE bus home.
- If your child needs to go to daycare three days and home two days a week; you will need to decide which stop he or she will ride the bus to and will need to be parent pick-up on the days your child will not ride the bus.
- For day care forms, additional information or problems on bus transportation, you may contact **Steve Rocco, Transportation Coordinator at central office at 508-841-8363.**

Bus Tags

Please be sure to have your child wear his/her bus tag to school for the first few weeks of school. We need to see the information on the bus tag to ensure that each child boards the correct bus home. **Your child's teacher will notify you when your child no longer needs to wear his/her bus tag.**

Children Riding the Bus Should...

1. Sit in a seat near the front of the bus.
2. Remain seated for the entire bus ride.
3. Keep all personal belongings inside the backpacks.
4. Speak softly to others who are sitting close by.
5. Never stand up, or put hands out the window.
6. Speak politely to the bus driver at all times.
7. Tell the bus driver or the teacher if there is a problem on the bus.
8. **Never eat food on the school bus.**

Parents Should...

1. Practice saying the bus number and the home address with their children.
2. Tell their child to sit in the front seats on the bus.
3. Review the bus rules regularly.
4. Be at the bus stop when the bus arrives to bring the child to school.
5. Be at the bus stop when the bus returns the child from school.
A responsible adult **must** be at the bus stop for . **The bus driver will bring your child back to school to Extended Day if there if no adult at your child's bus stop to meet the bus. Extended day entrance is in the rear of the school across from the greenhouse.**

Attendance, Tardiness, and Absenteeism

Beal School's Child-Safe phone [line](tel:508-841-8860): 508-841-8860

Attendance

Children are required to attend all scheduled school days for the hours of operation except in the case of illness, religious holidays and emergencies. In the event that your child is going to be absent from school, parents should call the **Child-Safe phone line** and report the absence before 8:45 a.m. (morning session) and 12:40 p.m. (afternoon session). Parents will be called when their child is not in attendance if he has not been reported to the Child-Safe phone line. **When calling the Child-Safe phone line, please give the child's name, please spell the child's last name, the teacher's name, the session he/she attends and a reason for the absence.** All absences must be reported to the Department of Education. Please provide the school with appropriate emergency phone numbers as well as cellular phone numbers.

Absence due to Vacation

If your child is absent from school due to family vacation for 15 days or more, he or she will be removed from the rolls and will have to be reregistered with proof of residency upon the family's return to Shrewsbury at the town hall. Please see the Districts Extended Absence Policy on the districts website.

Tardiness

Regular attendance is important and parents are requested to bring their child to school on time. If your child is going to be arriving at school after 9:15 a.m. please call the office and let the secretaries know. You must walk in with your child in the front door and sign them in at the main office if they arrive after 9:15

Early Dismissal

Early Dismissal: The instructional day ends at 3:25, and students are expected to be present until that time. There are instances when a child may need to be picked up early, such as for medical and dental appointments. In those instances, please dismiss your child prior to 3:10. Please remember to send in a early dismissal note to the teacher so it will be less disrupted for the classroom. Dismissals after 3:10, parents are expected to use the parent pick-up line which is from 3:25-3:45. Thank you for your cooperation with this procedure and in keeping all our students safe.

School Cancellations

*All delays and cancellations will be posted on the school website,
<http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/Beal>.*

Cancellations

When school is canceled because of weather conditions, notification will be given, usually no later than 6:00 a.m., to these television channels: 4, 5, 7, and radio stations: WXLO FM104.5, WTAG AM 580, WSRS FM 96.1, WBZ AM 1030. You will also receive a “connect ed” phone call from the Superintendent’s office. ***Please do not call the school office.***

Delayed Opening and/or Cancellation of Morning Kindergarten

The School Department may announce a delay of the opening of school. They may also cancel AM Kindergarten. The announcement will be made on the television and radio stations listed above, usually no later than 6:00 a.m.

- Parents who bring children to school must also observe the delayed opening.
- Teachers will also be arriving later and there will be **no supervision** of children before that time.
- The **before-school program** is cancelled when there is a delay in the start of school.
- Dismissal times will remain the same as on a regular day.

Cancellation of Afternoon Kindergarten

It may be necessary to cancel the afternoon sessions on days when bad weather conditions develop during the morning. Please listen to the radio stations listed above. The announcement will be made no later than 11:30 a.m. and communicated by means of the Connect ED phone chain.

Behavior

Code of Conduct

It is a goal of the Shrewsbury Public Schools to establish and maintain a respectful learning environment. The development of good behavior in school is a teaching process that has a positive effect on the student and the learning environment.

