

**PROFESSIONAL
CHILDREN'S
SCHOOL**

Handbook

for Students & Parents 2019-2020

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PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

Beliefs

We believe that education is a lifelong process of primary importance, irrespective of one's professional pursuits. Education is not only an intellectual endeavor, but one that encompasses artistic, emotional, spiritual and physical growth as well. A good school encourages critical thinking, aesthetic appreciation, formation of values, and sound health and fitness, while also fostering intellectual curiosity, initiative and creativity in all areas of life.

We believe that, although students have different abilities, aptitudes and talents, all children want to learn and are capable of learning. Each student should be encouraged to achieve his or her full potential. An effective school must provide a challenging and supportive learning environment, in which students learn from and provide an educational stimulus for one another. In order to nurture their growth as thinkers, as artists and as citizens, students should be provided with a wide range of courses that meet their educational needs and interests.

We believe that our school functions as part of a larger society. Students should see themselves not only as members of academic and artistic communities, but as members of New York City, the nation and the world. A meaningful education should prepare students to meet the challenges of these ever changing communities, in an atmosphere that encourages awareness and appreciation of diversity. As a school, we have the responsibility to enable students to make informed choices and to adapt themselves to personal and social changes through their lives.

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY STATEMENT

Professional Children's School is committed to developing a community where all of its members feel safe, supported and celebrated, and share a common responsibility to cultivate the same in others. We aim to be a place that embraces diversity in its multiple forms, actively confronts prejudice and bias, and does not shy away from difficult conversations. Given that the journey towards equity and justice is ongoing and evolving, so too must our academic offerings and social interactions remain open to revision, as we strive to become responsible world citizens.

Professional Children's School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation in employment practices, admission criteria or the day-to-day functioning of the school.

THE SCHOOL DAY

MIDDLE SCHOOL

The school day begins for students in grades 6, 7 and 8 at either 8:00 am or 8:53 am depending upon schedules. Students may arrive after 7:30 am.

If students arrive before 7:30 am, they must remain in the waiting room until given permission to come upstairs by an adult, either an administrator or the teacher with whom they have an early appointment.

Middle School students are dismissed at either 2:00 pm or 2:45 pm, depending upon schedules.

Students may meet with teachers before or after school, depending upon teacher availability.

Middle School students attend a Community Meeting each Tuesday from 9:35 – 9:48 am.

Lunch periods are from 5th to 6th period (11:10 am - 12:36 pm).

Students are asked to leave the building at 5:00 pm, unless given permission to stay by an administrator or unless they have a meeting with a teacher.

UPPER SCHOOL

The school day begins for many Upper School students at 8:00 am, and for others at 8:53 am, depending on their individual schedules. Students may arrive after 7:30 am.

If students arrive before 7:30 am, they must remain in the waiting room until given permission to come upstairs by an adult, either an administrator or the teacher with whom they have an early appointment.

Upper School classes are generally dismissed by 2:00 pm.

Students may meet with teachers before, during, or after school, depending upon teacher availability.

All Upper School students are expected to attend a Community Meeting each Tuesday from 9:35-9:48 am.

Juniors and Seniors are allowed to leave for lunch with the permission of a parent or guardian, conveyed to the school attendance office in writing.

Lunch periods are from 4th to 7th period (10:27 am - 1:16 pm).

Students are asked to leave the building at 5:00 pm, unless given permission to stay by an administrator or unless they have a meeting with a teacher.

SCHOOL SERVICES AND GENERAL INFORMATION

CAFETERIA

PCS has collaborated with Flik Independent School Dining to bring an All-inclusive Food Service to our Cafeteria. The cafeteria is open from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm daily. The All-Inclusive menu includes Breakfast, Lunch, and Beverages. These beverages include Coffee, Tea, Milk, Hot Chocolate and Fountain Drinks.

Breakfast is available beginning at 7:30 am and lunch is available from 10:30 to 1:30 pm.

A la Carte snacks and bottled beverages will be available from 1:30 pm. These items are to be purchased with cash only.

Parents can contact the Food Service Manager at ext. 121 with any allergy concerns or questions. A detailed list of lunches served during each month will be available through a downloadable App.

It is a community responsibility to keep the cafeteria clean and we ask that students remember the following:

Clean up and deposit dishes, utensils, bottles, and litter in appropriate bins. Keep the noise level low in order to maintain a pleasant environment. When spills occur, clean them up or ask for assistance.

See the cashier for purchases during lunch periods. At other times, please record your purchases on the form available in the cafeteria. Failure to pay for food

or consuming food without paying is considered theft.

THE GLADYS BROOKS LIBRARY

The library is open from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm for quiet study and research.

The library operates on an honor system. Students are responsible for signing out their own books.

All books must be returned on time. The librarian will send overdue slips home to parents/guardians.

Lost books must be paid for in full before report cards or transcripts will be released. Ebooks are available to download to any device.

LOCKERS

Lockers will be assigned to students at the beginning of the school year either by the Upper or Middle School office.

Middle School lockers are located in designated classrooms. Upper School lockers are located on the sixth floor.

Textbooks, notebooks, laptops, iPads and personal possessions should be kept in locked lockers when not being used and, if lost, are the student's responsibility to replace.

LOST AND FOUND

Students may check in the Middle School and Upper School offices for lost items. Found laptops and electronics are brought to the Business office for security purposes and can be retrieved after 9:00 am.

MEDICAL ATTENTION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Students in both Middle and Upper School should go to the Middle School Office for medical attention. If necessary, arrangements may be made to send a student home.

A student who is ill may not leave the school without permission of the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School.

A student who is sent home due to illness must remain at home for the entire day, and she/he may not return to School to participate in any school related event.

LOST BOOKS

Students should see the Middle School or Upper School Assistant who will determine the price of the lost book. A check or cash must be brought to the Business Manager before a new book may be obtained.

