



New Garden
FRIENDS SCHOOL

Galaxy
(Grades 5 and 6)
Handbook

2022-23

Galaxy Handbook (Grades 5 and 6)

Welcome to Galaxy! We are looking forward to a great year with you and your child. This handbook will help you understand the procedures of our level.

For the most up-to-date health information throughout the year, please consult the NGFS COVID-19 Handbook located on our [website](#). We will continue to use a rigorous, layered approach to COVID-19 mitigation, introducing and revising strategies in response to current data and trends.

Contact Info

Brad Harrell, bharrell@ngfs.org

Tracey Bouchard, tbouchard@ngfs.org

Neil Swenson, nswenson@ngfs.org

Arrival and Dismissal

Galaxy Door Opens	Arrive By	Class Begins	Dismiss	Pickup	Pickup Location	Time Sent to Extended Care
8:00 a.m.	8:25 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:10 p.m.	3:10 p.m.	Carpool Line	3:20 p.m.

The classroom opens at 8 a.m. each day. We start music at 8:25 a.m. so that the students can be settled for the start of school at 8:30 a.m. Students also need time to turn in homework and complete any other morning tasks before class begins.

Timely arrival and attendance at Morning Meeting are important for your child for several reasons:

- The school has implemented a comprehensive social curriculum. This curriculum is designed to ensure a warm, safe, and rich learning environment. When your child is late, your child misses Morning Meeting, a critical and fun element of the social curriculum.
- Promptness helps your child make a smooth transition into the school day because it allows them to focus attention on the classroom, peers, teachers, and potential learning adventures before plunging into daily activities. Missing this time forces your child to play "catch-up" all day.
- Morning Meeting is the time for introducing new materials and information, activities, and physical changes in the classroom. Understanding and recognizing new possibilities are essential for your child to make the most of the day.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

- Drop-off will begin at 7:30 a.m. for [Extended Care](#) and 8 a.m. for the regular school day and will continue until 8:25 a.m. Please plan to arrive during this window of time.
- Please drop your child off at the car-loop in front of the fence gate at the front of the school. Your child will then enter the classroom by using the sidewalk to access their class door. Staff members will be present during drop off.
- If your child arrives late, please bring your child to the office and sign them in. Your child will be escorted by staff to their classroom.
- Dismissal is at 3:10 p.m. Staff will direct parents/guardians through the carpool line, and teachers will bring their students to the carpool line. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick-up list in ParentsWeb (FACTS Family Portal). Instruct them to have identification with them; staff will check the ID of anyone unknown to them.
- If you must pick your child up before school is over, please come by the office to sign your child out. If this early pick-up is for a scheduled appointment, please coordinate with your student's teacher in advance so they will have their belongings packed and ready to go at the designated time. If someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up early, please make sure the person you send is on your authorized pick up list in ParentsWeb.
- Please email your student's contact teacher if they will be absent. If an extended absence from school is necessary, prior permission (at least a week in advance) must be obtained from the Division Head so that arrangements can be made for work. After contacting the Division Head concerning a protracted absence, parents/guardians of students in K-6th grades should contact teachers for assignments.

Extended Care

- Morning Care is offered from 7:30-8 a.m.
- Afternoon Extended Care runs until 6 p.m.

Parking Lot Safety

Please help us keep everyone safe by observing the parking lot rules.

- When driving in our driveway or parking lot, **please do not use a handheld or hands-free phone**. Phone use, even hands-free, can distract drivers and make accidents more likely.
- Please drive slowly and slow down for speed bumps.
- Please drive all the way down and turn around at the loop instead of making a loop part-way down the parking lot. This makes it easier for cars to back out of parking spaces and reduces the risk of accidents.

Social Curriculum

The social curriculum at NGFS flows directly from a book written by Ruth Sidney Charney called "Teaching Children to Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom". For more information,

please ask a teacher to help you locate a copy. This curriculum helps students become empathetic, ethical thinkers as they learn to interact successfully in the school environment.

- We value the social curriculum as an integral part of our overall program.
- Positive social interactions and a strong sense of community enhance cognitive growth.
- There is a set of social skills that students need in order to be successful academically and socially: cooperation, self-advocacy, responsibility, empathy, perseverance, self-control, and peaceful conflict resolution skills.
- Knowing the students we teach individually, culturally, and developmentally is essential to the students' education and to developing community.
- Knowing the families of the students we teach and inviting their participation is essential to the students' education and to developing community.
- Adults model the above skills through positive interactions with each other and with students.

