

**THE DARCEY SCHOOL  
EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER  
FAMILY HANDBOOK 2021-2022**

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[www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/Darcey](http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/Darcey)

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## DARCEY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

*Our early childhood team is dedicated to the development of young children in a secure and nurturing environment that promotes curiosity, a love of learning, and the joy of discovery. Our staff works collaboratively with families and the community to provide a creative and flexible educational program. We recognize the strengths of each individual, encourage self-confidence and establish a strong foundation for lifelong learning. We believe in providing enriched educational experiences which enable children to become independent thinkers and problem solvers who can work and play well with others in a diverse population and have respect for the world in which they live.*

### EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

In pursuit of the District's and Darcey's mission, we believe that all members of our school community:

- can learn through inquiry, self-direction and creativity which are valued in the learning process
- will be learners
- will recognize and achieve their personal learning goals
- have individual interests, needs and talents
- will be physically and emotionally safe in the learning environment
- will act as partners in the learning process

Darcey School is designed to meet the unique needs of young children and their families. Our dedicated team of early childhood educators understand the physical, social, emotional and academic needs of growing children. By integrating their experiences and skills in early childhood pedagogy, child development, psychology, speech/language pathology, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, our teams work together to provide an outstanding educational experience for all children. We recognize that all children have unique strengths and areas for growth therefore intentional teaching is based on data collected through observation and assessment in all the developmental domains. The curriculum reflects a variety of rich and rigorous experiences which will promote deeper thinking and real world application. Children are taught through a balance of teacher facilitated and student initiated learning opportunities which are critical for learning and mastery. Strong classroom communities are built through collaboration and active participation of parents, students and the school community. We welcome families to be involved at Darcey School Early Childhood Center. There is strong parental involvement through an active Parent Teacher Association. It is this dedication to building relationships between teachers and families which lead to the children's success and what truly makes Darcey a special place. Working together, we do make a difference!

## CHESHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Your year(s) at Darcey are just the beginning of your child's Cheshire education. Below are listed the Performance Standards that we hope every student will achieve by the time they graduate from Cheshire High School. We begin the foundational work on meeting these standards at the early childhood level and it will continue through all the years in Cheshire schools.

### *Collaborative/Cooperative Worker*

Performance Standard: Students participate collaboratively as well as cooperatively as a member of a team. Collaboratively, the student gathers ideas from the group to develop an individual position. Cooperatively, the student works to resolve divergent ideas in order to achieve a common purpose.

### *Community Contributor*

Performance Standard: Students exert a high level of effort and perseverance. The student contributes to the well-being of the school and community, works well with students and staff from diverse backgrounds, and shows respect for self and others.

### *Complex Thinker*

Performance Standard: Students use a variety of complex reasoning skills, including inquiry, to pose and answer questions, to solve problems, and to explore ideas. The student shapes information into knowledge and knowledge into understanding.

### *Effective Communicator*

Performance Standard: Students communicate thoughts, ideas, and information clearly, effectively, and in an organized fashion; the student does this in multiple ways including oral, written, technical, and artistic expression.

### *Knowledgeable Person*

Performance Standard: Students access, process, integrate, and apply information in order to construct knowledge. The student uses relevant skills and strategies from the disciplines to turn knowledge into understanding.

### *Self- Directed Learner*

Performance Standard: Students are autonomous, reflective, and responsible learners. The student demonstrates leadership, self-regulation, independence, and an ability to set and achieve goals.

### *Skilled Information Processor*

Performance Standard: The Cheshire High School student gathers information and applies concepts from the arts and humanities, sciences, and technology. The student interprets and synthesizes information and accurately assesses the value of information in any given task.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

The school office hours are 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday

Kindergarten hours are 8:50 to 3:20

Smart Start Full Day Preschool Hours are 8:50 to 3:20

Stephen August Early Intervention Center sessions:

AM: 9:00 to 11:30

PM: 12:30 to 3:00

For safety and comfort, children should arrive no earlier than 5 minutes before their school session begins. Please refer to the safety procedures in regard to dropping off your child. Your child can be dropped at school no earlier than: 8:45 (8:55/12:25 for half day preschool sessions)

## **ATTENDANCE**

Schools are responsible for teaching your child. A child who misses a day of school also misses a day of learning that might never be replaced. In case of illness or excused absence, please call the school's absentee line (203-272-3343) (select option 1) and then leave the child's name, classroom teacher's name and reason for the absence.