METROCARDS

Students who use mass transit in NYC may be eligible for a Metrocard. Please see the Business Office Assistant on the first floor at the time of registration. Students may apply for a new card with the Business Office Assistant at any point in the school year.

ACADEMICS

GENERAL INFORMATION

The life of a PCS student is very busy both in and out of school. Students are expected to attend to all their commitments, to complete all of their assignments even when absent, and to develop the self-discipline necessary to perform the best of their abilities in all of their endeavors. Homework is an integral part of a PCS education and is to be completed when assigned. Monthly assignment sheets are posted for students on Moodle, a learning management system which is used in each class for daily classwork and long-distance correspondence. Moodle allows for students to plan ahead, to keep track of their monthly homework assignments, to communicate with teachers, and to engage in classroom learning. Extensions on assignments for legitimate reasons must be approved in advance by each individual teacher. Students who are having academic or personal problems should speak to their subject teachers or advisors for either advice or for extra help.

PCS SUMMER ACADEMY

Each summer PCS offers a variety of courses taught online. Courses will vary from year to year, but recent offerings included Health, Creative Writing, Conceptual Physics, and Environmental Science. Summer course offerings are announced early in the second semester of each school year.

MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Our program is geared specifically to middle school-age students. A developmentally appropriate sequence of classes promotes progression from concrete thinking to more abstract thinking. The 6/7th grade program is combined for English, Social Studies, Science, and the Arts, allowing for an interdisciplinary approach among those subjects. The 8th grade program is also grade-level specific, with appropriate placements in math and world languages. The curriculum as described in the PCS Curriculum Guide, along with classwork, independent projects, and homework, provides students with a variety of opportunities to grow and develop as thinkers.

Each Middle School student is assigned an Advisor who meets with them once a week during a designated Advisory Period, or on an individual basis, as needed.

MIDYEAR AND FINAL EXAMS

In the Middle School, eighth graders as well as students taking ESL, French, or Spanish courses are tested at the end of each semester. Each exam period is preceded by a week of review and exam schedules are published in advance.

While we remain supportive and flexible regarding professional commitments, during each exam period, we do our best to have students take their tests according to the exam schedule. It is in the student's best interest to take the exams according to schedule. It is not our practice to reschedule exams except for extraordinary or unavoidable professional commitments, and it is our policy that any student missing an exam due to illness must supply a doctor's note to verify their illness.

Exams must be taken at PCS or under conditions approved by PCS.

For course descriptions and additional academic information, please see the Professional Children's School Curriculum Guide.

UPPER SCHOOL PROGRAM

OUTLINE OF GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of eighteen credits are required for graduation. Professional Children's School's curriculum is based on a four-year program, and it is recommended that college-bound students graduate with credits beyond the minimum, especially in sequential courses.

Students generally carry five credits per year. Courses that meet five times per week for 40 minutes, or four times per week for 50 minutes, receive one credit per year or one-half credit for semester offerings. Courses that meet less frequently receive less credit.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Each student is required to take the following courses:

English	- 4 credits, including Senior English for all but students who have been in the ESL Program.
History World	- 3 ½ credits. 3 credits for students who have been in the ESL Program.
World Languages	- 2 credits
Mathematics	- 2 credits
Science	- 2 credits
The Arts	- 1 credit
Health (Gr. 9-10)	- 1/2 credit

Research & Information Literacy – 1/2 credit, online course

SEQUENCE

In addition to the above, students must select a three-year sequence in foreign language, mathematics or science.

All students are required by New York State law to take Physical Education each year. There is a minimum requirement of two hours a week. Students must wear athletic footwear and appropriate clothing for physical activity. Physical Education exemptions may be granted to students who are regularly engaged in supervised physical training outside of school for at least two full hours weekly. Exemptions are commonly granted for students taking dance classes and training in competitive sports. All students who feel they qualify for an exemption must submit the PCS exemption form, signed by both their instructor and their parents by the expressed deadline in order to be considered. Students who have submitted an exemption form must continue to attend their Physical Education classes as scheduled until they hear that the exemption has been granted. Physical education exemption forms are available in Division offices. Medical exemptions may only be given with a letter from a physician, and students must attend Physical Education classes until exemption forms are completed and received.

Attendance in Physical Education is mandatory. In cases where students become very busy professionally, there must be documentation for these absences. Students who miss an extensive number of classes will not receive credit and will be required to attend extra classes in the following quarter in order to meet the course requirements.

ELECTIVES

Once students have completed course requirements, the additional credits required for graduation may be taken from the sequences or in history, English, or the arts.

TRANSFER CREDIT

Transfer credit will be given for courses that are similar to courses offered at Professional Children's School. In the case of foreign transcripts, courses are sometimes blended since they frequently meet less than 200 minutes per week, i.e. history, geography, social studies.

ELIGIBILITY FOR HONOR ROLL

Upper School students are eligible for the Honor Roll at the end of the semester if they are taking a minimum of three academic courses* and they have an Average (3.7) or better.

Grades for courses earned at other institutions while enrolled at PCS are not computed for the PCS Honor Roll. These courses must be passed and are counted simply as a course taken.

Students who withdraw from courses after the end of the first marking period are not eligible for Honor Roll, unless they withdrew at the recommendation of the School. Students who earned a Pass as a semester grade in any course may not be eligible.

Students who have violated the school's policies on academic honesty are not eligible for Honor Roll within the semester of the violation.

*Academic courses are all courses with the exception of Physical Education, Research and Information Literacy, Health, Fine Arts, Creative Writing, Introduction to Modernism, and Performing Art classes. Poetics of Music is counted for honor roll.

DROPPING AND ADDING COURSES

A student is permitted to drop a class during the first marking period of a course. If a course is dropped during the first marking period, it will not appear on the student's transcript.

After the first marking period of a course, there will be a ten-day grace period within which a student may drop that course.