Each student and teacher has the following rights in school:

- To work in pleasant, safe and orderly surroundings.
- To be free from insulting or abusive treatment from others.
- To have an atmosphere that encourages learning

Beal School implements the Responsive Classroom®, which encourages students to be respectful at all times.

Expected Behavior

Shrewsbury elementary school students will:

- Be honest in their words and deeds.
- Act in a way that does not disrupt learning.
- Walk in the hallways and conduct themselves in an orderly manner.
- Respect the school property, buildings, grounds, material, and furnishings.
- Respect the personal property and school material of others.
- Respect the rights of fellow students without fighting, teasing, or name-calling.
- Use language that is free from vulgarity and profanity.

Parents will be notified if students exhibit inappropriate behavior at school, on the playground, or on the school bus.

Food At School

Kindergarten Snack (Full Day Kindergarten only)

Snack time is an opportunity to build independence during the Kindergarten day. Teachers use this time to talk with the children about healthy eating habits and good table manners. Snack is primarily served during center time so as not to infringe on academic time. Although we prefer that all children eat the same nutritional snack, each family may decide whether to purchase a school snack, or bring one from home. Please contact the Cafeteria, at 508-841-8874 with questions regarding snack. **School Snack fee is \$153.00 per year for full day kindergarten.** This includes juice or milk and a simple-to-eat snack.

If you choose to send a snack from home, please be sure that it is nutritional. We ask that you avoid “dessert snacks” and keep the quantities small.

If a student in your child’s classroom has a serious food allergy, we will ask you to observe certain restrictions to assure a safe environment for the allergic child.

No glass containers or soda cans may be brought to school. If a snack is forgotten, parents may bring the snack to the school office so that their child can participate in snack time.

Half day kindergarten

In an effort to save instructional time, we will not have a snack program for half-day kindergarten students. Of course, we will have a light snack (individually wrapped crackers) available for any child who is hungry. Children may drink water from the bubbler or may bring a plastic bottle of water.

Lunch Program

The school lunch menu is posted on our website (<http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/Beal>) and is also printed in the newspaper. School lunch can be purchased monthly or daily. Coupon books can be obtained from the school cafeteria. Lunch costs **\$3.25** per day. This includes milk. If you would like to come to Beal School to have lunch with your full day Kindergarten, please contact 508-841-8874 to schedule an appointment. It is necessary that you have a current CORI on file with Shrewsbury Public Schools. Unfortunately, due to space constraints, we are unable to accommodate siblings at lunchtime. The telephone number of the Food Services Director, Beth Nichols, is 508-841-8819.

School Celebrations

Teachers will send home a questionnaire regarding your availability to share cultures and customs with your child’s classmates. As a part of the local Wellness Policy, which promotes access to healthful foods and educational content and experiences, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- For school-wide celebrations, only healthy, wrapped, store bought foods with ingredients listed on the labels may be brought to school.

The Beal Day

Sing-Along

The purpose of our sing-along is to promote community among our students, while singing and having fun. Kindergarten children will participate weekly on Thursdays, either at 10:55 am or 2:40 pm. Parents will be invited to attend sing-along at designated dates and times during the school year. Parents are always invited to sing along when it is their child's birthday. Dismissal after sing along is discouraged as it is disrupted to the classroom. All students will be parent pick up if you wish to take your child home at the end of the day. The instructional day ends at 3:25, and students are expected to be present until that time. There are instances when a child may need to be picked up early, such as for medical and dental appointments. In those instances, please dismiss your child prior to 3:10. Please remember to send in a early dismissal note to the teacher so it will be less disrupted for the classroom. Dismissals after 3:10, parents are expected to use the parent pick-up line in the rear of the school which is from 3:25-3:45. Thank you for your cooperation with this procedure and in keeping all our students safe.

Birthday Celebrations

The Beal School staff will celebrate your child's birthday in the following manner:

- Making the child a special birthday crown
- Singing "Happy Birthday" to the child as a class
- Acknowledging the child's birthday at Sing Along – Parents are welcome to attend sing along the week your child's birthday is acknowledged.

If you want to send something to school to acknowledge your child's birthday, we recommend purchasing a book and sending it to your child's class for the classroom library, or purchasing one of the books from our "Birthday Book" collection.

