



# New Garden

## FRIENDS SCHOOL

# Galaxy

(Grades 5 and 6)

# Handbook

# 2024-25

Guided by Quaker values, New Garden Friends School is committed to being an inclusive, educational community that honors and develops each person's gifts.

## 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.

### Contact Info

Brad Harrell (he, him), [bharrell@ngfs.org](mailto:bharrell@ngfs.org)

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### Arrival and Dismissal

Door Opens	Class Begins	Dismiss	Pickup	Pickup Location	<a href="#">Extended Care</a>
7:45 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	3:10 p.m.	3:10-3:20 p.m.	Carpool Line	begins at 3:20 p.m

The classroom opens at 7:45 a.m. each day. We start music at 7:50 a.m. so that the students can be settled for the start of school at 8:00 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 several reasons:

- We have a school-wide social curriculum that is grounded in Morning Meeting. 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

- You will be given a name card to hang from your car rearview mirror. Please be sure to display the tag in the morning and afternoon; we appreciate your assistance in helping drop-off and pick-up run smoothly and efficiently.
- Drop-off begins at 7:30 a.m. for Extended Care and 7:45 a.m. for the regular school day. The school day begins at 8 a.m.

- At arrival, staff will direct you through the carpool line to drop off your child. Students will walk down the breezeway to their classroom building where they will be let in by a staff member.
- If your child arrives late, please bring your child to the office and sign them in. An adult must accompany your child to the office.
- 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. (Please note that changes in ParentsWeb may take up to 48 hours to update.)
- If you must pick your child up before school is over, please go to the office to sign your child out. If 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 your child will be absent. Please also include Renee Gaunt, Lower School receptionist, at [rgaunt@ngfs.org](mailto:rgaunt@ngfs.org).
- If an extended absence from school is necessary, communicate with the Division Head at least one week in advance 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** (see [Extended Care page](#) for information)

- Morning care will be provided from 7:30-7:45 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 and following the directions of staff who assist with arrival and dismissal.

- When driving in our driveway or parking lot, **do not use a handheld or hands-free phone**. Phone use, even hands-free, can distract drivers and make accidents more likely.
- Drive slowly and slow down for speed bumps.
- Use caution when backing out of parking spaces.
- Be mindful of adults and our students going to and from their classrooms in the morning and afternoon. Please do not let your students run ahead of you when leaving or going to their vehicle.
- Follow directions from staff during dismissal times. When a car is coming out, or when the car line is full, we will hold cars at the stop sign.

## **Social Curriculum**

The social curriculum at NGFS is guided by a book written by Ruth Sidney Charney called "Teaching Children to Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom." 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 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.

Families have the option to order hot lunches through My Hot Lunchbox, which partners with local restaurants to deliver nutritious meals to schools. Visit the [Back to School page](#) for more information and directions for creating an account and placing orders. If you have questions, please contact My Hot Lunchbox at 888-894-8295 or [info@myhotlunchbox.com](mailto:info@myhotlunchbox.com).

### **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. 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, lunch boxes, 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 at 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.

### **Learning Support**

At NGFS we value diversity in all of its dimensions and we understand that no child will develop academic skills at exactly the same pace or in the same way as their classmates. Our learning, reading, and math specialists frequently co-teach lessons and may work with a small group to preview or review concepts. The specialists provide small group instruction to students who may need to work at a different pace or have material presented in an alternative manner. Occasionally, the support we offer is not sufficient to meet a student's need, and outside assistance may be necessary. In these cases, one of our learning specialists or your child's contact teacher will request a conference with parents/guardians and teachers to discuss next steps.

### **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**

- Please communicate with your child's contact teacher ahead of time so we can plan ahead for student birthdays.
- Parents/guardians may send in birthday treats for the class.
- Balloons, party favors, etc. should be kept at home for the child's at-home celebration.
- 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**

We welcome parent/guardian volunteers in our classrooms. All volunteers are required to have a background check done through NGFS. Please contact the Division head to complete a background check. Please check in with teachers to learn more about volunteer opportunities. Classroom volunteers are expected to maintain confidentiality.

Volunteers must sign in at the office and receive their visitor badge. At the end of their volunteer time, they must return to the office to sign out and return the visitor badge.

### **Guilford Campus Outdoor Play Guidelines**

We welcome our families to use the **Upper Playground** (playground that has the structure, located behind the parking lot fence) after school dismisses. In order to be truly welcoming to everyone, we need to remember that our community includes people with different abilities and interests. To keep everyone safe and to be consistent with the expectations that students have during the school day, please follow these guidelines and help your child(ren) with reminders when needed.