Occasionally there are extenuating circumstances for a student to drop a course, commonly professional or medical. The decision to drop a course after the above mentioned deadline is at the discretion of the Associate Head for Academic Affairs. If a student drops a course after the end of a marking period, however, a notation of Withdrawn/ Passing or Withdrawn/Failing will be recorded on the transcript.

Students who undergo an educational evaluation midyear, and receive the recommendation that they not take foreign language, may drop the language course once the school receives the evaluation, and the course will then be deleted from the transcript.

Students may add a course up until the first interim reporting date of a marking period.

Subject teachers will make final decisions regarding student permission to add a course.

ACCELERATION

Occasionally there are students who are completing the 10th grade who request permission to combine their Junior/Senior years and graduate one year early. This request may be considered if the 10th grader has at least 12 credits, has a grade point average of at least 3.0, and there is a compelling reason or professional need that would make early graduation advisable. Since competitive colleges and universities generally frown upon early graduation, the following process is in place at PCS.

The parents must write a letter to the Associate Head for Academic Affairs requesting permission to combine Junior/Senior years. The specific reason for the request must be clear and compelling.

The parent and student must meet with or speak with the college counselor in order to understand potential consequences, especially if the student plans on applying to competitive colleges.

The Associate Head, Head of Upper School, and College Advisor will review the request and make a decision. They will consider both the academic performance and the maturity of the student in coming to their decision, and the decision is left to their discretion.

If permission is granted for acceleration and the student needs to take a course in summer school after the 10th grade, the course and the curriculum must be approved by the Associate Head.

The student must successfully complete the 10th grade before a revised contract is issued to Parents.

TESTS AND QUIZZES

While conflicting professional commitments remain the ongoing exception, we expect students to take tests and quizzes as scheduled.

Along with an adult contacting the attendance office to excuse an absence, students must be in contact with each of their teachers, either in person or by email, in order to reschedule an assessment.

Missing a test as scheduled and/or neglecting to contact the teacher after an absence may result in a grade sanction. Specifics of such sanctions are at the discretion of the teacher.

MIDYEAR AND FINAL EXAMS

In the Upper School, Exams are given at the end of each semester. Each exam period is preceded by a week of review and exam schedules are published in advance.

While we remain supportive and flexible regarding professional commitments, during each exam period, we do our best to have students take their tests according to the exam schedule. It is in the student's best interest to take the exams according to schedule. It is not our practice to reschedule exams except for extraordinary or unavoidable professional commitments, and it is our policy that any student missing an exam due to illness must supply a doctor's note to verify their illness.

Exams must be taken at PCS or under conditions approved by PCS.

Exam Exemptions for 2nd Semester Seniors: All Second Semester Seniors are expected to attend classes through review week unless otherwise instructed by the subject area teacher. Subject area teachers will make final decisions regarding exemptions from final exams, and will inform exempted students during review week.

- A Senior who maintains an average of at least an A for a second semester course may be exempted by the teacher from taking the final exam. All course work for 4th quarter must be completed and submitted before the first day of review week.
- Juniors who are taking Senior-level courses may not be exempted from exams.

The privilege is reserved for second semester Seniors only.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honor holds that all work must be one's own or attributed to the source from which it came. This belief is central to the academic philosophy at Professional Children's School. All students both in and out of the classroom must uphold academic honesty. Violations of academic honesty, including cheating and plagiarism, will not be tolerated and will become a part of the student's permanent record. Repeated offenses of academic dishonesty may be cause for suspension or expulsion from school.

Plagiarism is the undocumented or unacknowledged use of material that is not one's own. It can occur in both the literal and the general use of ideas or concepts when taken from, but not attributed to, another source.

It is the responsibility of the faculty at PCS to advise students in their classes as to the definition of plagiarism within the context of that subject matter or discipline

The faculty at PCS is required to report an instance of plagiarism to the administration. Upon notification to the administration, the reviewed charge will be documented, and the student's parents will be informed. The information will be placed in the permanent file of the involved student or students

Students whose work is deemed plagiarized shall receive a grade of zero for that work.

The administration and faculty of PCS will share, where and when appropriate, information regarding the citation of plagiarism. This may include college recommendations when questions of a student's integrity arise. Upon a second offense, it is the School's policy to include this information with materials sent to other schools and colleges.

ESL students will be given appropriate guidelines regarding plagiarism in their first two years at PCS. During that time, students will be instructed on the proper use of material.

Cheating on quizzes, tests and exams, as well as on work done outside of class that should have been done alone, is a major offense.

In cases in which cheating occurs, just as with plagiarism, the student or students involved will receive a zero for that work.

COPYRIGHT STATEMENT

Professional Children's School recognizes that it is illegal to duplicate copyrighted materials without authorization of the holder of the copyright, unless the copying or using conforms to the "fair use" doctrine. We encourage our teachers to enhance their curriculum by making proper use of supplementary materials, while educating themselves about and obeying the requirements of the law. For answers to what materials comply or what procedures are permissible, the PCS community can refer to the PCS Copyright Resource page located on the PCS Library Media Center page, or consult with our Library Media Specialist. Additionally, copyright regulations and information about the TEACH Act will be posted in the library, as well as on the PCS community portals.

GUIDED STUDY PROGRAM

Professional Children's School emphasizes the value of regular classroom attendance, teacher instruction, and group discussion. During the course of the year, however, students who are unable to be in class for three days or more due to professional obligations enter our Guided Study Program. This Program keeps students connected to the classroom experience, facilitating ongoing learning and communication between the student and their teacher.

Students keep up with their work on Moodle and, when appropriate, receive up to a two week extension on due dates. Technological tools, including Moodle discussions, video chats, and PCS email exchanges, allow students to attend to their academic responsibilities while working around their professional commitments.

The Guided Study Program is designed solely for students who are unable to be in class for more than three days because of professional obligations. For example, preparation for an audition (up to three days), preparation for a recital or competition (up to four days), and preparation for a concert (up to five days).