If the school has not been notified of the absence, PowerSchool will contact the parent to verify the child's absence. PowerSchool will continue to call until a parent calls the office to confirm the absence. For more information on attendance regulation refer to CPS Board Policy 5113(a). An unreported absence is an unexcused absence. Absences are excused only for illness or certain family emergencies at the discretion of the principal. Vacations and family trips are considered unexcused absences and need to have permission of the principal. We strongly urge you to plan your trips around the school vacations whenever possible. If you find that you have no option but to take your child out of school for an extended period you must notify the principal, in writing, before you make arrangements for the trip (BOE 5113(a)). Excused absences are listed in the "Cheshire Public Schools Parent/Student Handbook." Religious holidays requiring absence are considered excused absences (BOE 5113). A child whose total absence at any time during the school year is equal to or greater than 10% of the total number of days that the student has been enrolled at the school during the school year is considered a "chronically absent child." The child will be subject to review by the district and/or the school attendance team.

Kindergarten and Smart Start preschool begins at 8:50 AM. A child is considered tardy after 9:05. The half day integrated preschool program begins at 9:00 AM and 12:30 PM. A child is considered tardy after 9:15 AM and 12:45 PM. Tardiness may cause students to "feel like they are late and they have to hurry to catch up." They may miss important arrival routines and community building activities such as morning meeting. Any student arriving after late must report to the office to sign in before going to the classroom (BOE 5113(b)).

## **FAMILY/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

### **AUTOMATED PHONE MESSAGING SYSTEMS**

The Cheshire Public School system uses an automated phone messaging system which gives school administrators the ability to easily contact parents/guardians immediately of news that needs to be communicated. Administrators have the ability to send personally prerecorded messages to the entire

school community, or they can tailor transmissions to smaller groups, when needed. The system allows the District to program up to three numbers for each parent/guardian of a District student. (home phone, work phone, cell). Such calls are permitted without prior consent if limited to notice of emergency items. Parental consent will be sought when the messaging system will be used for other informational items. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the main office if any changes need to be made to your child's contact information.

Teachers communicate classroom happenings with families in a variety of ways including classroom newsletters, blogs, and "ask me about" highlights, to name a few. Individual parent-teacher conferences will be held in October and March. If you feel you need an additional meeting with your child's teacher please contact the teacher directly to schedule a meeting. Planned meetings will offer everyone the chance to be focused and prepared to answer/ask questions and address concerns. A planned meeting will also promote more positive home/school transitions. We need everyone to help children end their day successfully by having all adults- teachers and parents- give children their full attention at the end of a busy day.

Darcey teachers can be contacted through notes, email (for example: jdoe@cheshire.k12.ct.us), or by voice mail. Please note that time-sensitive information should not be sent through email or voice mail. Teachers are busy with students all day long and don't always have time to check their email or voicemail until lunch or after school. In an emergency or a time-sensitive message please speak directly to a secretary in the office.

### **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATIONS**

If a family member has a question or concern about a school related matter, it is best to first contact the person who is closest to the situation. In most cases this is the teacher. The proper channeling of complaints regarding instruction, discipline or learning materials is (1) teacher, (2) principal, (3) superintendent, (4) board of education .

**ARRIVAL PROCEDURES Due to COVID19, please refer to the modified arrival and dismissal procedures provided to you at orientation.**

If you are dropping off your child at school, please observe the following safety procedures:  
***Always hold your child's hand when exiting the building and when walking in the parking lot.***

For Kindergarten and Smart Start Preschool Parents:

- Park your car in the lot to the left of the school. Only buses are allowed in the circular drive in front of the school. Please do not use the circular drive.
- Children must be escorted to the door. No child should be left to cross the parking lot or circular drive area without an adult.
- Enter through the front door. Smart Start Preschoolers should be walked to their classroom where parents must sign them in. Kindergarten students can walk to their classroom with the other bus children.
- Parents who bring their children early must wait with them in the front foyer until they can be admitted to class (See "School Hours").

Early Intervention Center Preschool:

***Always hold your child's hand when exiting the building and when walking in the parking lot.***

- Same as above except park in the rear lot and enter through the rear door.
- Please escort your child directly to the classroom.