Each class at NGFS makes its own set of guidelines. In Galaxy, the students work on these guidelines for a part of each day for the first few weeks. The result of this work is a set of guidelines that the students have had a voice in developing; therefore, students are invested in carrying through with them.

The consequences for not following the guidelines are a series of removals from the group for centering time:

1. Removal to centering area in class (student enters back into class after minimum three-minute centering period).
2. Removal to centering area in class and complete centering form (teacher has to give student permission to re-enter class after form is filled out).
3. Removal to centering area in another Galaxy classroom (teacher will speak with student when teacher is available). A form will be sent home in an effort to increase communication about behavior. A parent/guardian needs to sign the form and send it back with the student the next school day.
4. Removal from the Galaxy classrooms with work to complete and parents/guardians will be contacted to discuss the situation.

Exceptions to the Process

- A student who is having difficulty following the classroom guidelines may visit the office to talk with the Division Head about the exhibited behavior and make a plan for improvement upon transition back to the classroom. Using the restorative practices model, we focus on finding solutions, applying logical consequences, and providing opportunities for reflection. The aim of restorative practices is to develop community and to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and restoring relationships.
- In the case of threatening, violent, or extremely disruptive behavior or language, students will bypass the centering procedure. Administrative staff will be consulted; parents/guardians will be called and notified of necessary consequences.

- In some instances, other appropriate natural consequences may be used at the teacher's and/or administrator's discretion. For example, a student may be required to write an apology note if others were affected by the student's actions. Natural consequences may include missing a school activity or field trip.
- If a student's actions or words are extremely disruptive, the student must be picked up from school immediately. A student demonstrating disruptive behavior may be asked by the Division Head or Head of School to remain at home until a plan can be put in place to help the student safely transition back to the classroom. If necessary, STAP procedures will be initiated (see Appendix, All School Handbook).

Snack and Lunch

Your child needs to bring a snack, lunch, and a non-caffeinated drink each day. Appropriate snacks include fruit, yogurt, cheese, bread products, and juice. We do not have refrigerator space for lunches or student access to microwaves, so pack lunches accordingly. Lunch box-sized ice packs/coolers work well for keeping drinks and yogurt cool.

Due to food allergies, Galaxy will be nut-free and shellfish-free* this year. Students may not bring food items containing peanuts, cashews, almonds, or other nuts. This includes peanut butter, granola bars containing nuts, and other nut items. SunButter can be a great alternative for some students. In addition, students may not bring food items containing shellfish such as crab and shrimp. *Updated: Oct. 31, 2022

We have a hot lunch program for K-12 students through My Hot Lunchbox, a contactless delivery service. Lunches must be ordered ahead of time.

Clothing/Dress Code

We ask that your child dress in comfortable, appropriate clothes and athletic shoes. If your child wears dressy shoes or sandals, please send tennis shoes for outside time and PE. This year we will be outside as often as possible. Time spent outdoors is vital to children's well being and we will be outside often, even if the weather is not ideal. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Layers can be helpful since the temperature can vary each day. Raincoats are helpful on rainy days.

Please help your child wear appropriate clothing. It is important for children to realize that what they wear can be offensive to other people (sexually explicit language, profanity, drug symbols, violent messages, etc.). If students follow the idea of clean, neat, and appropriate to the occasion, dress should be acceptable. Though current styles may disagree, we do not want to see bellies or boxers at school. Please help us keep dress appropriate by ensuring your child's shirt overlaps with his/her/their shorts, pants, or skirt through all normal ranges of motion.

Cubbies

Students will keep backpacks, lunchboxes, jackets, and other personal items in their cubbies. Large backpacks with wheels often do not fit in the cubbies and can present a storage issue in

the classroom. Please help your child stay organized by providing a backpack that can fit in their cubby.

Personal Possessions at School

We ask that you assist your child in keeping personal possessions at home. This also includes money, which is not permitted in school. Children need to realize that if they bring something to school, it can be misplaced, broken, or taken. Also, many times what they bring causes disruptions to the class. The use of gaming systems, cell phones, and other technology from home is not allowed on campus. If a student needs to have a cell phone, parents/guardians need to check in with the contact teacher and the phone must be checked in to the designated cell phone collection box in the morning. If a student has a smart watch on at school, it should function as a time-telling device only. Students should not use smart watches for communication such as texting or phone calls.