Extended absences for personal (non-professional) reasons must receive approval from the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School.

STUDENTS ON GUIDED STUDY FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

Notify the Dean of Middle School Life or Head of Upper School at least one week prior to departure, receiving signature on the Guided Study form to start the sign out process.

Meet with and obtain signatures from advisor, subject teachers, and parent or guardian. Return signed to the Dean of Middle School Life or Head of Upper School.

If on Guided Study for two or more consecutive weeks, students are required to work with a tutor.

Follow the assignment sheet on Moodle.

Keep copies of all work submitted to teachers. Extensions are decided by the teacher, but cannot exceed two weeks.

Include the Dean of Middle School Life or Head of Upper School and advisor on all email correspondence to PCS while away on Guided Study.

If there is any potential for poor Internet connection, print out and bring hard copies of all assignments before leaving, when possible.

Check in with teachers weekly regarding their progress.

Exams must be taken under conditions approved by PCS or at PCS.

WHEN STUDENTS ARE ON GUIDED STUDY, PARENTS WILL:

Notify the Dean of Middle School Life or Head of Upper School at least one week prior to the student's departure.

Sign the Guided Study form (the agreement takes effect only after parents sign).

Be available to discuss student progress with teachers.

Provide the Dean of Middle School Life or Head of Upper School with any changes of address and contact information for the student.

Provide a tutor if student is absent from school for two or more consecutive weeks.

Provide the Dean of Middle School Life or Head of Upper School with the name of the tutor or agency working with the student.

Send work to the school on a weekly basis either by email, fax or regular mail. Retain copies of all work sent to school.

If a student needs to extend Guided Study arrangements, parents must notify the school.

THE DEAN OR DIVISION HEAD WILL ASSIST THE STUDENT ON GUIDED STUDY BY:

Meeting with students before departure. Signing the Guided Study form.

Communicating with teachers about Guided Study status, including any change in circumstances.

Regularly checking in with students away on Guided Study. Contacting parents when their extra attention is required.

Working out tutor obligations with each individual tutor.

FACULTY WILL ASSIST THE STUDENT ON GUIDED STUDY BY:

Signing the Guided Study form and providing current assignment sheets and materials.

Posting all assignments on Moodle.

Modifying and clarifying assignment sheets for use on Guided Study.

Providing feedback, encouragement, and instruction to students in a timely manner.

Encouraging students to communicate problems and questions via email, voicemail, and/or video conferencing.

Copying or forwarding all email correspondence to Dean or Division Head.

When a student is on Guided Study, every teacher must write a Thursday Report documenting the work owed/turned, and clarifying the extensions given up to two weeks.

RESIDENT GUIDED STUDY

Students who for professional reasons must miss a class session every week, can be approved to take some courses on Resident Guided Study for either a semester or for the entire school year.

Must be approved at the time of course registration.

Expected to complete assignments on time and regularly communicate with teachers.

They will not be automatically granted extensions.

STUDENTS NEEDING EXTENSIONS WHEN THEY CAN BE IN SCHOOL

Students who are unable to complete homework or take quizzes or tests because of out of the ordinary professional commitments, additional rehearsals and/or performances may be granted extensions for up to three days.

Students in such situations should see their advisor for consultation and assistance.

If it seems appropriate, advisors will ask for a confirmation email from a parent or guardian, and then send an email to teachers and the Head of Upper School.

Students will work with teachers to determine schedule of extensions.

For attendance purposes, teachers continue to record attendance for any days or periods a student is and is not in class.

As exams must be taken at PCS, or under conditions approved by PCS, Guided Study may extend beyond the school year, but all coursework and exams must be completed by June 30th. Extensions to this timeline may be granted with specific permission from the Head of Upper School.

All of the above constitutes the Guided Study Agreement. The following is a sample of the Guided Study form which can be found on the PCS website, on the student's Moodle page, through Family Access Module (FAM), or in both the Middle and Upper School Offices.

PROFESSIONAL CHILDREN'S SCHOOL

132 WEST 60TH STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10023

212-582-3116 • FAX: 212-956-3295 (Upper School) • 212-973-7018 (Middle School)

E-mail:

US apena@pcs-nyc.org or levanoff@pcs-nyc.org

MS aworthey@pcs-nyc.org or dnauholyk@pcs-nyc.org

GUIDED STUDY FORM

Instructions to Students: It is understood that you will follow Moodle in each of your courses and adhere to the conditions of the Guided Study Agreement in the Student Handbook. Take this form to all of your teachers and your advisor to sign. Return the completed form to the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School after everyone, including you and your parent or guardian, has signed.

Name _____ Grade _____ Date of absence _____

Reason for Absence _____

Describe the quantity of time that will be required for professional commitment:

Describe the quantity of time that will be available and allotted for schoolwork:

Mailing address while away _____

Phone # while away _____ Fax # while away _____

Student cell phone # _____ Parent cell phone # _____

Student email _____ Parent email _____

Tutor information (if away for two or more consecutive weeks) including email and phone number:

COURSE	TEACHER	TEACHER'S INITIALS AND COMMENTS

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Signature of Student _____ Date _____

Signature of Advisor _____ Date _____

Signature of Dean or Division Head _____ Date _____

ATTENDANCE

Professional Children's School is unique in that it provides its students with a college preparatory education while they pursue their careers. We understand that on occasion students must be absent from school and may need to arrive late or leave early to fulfill professional commitments. We accommodate these professional obligations on a regular basis, and to continue providing this flexibility, we need to be informed, in advance, if your child will be absent, or late, or need early dismissal. That said, we believe that children need to be at PCS as much as possible in order to obtain the highest quality education. The time children spend in class is precious and irreplaceable.