**DISMISSAL PROCEDURES** Due to COVID19, please refer to the modified arrival and dismissal procedures provided to you at orientation.

Early Intervention Center Preschool Dismissal:

- Dismissal for the half day preschool is 11:30 and 3:00. Dismissal for Smart Start Full Day is 3:20
- Half day preschool parents must park in the back lot and enter through the back doors.
- Ring the doorbell, state your name, your child's name and the teacher's name.
- Proceed directly to the classroom and sign your child out. Be prepared to show ID if necessary.
- If you are picking up a kindergartner as well please sign out in the office and wait for the announcement "All parents may go to the classrooms".
- Any parent who comes earlier than the designated time will be considered a visitor and therefore must go through the main doors and follow visitor procedures.

Full Day Smart Start Preschool and Kindergarten Dismissal:

- Dismissal for Smart Start Preschool and Kindergarten pick up is 3:20
- All parents must enter through the main doors in the front of the building.
- Ring the doorbell, state your name, your child's name and the teacher's name.
- Proceed to the office. Do not hold the door open for anyone and be prepared to show your ID.
- Kindergarten Parents will sign their child out in the logbook in the office and take a sign out slip from the basket.
- Preschool Parents will sign their child out in the classroom.
- Wait in the main foyer until "All parents may go to the classrooms" is announced.
- Any parent who comes earlier than the designated time will be considered a visitor and therefore must go through the main doors and follow visitor procedures. Please refer to ***Early Dismissal*** in the Handbook for procedure.

If you are picking up your child from school rather than having him/her ride the bus please send a note to your child's teacher saying that he/she will be "parent pick-up" that day. Indicate if someone other than the student's parents or guardians will be picking up your child. Staff will ask to see a picture license as identification for safety reasons. In case of an emergency, if you were unable to send a note with the child prior to parent pick-up, please notify the office at 203 272-3343 at which time, the secretary will verify your code word. IMPORTANT: If someone other than a parent is picking up a child the parent MUST notify the office. Emergency contacts in Powerschool are emergency contact numbers only. It is NOT a list of authorized pick up people. **ALL DISMISSAL CHANGES MUST BE REPORTED TO THE OFFICE BEFORE 2:45**

**Idling of vehicles:**

For the health of our students, staff, and the planet please do not leave your vehicle idling.

**EARLY DISMISSAL**

Students are expected to be in school all day. Early dismissals should be requested only in emergency or unusual situations. Requests for early dismissal must be in writing and signed by a parent or legal guardian. Such requests shall be subject to the approval of the building principal. In an emergency, telephone requests for early dismissal will be approved (BOE 5113(d & e)). Parents/guardians are required to go to the office and to sign their child out. Parents must wait in the office for their child. The student will be called to the office when the parent arrives. Please do not go directly to your child's classroom or make the request while your child is waiting in the bus line. Although we do realize that emergencies occur, we ask that whenever possible, you schedule doctor and/or dentist appointments and other commitments for your children after school and not during school hours. Each early dismissal request we receive results in a classroom disruption for all students. Please avoid requesting early dismissals after 2:30, unless absolutely necessary. These requests are disruptive to students and classroom teachers who are completing the end-of-the-day activities, as well as office staff preparing for school dismissal.

**EARLY DISMISSAL/DELAYED OPENING- WEATHER RELATED**

During inclement weather, please check your phone or email for a POWERSCHOOL notice of any delayed openings or early closing, or you may look at the Cheshire Public Schools website which has a link to the school closing and delay information. [www.cheshire.k12.ct.us](http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us) Darcey School operates as follows: With a 2 hour delay Full Day Preschool and Kindergarten will begin at 10:50 AM and the Half Day Preschool AM session will be cancelled. Half Day Preschool PM session will begin at the regular time of 12:30 PM and be dismissed at 3:00 PM as usual.

**EARLY DISMISSAL- PLANNED (PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES)**

There are several planned early dismissal days in the school year, please refer to the CPS calendar. Smart Start Preschoolers and Kindergarten students will be dismissed at 1:20 pm. EIC morning sessions are dismissed at 10:50 am. Afternoon EIC sessions begin at 11:30 am and are dismissed at 1:20 pm. Please refer to your Cheshire Public Schools calendar, which is available on the Cheshire Public Schools website for further calendar information.