Please **do not** send party foods to school, as we will not be able to serve them. Also, please **do not** send birthday invitations to the classroom to be distributed.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to develop independent study habits, to reinforce classroom instruction, to prepare for upcoming lessons, and to encourage parent participation in each child's program of study and academic development. Homework at Beal School may consist of review and practice material, assigned reading and problem solving activities. All of the activities are intended to be meaningful activities designed to meet the needs of each student.

While there is no formal kindergarten homework, parents should consistently read to/with students to foster literacy and language skills.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Change of Address, Telephone Number or Name

It is imperative that the school is able to reach you during school hours.

For Beal to have up-to-date information in case of an emergency, etc., please notify the school as soon as possible if there is any change of parents', guardians' or students' address, telephone number or last name.

If you have a privacy block on your phone, please be sure to add the Beal School phone number, 508-841-8860, so we can reach you in case of emergency.

Contacting the School

If you need to contact your child's teacher, please call the Beal School 508-841-8860 and we will get a message to the teacher. We do not want to disturb classroom time with telephone calls.

Report Cards

Report cards will be issued three times a year for Kindergarten and Grade One.

Reaching the Classroom Teacher

Please feel free to contact your child's teacher with any concerns you might have regarding your child. Teachers can be reached in three different manners: 1) You may send a written note to the teacher through your child's backpack, 2) you can contact your teacher directly by e-mail, or 3) you can telephone the school main office 508-841-8860 and leave a message on their voice mail. The teachers have suggested that it is best to reach them by messages via the backpack or e-mail because they will receive these messages on a daily basis. There is a complete listing of all teachers/staff and their e-mail addresses on the school website: <http://www.shrewsbury-ma.gov/schools/Beal>.

Communication Folders

Each child will receive his/her own communication folder. The folder will be sent home every day. Please be sure to check the folder regularly. If you need to correspond with your child's teacher in writing, please use the folder. The teacher checks the folders daily. Beal School parents and PTO have generously paid for these folders. If the folder needs to be replaced, we will need to charge \$1.25 to replace it.

Parent/Teacher Partnership

The foundation of a strong parent/school partnership is regular and open communication. Parents should feel comfortable contacting the school office or principal when questions or concerns arise. We ask that you follow a logical chain of communication by contacting the classroom teacher as an initial step in most situations. Parents should also feel free to call counselors, specialists and administrators as the need arises.

When Parents Have a Concern

The school welcomes the opportunity to assist you and your child to have a successful experience in our school. Should your family have a school concern or problem, the school should be notified. Contacting the right person and discussing your concerns can solve most problems. Generally, the best place to begin to solve an issue is with the source, most often by contacting the classroom teacher. In the event that you are not satisfied with the solution or are unable to resolve an issue, you should then contact the principal, Christian Girardi, **508-841-8865**.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

One parent/teacher conference is scheduled during the year to discuss your child's performance, progress, and personal development. It may include discussion about a specific curriculum area, skill development, or test results. However, a parent or teacher may request a conference if they determine a need to do so. When parents see a need to meet with the school, they should contact the classroom teacher or the psychologist to schedule a conference. Parent conferences are scheduled for Tuesday, November 8th. There will be **no school** for students scheduled on this date. More information regarding parent conferences will be sent to you at a later date.

Volunteering

Volunteering in the Shrewsbury Public Schools is a time-honored tradition. School volunteers are always in demand and perform a variety of functions. Most volunteers work in their child's classroom and are scheduled on a regular basis. Other volunteer opportunities include: working in the main office, preparing materials for teachers and students, working in the media center, and presenting special topics and project to the students. Your support and expertise is welcomed. Volunteers are required to complete a C.O.R.I with the Shrewsbury Public Schools, a C.O.R.I with the soccer league is not accepted and must be one through Shrewsbury Public Schools.

Volunteering does not require specific skills. Our website offers a Volunteer handbook to view, sign and return to the main office.

***All visitors to the school must register in the main office,
and wear a visitor's badge while in the building.***

Items From Home

Backpacks

Please be sure to check your child's backpack on a regular basis. It will contain your child's communication folder as well as Media books and schoolwork. Therefore, it is important to purchase a **large, sturdy backpack**. Please avoid popular themes from cartoons or movies because your child will have difficulty identifying his or hers among many identical backpacks in the class. Backpacks shaped like animals are not large enough to accommodate the materials your child will be bringing home from school. Please do not choose a **backpack with wheels** as this cause a dangerous situation going up and down the stairs.

We do not allow students to hook **key chains** on to their backpacks. As students go down the stairs at school to and from the buses and step on and off the buses, it is possible that one student could accidentally step on a dangling key chain from another student's backpack. This could cause a serious injury.