Telling us in advance that your child will be absent, late or leaving school early is essential to our knowing that your child is secure. Insisting on knowing the whereabouts of each child is one way PCS works to ensure the safety of every child during the day. In addition, PCS is responsible for reporting attendance records to New York City authorities. The privilege we grant to our students may not be misused. Violations of our attendance policy will be responded to promptly and will have definite consequences.

GUIDELINES

Students must swipe attendance cards every time they enter or leave the building.

Students without an ID must sign-in every time they enter or leave the building.

Upper School students without a first or second period class should sign in on the first floor.

Middle School students arriving late should go to the Middle School office to sign in.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

- For a single day absence due to illness, a parent or guardian must contact the attendance office.
- More than three (3) days consecutive illness must be confirmed by a doctor's note
- For more than ten (10) days illness per marking period, the school may require a physician to perform a physical
- Death in the family
- Religious observance
- College visits (Seniors Only -- must not exceed two days)
- Professional performance, rehearsal, concert, class, or lesson (only when impossible to schedule after school)
- Auditions, callbacks, or go-sees (only when impossible to schedule after school)
- Preparation for an audition (up to three days), preparation for a recital or competition (up to four days), and preparation for a concert (up to five days).

While we do not excuse students for study days, we do excuse students to take standardized tests, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

In the case of an extended professional absence (three days or more), students must sign out on full Guided Study at least 48 hours before they leave. In the case of an Extended

Personal Absence (two days or more), parents must contact the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School for permission.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES/LATENESSES

All absences and latenesses not mentioned above, including but not limited to the following, shall be considered unexcused:

- Extension of scheduled school vacation days
- Oversleeping
- Unauthorized extension of Guided Study
- Practicing
- Routine doctor and dentist appointments
- Chronic transportation delays

Punctual attendance to all classes is essential to learning. All unexcused absences and repeated unexcused latenesses will be sanctioned as follows:

Unexcused absences: 2 points will be taken off the semester grade for each unexcused absence.

Unexcused latenesses: After 2 warnings, 1 point will be taken off the semester grade for each unexcused lateness.

Twenty minute lateness: Counts as 1 unexcused absence.

The Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School will contact parents when there are questionable or excessive absences and/or latenesses, and chronic attendance issues, including cutting class, may result in disciplinary consequences above and beyond grade sanctions. Final decisions will be left to the discretion of the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School.

In extraordinary circumstances, a parent must formally request an exception to this policy from the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School. Please be advised that exam week at the end of each semester should be preserved for full attendance, and students should avoid professional commitments on those weeks. Doctor's notes will be required if absent due to illness during exam weeks.

Upper School students with excessive absences may be asked to stay back from field trips in order to attend classes, and if a student is not in school the day of a school activity (i.e. All School Night), they may not be allowed to participate in said school event.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN ABSENT OR LATE

Parents/guardians of all students in grades 6-12 who are absent must call our attendance officer at 212-582-3116 ext. 143, or email the attendance office (attendance@pcs-nyc.org). This must be done as early as possible on the day of the absence. Out of town parents must call or e-mail within 24 hours to inform the school of the child's absence. For School of American Ballet students living in the dorm, we must receive a call from the SAB Resident Advisor. Absences in case of latenesses not called in may result in grade sanctions. It is not our practice to excuse any absences over two weeks after a student is absent.

Parents/guardians must contact the attendance office if a student is going to miss even one period of class, this includes arrival late and leaving early. When Upper School students arrive late they must sign in on the first floor. Middle School students arriving late must sign in on the fourth floor.

Parents/guardians must notify the attendance office, the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School when leaving their child in the care of another adult for an extended period of time when school is in session, providing contact information for this temporary guardian and noting when and for how long the arrangement will continue.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW WHEN LEAVING SCHOOL EARLY

Students are permitted to leave school during the day for professional reasons provided that a parent/guardian informs the school that day. Upper school students must sign out on the first floor and middle school students will sign out on the fourth floor. Students must always swipe their attendance card.

Without advanced notification, the School must speak with a parent or guardian before allowing a student to leave the school building. Unless an early dismissal receives prior approval, students may not leave the school building due to illness or professional commitment without first seeing someone in the Middle or Upper School office.

Students who become too ill to attend classes while at school must go to the Middle or Upper School office. At that time a decision will be made with a parent/guardian should it seem appropriate to send the student home.

Students whose normal school day is finished before 2:00 pm do not need to sign out, but they must swipe their attendance card.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW FOR PROFESSIONAL ABSENCES

If students need to be out for legitimate professional reasons for 1 or 2 days, an e-mail (attendance@pcs-nyc.org) must be sent or a phone call made to the attendance officer, specifying dates and reasons for absence(s).

If students need to be out for legitimate reasons for 3 or more days, they must follow Guided Study procedures. (See pages 13 to 15 for details.)

ADVISORY PROGRAM

While at Professional Children's School, students are known and cared for by many adults. In addition to developing close working relationships with their classroom teachers, all students at PCS also have individual advisors.

Advisors are adults who help students register for classes, adjust to PCS, and serve as an ongoing source of support during the school year. Students meet with their advisor in small groups and individually, both formally and informally over the course of the year.

In addition to supporting our students, advisors are available to respond to any questions or concerns parents have regarding their child's experience at PCS. Please find their contact information at the back of this Handbook.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

- Learning Specialist – The Professional Children’s School has a learning specialist on staff who is available to work with students upon the recommendation of the School. The learning specialist at PCS works individually with students who need additional support in organization and study skills, reading comprehension, writing skills, or mathematics. Work with the learning specialist may be short-term or ongoing and is available to students regardless of whether or not they have a diagnosed learning disability. The learning specialist is available to parents and teachers who have questions regarding students’ academic challenges and may recommend a psycho-educational evaluation by an outside professional in cases where a student is not progressing as expected. Requests for accommodations on standardized tests such as the SAT or ACT should also be directed to the learning specialist.
- Tutoring – Professional Children’s School works together with families to ensure that students are succeeding academically, and extra help from teachers is available during the school day without charge.