Weapons

Weapons may not be brought to school by students nor should any of these items be on any student's person: firearms, switchblades, pocket knives, knives, slingshots, clubs, nunchucks, brass knuckles, throwing stars, tear gas, mace, stink bombs, firecrackers, explosive devices, bows and arrows, razors (overnight trips excepted), lasers, tasers, or phasers. This list is thorough but not complete. NGFS staff have the discretion to determine whether other implements are weapons or if they are being used as weapons. The NGFS All School Handbook outlines the consequences for having/using a weapon on campus or at a school-sponsored event.

Homework

At this level and beyond, day-to-day communication about homework is directed to the students as we hope to build a sense of responsibility for them to take care of the work expectations. We will attempt to stagger the due dates of long-term projects, tests or assessments, or other assignments to avoid overload. Generally, homework on holidays is not assigned, other than work on long-term projects. We will share more information about homework expectations at our parent meeting.

Study Session

On Wednesday afternoons we will offer study session from 3:10-4 p.m. for students to get extra academic support. Students may opt into study session or may be asked to attend by a teacher due to missing or incomplete work.

Birthdays

- Parents/guardians may send in birthday treats for the class.
- In order to protect classmates' feelings, party invitations may NOT be handed out at school unless all Galaxy students receive one. Please also ask your child to refrain from discussing these events in front of their peers.
- If you have questions about appropriate, allergy friendly treats, please check in with your contact teacher.

Visitors and Volunteers

All volunteers are required to complete a background check done through NGFS. Please check in with teachers to learn more about volunteer opportunities. Classroom volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality.

Questions and Communication

Please read email communications from NGFS as they contain important information. Families should check the Community Newsletter which is emailed weekly. In the newsletter, Galaxy teachers will share about classroom learning, special events, field trips, and other announcements. The newsletter will also provide you with information on whole school events and calendar reminders. The NGFS website posts a whole school calendar and other whole school information. We will regularly share photos through Vidigami. Please subscribe to the NGFS mobile app and enable notifications. Galaxy teachers will periodically send reminders through the app about class events.

Please talk with us about questions or concerns that you have. We can chat by phone, or if an extended time is needed, we can set up a conference before or after school. At the Hopes and Dreams conference in September, we will meet for you to share information that will help us learn more about your child and your family. In December and June, you will receive written evaluations of your child's progress.

If you wish to talk with us, you may call the office and leave a message on our voicemail so that we can call you at a convenient time. We check our messages at the end of the school day. We will also communicate via email. Emails will be responded to within 24 business hours.

On Tuesday, August 30, from 6-7 p.m., we will have a required parent meeting to familiarize parents/guardians with Galaxy.

Opportunities to Conference with Contact Teachers:

Hopes and Dreams Conference: Friday, Sept. 2

End of 1st Trimester Conference: Friday, Dec. 9

End of 2nd Trimester Conference: Thursday, March 2, and Friday, March 3

Field Trips

We will travel in buses. Parents/guardians will be notified when students are going off campus. Travel between campuses and to New Garden Friends Meeting is not considered off-campus. Background checks are required for any parent/guardian volunteers, including field trip chaperones. We look forward to enriching our curriculum by resuming the overnight trips that NGFS is known for. Families will be notified about trips with plenty of notice, and detailed information will be provided at that time.

Technology

Computers, iPads, and Internet access are available to be used as tools to enhance student learning. Teachers will use technology when appropriate to supplement the class curriculum.

Each year, parents/guardians must review and sign the Acceptable Use Agreement (AUP), which is part of the ParentsWeb Student Information form. Please take time to review these guidelines with your student.

Students have individual Google accounts with access to Google Drive and email for the purpose of creating and sharing documents and communicating with teachers.

Students are not allowed to have cell phones or other handheld “entertainment” devices on campus. Students may bring their own technology devices, such as a laptop, Nook, or Kindle to support school work, with prior teacher approval. If a student needs to have a cell phone, parents/guardians need to check in with the contact teacher, and the phone must be checked in to the designated cell phone collection box in the morning. All devices are brought to school at your own risk; we are not responsible for the loss or damage of these devices while in use at school.

Only school appropriate content should be accessed while at school. School staff may not work on, install software on, or otherwise support personal devices beyond offering suggestions.

Social media and other online formats can be powerful communication tools for connecting people. Sometimes students may use these tools to exclude or bully or to spread gossip and ill will. Students are expected to maintain a high standard of behavior at all times and to respect and honor their teachers, classmates, and school. Students should consider all possible outcomes of their online expression and should guard against causing any potential harm to others.

Families are asked to respect the privacy of students and other community members by not posting names or photos on social media sites without specific permission. Some families do not allow their child’s picture to be posted anywhere on the Internet. Please respect this.

Published: 8/22/2022