Our Lower School classes have staggered dismissal times. ACG dismisses at 2:30, followed by Sunrise at 2:45, Rainbow at 3:00 and Horizon and Galaxy at 3:10. Consequently, older classes are still going on while younger students have been dismissed. Additionally, dismissal for Horizon and Galaxy takes place in the playground area (Horizon on the sidewalk to the left and Galaxy by the fence gate); therefore, we ask that children who have been dismissed stay on the lower side of the Upper Playground structure area (away from the parking lot). Please be aware that later in the afternoon, Extended Care may bring a group of students onto the upper playground.

When parents/guardians remain after school to visit with other families and let their children enjoy the playground, it is imperative that they carefully supervise their children and ensure they are following our outdoor play guidelines as follows:

### **Boundaries and Manners**

- All activities should be inclusive and played in the spirit of caring.
- All children should be actively supervised and within sight of the adult responsible for them at all times.
- Shoes should be worn while outside and on the play structure.
- Children playing on the sidewalks should stop playing and move to allow people to pass.
- Please keep play activities out of the covered walkways and off the railing by the walkway ramp.
- Please ask children to stay out of the landscaped areas and off the brick wall by the covered walkway. Leave items in place; do not move the big rocks or stepping stones by the landscaped areas.
- Picnic tables are for sitting, not standing or jumping.
- Students are not permitted to climb or hang from trees on campus.

### **Play Structure**

- Climbing should only be done on the inside of the play structure.
- There should be no climbing on the outside areas of the structure, including on top of the tunnel.
- Do not jump off the top level of the play structure.
- Slide down slides only, feet first. Do not walk up the slides.

### **Materials/Toys**

- If building or playing with sticks, make sure they are not larger than your pinky finger.
- Keep flying objects (balls, frisbees) under control. Do not randomly toss or kick objects.
- When you leave, please return the balls to the storage box located on the sidewalk above the back playground.
- Please keep the sand and sand toys inside the sandbox. If your family is the last group on the playground, please cover the sandbox at the end of use.

**A Child's Garden Fenced Play Area:** This area is only for A Child's Garden (preschool, pre-K) students during the school day and after school for ACG Extended Care.

**Lower Playground:** Reserved for Extended Care only 2:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**A Child's Garden Fenced Play Area:** This area is only for A Child's Garden students being supervised by staff. It is used by A Child's Garden students during the school day and for A Child's Garden Extended Care from 2:30-6 p.m.

**Lower Playground:** Reserved for Extended Care only 2:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

### **Questions and Communication**

Please read email communications from NGFS as they contain important information. Families should read the Community Newsletter which is emailed weekly. The newsletter includes a link to the [Galaxy Class News page](#), which includes weekly class news, upcoming events, class resources, and class emails and announcements. Parents/guardians access this page using the



same login information as is used for [ParentsWeb](#) (FACTS Family Portal). The newsletter also provides whole school news. The school calendar is posted on the [NGFS Calendar page](#) and on the NGFS mobile App. Please use the App and subscribe to the Galaxy group. Be sure you have notifications enabled; we will 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 on August 30, 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, Sept. 10, from 6-7:30 p.m.,** we will have Lower School Parent Night. The evening will begin in the gym where administrators will share whole school information, followed by classroom information presented by teachers in the classrooms.

#### **Opportunities to Conference with Teachers**

Hopes and Dreams Conference: Friday, Aug. 30

End of 1st Trimester Conference: Friday, Dec. 13

End of 2nd Trimester Conference: Thursday, Feb. 27 and Friday, Feb. 28

#### **Field Trips**

At New Garden Friends School field trips are a vital part of the school curriculum. Students are able to learn in much greater detail when they not only study a subject in class, but also visit a location that reinforces and enhances the subject matter.

Parents/guardians will be notified when students are going off campus. Travel between campuses and to New Garden Friends Meeting and Guilford College are not considered off-campus.

Background checks are required for any parent/guardian volunteers, including field trip chaperones.

Galaxy students go on local and regional day trips. These required field trips lead to capstone Spring Trip experiences that enrich our social and academic curriculum. Galaxy has a two-night fall trip, and a spring trip for a minimum of three or four nights. As these trips are curriculum-based, students who do not participate in the trips will have work assigned by the teachers. Arrangements for students not participating in overnight trips need to be made at least one week in advance by notifying the Division Head and/or classroom teachers that your child will not be attending the trip.

### **Galaxy Overnight Trip Dates:**

- Fall Trip: Tuesday-Thursday, Nov. 5-7
- Spring Trip: Monday-Friday\*, May 5-9  
*\*5th graders return on Thursday, May 8; 6th graders remain for the 4th night.*

Details about the Spring Trip are provided several weeks in advance at the Spring Trip Information Meeting for parents/guardians.

### **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.

**Athletics: Middle Division Sports**

Galaxy students are eligible to participate in Middle Division sports (grades 5-7). You can read about this program, including the sports offered on the [NGFS Athletics page](#). For more details, including eligibility requirements, please see the [NGFS Athletics Handbook](#).