Outside tutoring support may be recommended by classroom teachers. Due to the busy schedules of our students, at times, a request can be made by parents for a student’s tutor to meet with them during the school day on school premises. This request must be cleared with the Dean of Middle School Life or the Upper School Division Head, and the cost of individual tutoring and remediation is paid directly to the tutor by the family.

We acknowledge our responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of students, therefore, as per New York State Law, all outside personnel who work with children must agree to a background check in order to receive clearance to meet with students. A form can be picked up in the Division offices. It must be signed by the tutor and returned to the Dean of Middle School life of the Upper School Division Head. A \$100 background check processing fee must be paid by the family. Once a background check has been completed and the tutor has been cleared for entrance to the School, the family will be contacted. Room assignments will be agreed upon by the Dean of Middle School Life or the Upper School Division Head.

A student may not be privately tutored by a teacher who serves concurrently as that student’s subject teacher.

- Peer Tutoring – The Professional Children’s School offers as a resource to its student body a Peer Tutoring program. Upon recommendation of the faculty, certain Upper School students are selected to help other students with various subject matter. Included in this assistance is a mentoring program designed to help international students practice their conversation skills. Interested students enroll in the program either through their own initiative or by recommendation of the faculty. The pairs meet together once a week, or more, especially if the tutee is a Middle School student. The Division Heads monitor and oversee this program, and students who elect to serve as tutors receive commendations for the service on their transcripts. Requests for peer tutors should be directed to the Division Heads.
- Guidance – Students who are having academic or personal difficulties are encouraged to talk to their teachers, advisors, and/or the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School. If a student or parent requests outside referrals, this may be done through the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School.

COLLEGE COUNSELING

Graduates of Professional Children's School go on to have illustrious careers in all walks of life, as dancers, musicians and actors, but also as doctors, educators, entrepreneurs, journalists, and lawyers. PCS is first and foremost an academic institution, and it has been our priority over the years to help our Upper School students and their parents with the college admissions process.

Most PCS students attend college immediately after graduation, and the College Counseling Office helps students with every phase of the college selection and application process. Some students, who may already have busy professional careers, choose to postpone college until a later date. For these alumni, all of the resources of the College Counseling Office will be available when they choose to undertake the college admissions process.

Formal work with our college advisor begins in February of a student's junior year, and each year, some 30 colleges send admissions representatives to PCS to meet with interested seniors. Our College Counseling Office has up-to-date resources and information for our students, and their parents, to use year-round.

STUDENT COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITIES

Professional Children's School believes that all students have a right to a safe and positive school experience. The community has an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

As community members, students have the following responsibilities:

Students are expected to respect and treat others politely as well as demonstrate an active commitment to the welfare of self and others.

While there is no formal dress code, we expect students and parents to use good judgment when choosing clothing for school. Appropriate attire should not be overly revealing, or include inappropriate graphics or logos.

Students must clean up after themselves whether in classrooms, the cafeteria, on the commons, the tech room, or in the library. Failing to keep these spaces clean may result in the loss of privileges.

Students who do not have an assigned lunch period may be given permission to eat in classrooms.

Seniors and juniors may leave the building at lunchtime if they have written parent/guardian permission. They must sign out and sign in before and after lunch. Since this is a privilege, the School reserves the right to rescind this permission if the situation warrants.

Students in grades 6 through 10 may not leave the building at any time during the school day, except for legitimate professional reasons.

Students will practice positive digital citizenship.

Students are expected to check their PCS email and Moodle pages at least once a day.

Students must have emails approved by the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School before sending to a large group (i.e. all students or parents).

CELLULAR PHONE USE

MIDDLE SCHOOL: Having access to your cell phone in School is a privilege and with privileges come responsibilities. Our expectation is that you take this privilege seriously as with any technology and use it appropriately and when necessary. While it is important for you to have access to your cell phone when you are commuting, it is not necessary for you to use it during the school day when you are in class or when you are transitioning between class periods.

- The cell phone **MAY NOT** be used during the school day unless a teacher has given permission to use the phone for a particular classroom activity.
- The cell phone must remain in the student's locker or bookbag and should be turned off during school hours.
- Parents should not call or text their child via their cell phone during the school day and expect a response.
- Parents should call the Middle School office if there is an emergency or if a child needs to be contacted immediately.
- If parents need to speak to their child directly and it is not an emergency, contact the Middle School office and your child will be told to contact you from the Middle School office between classes, during lunch or during free periods.
- Students can make calls home from the Middle School Office if necessary.

Upper School students must turn off cellular phones and electronic devices during class unless they are being used for classroom purposes. Texting is not allowed when a student is in class.

Inappropriate use of any electronic device may result in the confiscation of said device by any school administrator, staff, or faculty.

Parents should call the Upper School office if there is an emergency or if they need to contact their child.

ELEVATOR USE

Students may use the elevator to travel up from the 1st to the 4th floor or from the 1st to the 6th floor.

If an adult departs the elevator on another floor, students may exit as well.

When leaving for the day, students may take the elevator down from 6 to 1 or 4 to 1.

Students should respect the change of periods as particularly busy, and if possible, should wait to use the elevator until five minutes into the next class period.

Any student who needs to use the elevator due to an injury may obtain permission from the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School. A note from a doctor may be requested, and the student's name will be posted in the elevator once permission is granted. Students with an elevator pass may take the elevator as needed.

USE OF TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND OTHER ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

The law prohibits the sale of tobacco and alcohol to minors and prohibits the use and possession of certain narcotics, drugs, and marijuana. As an institution, the School has a responsibility to uphold the law. It further believes that the use of such substances is detrimental to the health of the individual and is dangerous to others. Therefore, any PCS student using tobacco, alcohol, and/or narcotics or marijuana on the school premises, on 60th Street between Amsterdam and Columbus Avenues, or at a school sponsored off-campus activity, will be subject to severe disciplinary measures.