Toys from Home

Toys and card collections from home generally cause problems in school and on the bus. Please check your child's backpack each day to ensure that these are **not** being brought to school.

Toy weapons are **not** allowed in school. We take toy weapons seriously at Beal and are required to report these incidences to the Shrewsbury Police Department.

Lost and Found

The lost & found is located in the front foyer of the school. Please label all clothing such as jackets, sweaters, raincoats, hats and other belongings such as lunch boxes, boots sneakers, etc. Labeled items are easily returned if lost. Items that are not claimed are eventually given to a local charity.

Umbrellas

Due to safety concerns, please do not send your child to school with an umbrella. Hooded rain jackets are appropriate for rainy weather.

Child Health & Safety

Beal Nurse: Ann Lambert, BSN, RN, 508-841-8870

The following information is intended to assist you throughout the school year with medical issues that might arise. Please feel free to contact the Beal School nurse at any time with concerns or to update her about a change in your child's health.

Immunization Record

Under Massachusetts law, no child will be admitted to school without proof of full immunizations. **You must have this information available before the first day of school.**

Physical Exam Record

Each child entering kindergarten must also have a physical exam that is current. Because of the limits placed by some insurers, we extended the deadline for this to the end of the **calendar year**. After that time, we are required to exclude the child until this information is provided.

Medication

The Town of Shrewsbury has a very firm policy that **prohibits** students from carrying any medication on the school bus. This policy is strictly enforced to ensure the safety of all children.

If your child needs to take medication during the school day, [these](#) procedures must be followed:

- If your child's pediatrician prescribes medications to be administered on a daily basis during school hours, the doctor must fill out the Medication Consent Form. Once the form is completed, the school nurse will be able to dispense the medication during school hours. Please bring the Consent Form with the medication to the nurse's office. **Please call the nurse in advance so that she will expect you.**
- All medications must be brought to school in a labeled pharmacy bottle. When the prescription is being filled, ask the pharmacist to divide the medication into two bottles. The pharmacist will comply if you explain that one is for the school nurse. It is expected that the parent will bring this medication to the Beal School nurse.
- Clear and accurate information exchange between the nurse and parents regarding the times/dosage for home and school dispensation of medication is very important. This will ensure safe dispensation of the medication.

Vision & Hearing Screening

This will be done in the fall. If the nurse has any concerns, the family will be notified. Please note that this is only a screening and not meant to replace an examination by your health care provider.

Allergies

Please remember to notify the nurse if your child has any allergies. Training is provided to staff regarding allergies.

Student Visits to the Nurse

Children who are in need of medical attention will be escorted to the school nurse. All visits to the school nurse are recorded. The nurse's office contains adequate First Aid supplies, which are readily available.

Illness and Attendance at School

Good attendance at school is always encouraged; however, a sick child should stay home. The decision to keep your child at home is difficult.

- If your child has had a high temperature, has vomited or had diarrhea more than once the night before, giving the day off will allow him/her to recover.
- Children who have a temperature over 100 degrees, have vomited or have diarrhea at school, will be dismissed.
- Children with strep throat or conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be on antibiotics for twenty-four (24) hours before they may return to school.

Medical Emergencies at School

In the event of a serious medical concern, the student will be transported to the home, doctor, clinic, or hospital as required using the parent's automobile, an ambulance or requested police assistance.

Footwear

For safety issues, we recommend sending your child to school in durable, sturdy shoes every day. Sneakers are required on gym days. Sandals, flip-flops, backless shoes, and platform shoes are inappropriate and may be a safety hazard.

Beal Organizations

PTO

Each elementary school has an active parent organization, complete with monthly meetings and a slate of officers and sub-committees. These organizations provide the school with educational, social and fund-raising activities. **Getting involved is a good way to be of service to your school and ultimately, to your child.**

We have a wonderful school program that is due in large part to the commitment of concerned parents who volunteer their time to the PTO. Involved parents have a great time and are an integral part of the success of these programs. The PTO in past years has sponsored “Raz-Kids” for our students, which offers a library of guided reading tiles on-line. for each student. The PTO also has furnished the students communication folders, extra books, supplies, etc. Parents are invited to attend monthly workshops and discussions.

Please consider being part of this very important school organization.

School Council

School Council is an advisory group that meets to assist the principal with the running of the school. The council is a voluntary group, composed of Beal staff, community representation, PTO liaison, and school elected Parent Members. Nomination forms are sent home early in the fall when there are vacancies on the school council.