**SCHOOL SECURITY**

All the doors in the school building are locked at ALL times, including before school, while school is in session and after school. To gain entry at any time you will need to ring the doorbell at the front or back entrance, and speak into the intercom stating your name and your purpose for visiting. All visitors are visible on video monitors by the office personnel. A secretary will buzz you into the building and ask you to come to the office to sign in using a state issued ID and receive a visitor's name tag through the LobbyGuard Kiosk System.

All Darcey staff wear an identifying name tag with a picture ID. There are video cameras in all hallways and stairwells and at the front and back doors. Thank you for cooperating with our security policies.



## **VOLUNTEERING AT DARCEY SCHOOL**

**Due to COVID19, at this time access to the building is limited due to reduce potential transmission of COVID19.**

Any and all volunteers must be with, and supervised by, regularly scheduled teaching staff at all times.

## **FIRE DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Fire drills are held at regular intervals as required by state law. Students must follow the exit directions posted in each classroom. A crisis response drill will be substituted for one of the required monthly school fire drills every three months. Such a crisis response drill will be planned and conducted with the local law enforcement agency. Such crisis response drills will incorporate the basic protocols of lockdown, evacuation, and shelter-in-place responses. Students are expected to follow the direction of teachers or others in charge quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner. Any parents/guardians or visitors in the building must exit the building immediately upon hearing a fire alarm. They must also follow the school safety procedures in case of a lockdown or shelter-in-one-place drill.

Local law enforcement and other local public safety officials will evaluate and provide feedback on fire drills and crisis response drills.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

It is the goal of Darcey School to ensure the safety and welfare of all students in attendance, and to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning. In working with students, emphasis shall be placed upon helping students to develop effective self-discipline/management strategies.

Throughout your child's day, we reinforce the following school rules to maintain an environment conducive to learning.

- Be Kind
- Work and Play Safely
- Respect yourself, others and our materials

The faculty and staff at Darcey School recognize that the most effective way to handle behavioral issues is to prevent them from happening in the first place. Therefore, we set children up for success in a multitude of ways including, creating a physical environment that meets the needs of young children, one that is predictable, has structure and routine while still offering opportunities for choice; we ensure an adult to child ratio that promotes the building of strong relationships between staff, students and families; we hold the children in high regard and treat them warmly, and at the same time we have clear behavioral boundaries (rules). We always try to frame our expectations in the positive (what they can do) rather than the negative (what they can't do). In spite of all the proactive strategies young children can be impulsive and reactive (physically and verbally) and often exhibit unwelcome behaviors that need to be handled, no matter how developmentally appropriate they are. How do the teachers help? Primarily through helping children identify their feelings and provide words so that the child can help to repair the hurt. The teacher might guide the child to an activity that will help to heal the hurt. A common "activity" is to fetch a cold pack for the hurt child or draw a picture. Teachers might also sit with both children,

giving nourishing support through their presence. Sometimes a boundary simply needs to be defined more clearly. Usually these methods of support are enough. Occasionally a child is encouraged to take a few minutes in a quiet space where they can reflect and gain control.

Under no circumstance may a staff member use physical punishment (shaking hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing; requiring a child to remain inactive for a long period of time), psychological abuse (shaming, name calling, humiliation, sarcasm, or frightening a child) or coercion (forcing a child to sit down, or to perform an action such as eating or cleaning up) when disciplining a child.

Please refer to CPS Policy Manual 5114(b) for more information regarding district discipline policies, including policies on suspension and expulsion.

### **Challenging Behaviors and the SRBI Process:**

Young children often exhibit challenging behaviors that can impact a child's ability to be successful in the classroom as well as impact the emotional climate of the classroom.

During these times it is important to recognize that children are trying to communicate a need through their behavior. It is our policy to look at every child and every situation through an individualized lens and provide a tiered approach of strategies/support based on a child's needs. When a child's emotional dysregulation requires more intensive intervention than universal classroom strategies (building relationships with adults and children, examining the transitions in the classroom, establishing clear expectations and rules/limit setting, breaking down directions and encouraging autonomy) we would implement the next tier of intervention. The first step of Tier 2 intervention is referring the student to the Darcey Child Study Team. This team collaborates to gain a greater understanding of the child's challenges/strengths and then develops a social and emotional support plan which includes defining goals, strategies and timeline for this goal. If the child continues to struggle the team then determines if another tier 2 strategy is appropriate or in some cases the child is referred to special education for an educational evaluation.