CONSEQUENCES FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

When a student does not abide by the student community responsibilities, she or he is given a verbal warning.

If such behavior continues, the student will be sent to the Division Head. Depending on the seriousness of the behavior, parents may be contacted.

Serious infractions may result in suspension, and a record of such infractions will become a part of the student's permanent record. If asked, we are also required to inform any institutions of higher learning to which they may choose to apply, including colleges, universities, and conservatories.

A student is automatically suspended if he/she violates the drug, alcohol or tobacco rule or if the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School determines that the behavior warrants such action. The duration of suspension is determined by the severity of the infraction.

Behavior that is considered intimidating or harassing through words or actions will not be tolerated. The School expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of such behavior. Each incident shall be promptly investigated. Students who are in violation of the School's behavioral expectations may be subject to disciplinary action.

The School reserves the right to expel students whose infractions are of an extremely serious nature, or whose long-term behavioral difficulties do not respond to helpful guidance suggestions.

The School maintains the right to revoke contracts for the second semester when a student repeatedly violates behavioral or attendance rules or does not fulfill rudimentary academic responsibilities.

CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

The professional nature of our student body makes it complicated for Professional Children's School to offer traditional extracurricular activities such as competitive sports teams. There are, however, numerous opportunities to participate in the life of the school. This participation includes musical and dramatic performances, after school basketball, an all school talent show, and numerous community service activities.

UPPER SCHOOL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Student Association is a non-elected body which organizes community activities, including but not limited to, philanthropic fundraisers, dances, movie nights, service outings, and other special assemblies. Student Association meets immediately after school one day each week, and any and all Upper School students are invited to attend. Students interested in having a direct voice in the life of the Upper School are encouraged to join the Student Association.

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT ASSOCIATION

Interested Middle School students may attend weekly meetings scheduled during the school day and run by a faculty member who serves as a guide and mentor. Students plan community service activities, dances, parties, and other events that build community life at PCS. All students are encouraged to participate and take on leadership responsibilities.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Each Tuesday students and faculty gather for a Community Meeting. Some weeks these meetings involve the entire school, but most weeks they are held by division. These meetings offer a regular opportunity for the PCS community to come together to share important information, celebrate exciting accomplishments, and commemorate significant events. Students and faculty are active participants in this Community Meeting, and the Student Associations are often active in developing the agendas for these weekly gatherings.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Professional Children's School encourages students to give back by organizing community service efforts both in and outside of School. External efforts have included food drives, fundraisers, community cleaning campaigns, and direct participation with and in support of non-profit organizations. Many of our students tutor their peers or help our international students by serving as "conversation buddies." Students who elect to serve as tutors receive commendations for this service on their transcripts.

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Students are invited to participate in a variety of clubs. All clubs meet either before or after school or during the school day. Club offerings have included:

- After School Basketball (Middle and Upper School)
- Book Club (Upper School)
- Diversity Awareness Initiative for Students (Upper School)
- Gay-Straight Alliance (Upper School)
- Literary Magazine (Middle and Upper School)
- Prom Committee (Juniors and Seniors)
- Student Association (Middle and Upper School)
- Yearbook Club (Middle and Upper School)

Historically, community service efforts and club offerings have reflected the interest of our student body, and we continue to encourage students to approach the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School with ideas for additional student life offerings.

New clubs should be proposed prior to the start of a new semester, and may not be approved if they cover something already offered. We have limited common time for clubs and we wish to see those offered as well attended as possible.

COMMUNICATION WITH HOME

Open communication between families and the School is extremely important. We encourage families to contact their child's advisor or the Dean of Middle School Life or the Head of Upper School with any concerns. The following mechanisms are used to communicate with both parents/ guardians and students.

Interim Reports – Interim Reports are brief comments on progress or concerns to keep parents/guardians informed. These reports may be sent halfway through each marking period, upon the discretion of each teacher.

Progress and Semester Reports – Formal reports are sent four times a year, at the end of each marking period. Progress Reports are sent at the end of the first and third marking periods, and Semester Reports including grades of record are assigned at the end of the second and fourth marking periods, the end of each semester.

Parent Conferences – Middle and Upper School Parent Conferences are scheduled in the fall. These conferences are arranged by appointment only. Each spring, the Middle School schedules a second set of parent conferences. As needed, additional parent conferences may be scheduled at any time.

Telephone – Advisors and administrators have direct phone lines at their desks.

E-Mail – Everyone at the School has an e-mail address, and this is often the most effective means of communication, especially with the faculty. E-mail addresses may be found at the back of this Handbook.

Family Access Module (FAM) – The Professional Children’s School Family Access Module provides parents with access to their student’s class schedule, report cards, and attendance records. In addition, FAM includes directories containing contact information of PCS parents, administration, faculty, and staff.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

In the event that PCS must be closed due to severe weather or other emergency conditions, the following procedures will be followed:

Through Parent Outreach, an automated phone call will be made to the parents’ number on file. Please note that you must answer with a greeting or a word to activate the message. Otherwise, you will hear silence and no further instructions.

A general message will also be left on the School’s voicemail and on the School’s website (www.pcs-nyc.org).

In the event that an emergency occurs after the school day has begun, parents/ guardians will be contacted before students are dismissed in accordance with the information on file in FAM.

In all cases whereby the public schools of the City of New York are closed due to weather or other emergencies, PCS will follow the decision of the public schools for the first day only. Beyond the first day, the automated phone call system will be utilized to share any subsequent days the School will be open or closed. The School’s website will also be updated accordingly.

GUARDIANS

Professional Children’s School mandates that any child living away from home and without a parent must have an adult guardian, who lives with and supervises the student while they are not in school. We will hold an orientation for guardians at the start of each school year.

Please know that students residing in a dormitory setting are generally exempted from this guardian requirement. Exceptions may also be granted with specific permission from the Upper School.

When selecting a guardian, please bear in mind that we expect this person to work with PCS in terms of enforcing our policies and to be a reliable contact for communication between home and school. Such communication could include everything from attendance to academic matters.

A guardian may be called upon to take part in parent conferences at some point during the school year.

Once you have selected a guardian, we ask that you share contact information for this designated adult, providing your consent for the School to contact this person in matters regarding your child. If a guardianship is changed for any reason, please be sure to inform the school and update contact information in FAM at once.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

PCS offers English as a Second Language (ESL) courses for English Language Learners as well as courses in History and Science that are tailored to the needs of English Language Learners.

International Students entering PCS are evaluated for their levels of competence in core subjects. Students will be placed into classes deemed to be in the students' best academic and social interests.

Upper School international students at PCS have a designated International Student Advisor.

Middle School international students have their own advisors which are assigned to them.

As with all advisors, our Upper School International Student Advisor and the assigned Middle School Advisor helps students register for classes, adjust to PCS, and serves as an ongoing source of support during the school year. In addition, advisors are available to respond to any questions or concerns you may have regarding your child's experience at PCS. Please find their contact information at the back of this Handbook.

During the School year, PCS holds Parent Conferences, to which parents and guardians will be invited. In order for these meetings to be useful, we encourage parents to bring translators with them to these meetings

I-20 FORMS

The Department of Immigration allows Professional Children's School to issue Certificates of Eligibility for Non-Immigrant students (I-20 forms). PCS is required to confirm that each I-20 recipient is enrolled in a full-time academic program. We are pleased to support young artists from other countries by being able to issue these forms.

After you have received the completed I-20 form, it must be submitted to the Department of Immigration and Naturalization as soon as possible. Please contact the nearest office for further information if the student is in the United States. If the student is not in the United States, please contact the nearest American Consulate. Please note that students entering the United States with an M-1 or B-2 Visa must obtain a new I-20 form from PCS and return to your country in order to convert your M-1 or B-2 Visa to an F-1 Visa. Students cannot complete this process while in the United States. Additionally, if the student has not registered within two weeks of the date on the I-20 form, the application will no longer be valid and we will be required to notify the United States Department of Immigration and immediately terminate the I-20 form.

For more information and to obtain the necessary I-20 paperwork, families should contact Jean Scales in our Business Office.

TECHNOLOGY

PCS aspires to be a school whose program enables students to learn in part through online exchange of ideas, content and instruction. This opportunity offers an enhanced classroom centered experience as well as an element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace of learning. This ensures our students' ability to pursue professional and pre-professional endeavors that remove them from the physical classroom and to continue to learn while they are away without losing connection to the teacher, the students or the coursework.

We are pleased to provide technology resources for the Professional Children's School community. Technology tools enable students to communicate, collaborate and create across a vast network of people and resources which facilitates and advances our educational goals and academic endeavors. The use of the technology resources provided by PCS is a privilege. Users are expected to make efficient, ethical and legal use of these resources.

Students and parents are provided a detailed Responsible Use Policy to read and sign at the commencement of each school year that delineates the expectations and guidelines for student's use of the school's technology resources. It is expected that each student understands this policy and deliberate inappropriate use will result in restrictive access. Through the act of accessing any or all of the technology resources provided by PCS, a student is by default accepting the conditions set forth by the Policy and bound by them. A copy of the policy can be found on Moodle and the Family Access Module (FAM).

PCS has a BYOD (bring your own device) policy, which requires each student to have a laptop or tablet device for use both in and out of school. A detailed description of the basic requirements for such a device can be found in this document (<http://bit.ly/PCSTech>), and if you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact our Director of Technology.

Each student is able to use the device of his or her choice to accomplish curriculum tasks with technology, and students are expected to bring the device to school everyday, fully charged. The purchase and maintenance of the student device is the responsibility of each family. For information on what device to select and how to correctly configure it to work with PCS tools please see our Technology Requirements for Student Devices, available on Moodle and the Family Access Module (FAM).

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

FIRE DRILLS

The School is required by law to hold twelve fire drills a year. At the signal, everyone must leave the building immediately. Administrators, Faculty and Staff will direct the drill. Absolute silence must be maintained so that instructions may be heard. Fire drill procedures will be reviewed with all students at the beginning of the school year.

EMERGENCY PLAN

Professional Children's School has developed procedures to follow in the event of an emergency situation. PCS will share procedures and locations of evacuation sites with parents.

During the course of the school year, the School will conduct four emergency drills which include two lockdown drills and two evacuation drills

Should the building require immediate evacuation and if parent, guardian and/or emergency contacts cannot be reached, a message will be left on our School voicemail as to where we

have gone and/ or a note will be placed on the front door of the School. A message will also be posted on our School website.

Please keep all family and emergency contact information updated in FAM throughout the school year.

STUDENT CONFIDENTIALITY

While the Professional Children's School community of adults seeks to be supportive of our students, in cases where clearly serious and inappropriate behavior takes place or the health of a student is at risk, faculty and staff have an obligation to inform the Dean of Middle School Life, the Head of Upper School, the Associate Head, and/or the Head of School of their concerns. In cases involving serious dysfunction, including an eating disorder, pregnancy, serious illness, threats of suicide or other bodily harm, physical or emotional abuse, or illegal activity, the School must inform the parents and any appropriate authorities regarding the matter. In all such cases, the School envisions working in partnership with the parents and the student to ensure the ultimate well-being of the student while maintaining support for the broad needs of the institution.

Depending on the nature of the concern, the School may require the student to undergo medical or psychological evaluation and/or treatment and to follow the recommendations made by the appropriate health professionals. In some cases, students may have restrictions placed upon them as a result of these evaluations. In extreme cases, the School reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a student if, in the judgment of the School, continued enrollment jeopardizes the welfare of the student or the general welfare of the School.

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