### **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

All school employees, including teachers, superintendents, principals, paraprofessionals and other professional school staff including guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, and licensed nurses are obligated by law (C.G.S. 17a-101) to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or if a child is placed in imminent danger of serious harm or sexual assault by a school employee to the Connecticut State Department of Children and Families Services. Specific procedures governing the reporting of abuse and neglect are in effect, and staff receive training in their use, as required by state law.

Reporting of child abuse, neglect and sexual assault by a school employee is a responsibility which is taken seriously. If there is any doubt about reporting suspected abuse, neglect or a sexual assault a report will be made. The school will work with the parents and appropriate social agencies in all cases.

Child abuse is defined as any physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means or injuries which are not in keeping with the explanation given for their cause. Improper treatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation, deprivation of necessities, emotional abuse, cruel punishment or neglect are also considered child abuse.

The Board of Education will post in each school the telephone number of the Department of Children and Families' child abuse hotline, Careline, and the Internet web address that provides information about the Careline in a conspicuous location frequented by students. Such posting shall be in various languages appropriate for the students enrolled in the school.

### **Reporting of Alleged Child Abuse Inflicted by School Employee**

As the result of increased awareness of child abuse in our society, CGS 17a-101 requires mandated reporters to report child abuse, neglect, or a sexual assault by school employees.

1. In cases where the mandated reporter suspects or believes such injury has been inflicted by a school employee, he/she shall report that suspicion orally or in person to the Department of Children and Families as soon as possible, but no later than 12 hours, followed within 48 hours with a written report.
2. The Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her designee is required to notify the school employee and the head of a school, except when the person is the alleged perpetrator.
3. The Superintendent shall immediately notify the child's parents or other persons responsible for the child's care that a report has been made; and, notify the Police Department of the alleged abuse.
4. The written report to the Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families or his/her representative, concerning a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education, shall also be sent by the Superintendent to the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative.
5. The report shall contain the names and addresses of the child and his/her parents, or other persons responsible for his/her care, if known, age of child, the nature and extent of his/her injuries, maltreatment or neglect, together with any evidence of previous injury or maltreatment to the child or his/her siblings, and the name of the person suspected to have caused injury or maltreatment or neglect and any other information which the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury or injuries and protecting the child, the approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred, information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of the child or his/her siblings, the circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter, the name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect, and whatever action, if any was taken, to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child.
6. The Superintendent is obligated to immediately begin the investigation of the report with the Department of Children and Families. The Superintendent may request assistance from the local police or state police in the investigation.
7. If the Superintendent finds evidence of child abuse by a school employee, he/she must immediately notify the child's parent guardian, the local or state police, the Commissioner of Children and Families or his/her representative, and, in the case of an investigation of a certified school employee, the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative.
8. When an investigation produces such evidence, and the employee in question is in a position requiring a certificate, the Superintendent may suspend the certified employee with pay and without diminution or termination of benefits, provided he/she notifies the Board of Education of the reasons for the suspension within 72 hours thereafter.
9. The suspension remains in effect until the Board takes acts pursuant to CGS 10-151 Teacher Tenure

Act.

10. The Superintendent must report suspected child abuse by a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education, to the Commissioner of Education or his/her representative. If the contract of employment of a school employee who possesses a certificate, permit or authorization issued by the State Board of Education, is terminated as a result of an investigation which reveals that child abuse, neglect or sexual assault has occurred, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education within 72 hours of such termination.

### **SUPERVISION**

Children are never left unattended for any reason.

Kindergarteners may leave the teacher's supervision for no more than 5 minutes so long as the children are in a safe environment (go to hall bathroom, report to school nurse or the office) the teacher must check on any children who do not promptly return within 10 minutes to the groups as expected or if an adult at the child's destination doesn't confirm his/her arrival. If Kindergarten children are working in the hallway a teacher must regularly check in on them.

### **CELL PHONE USE**

Except in an emergency, we ask that parents finish all phone calls before coming into Darcey School.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are a very important part of childhood and of course very important to every young child. At Darcey School we recognize every child's special day in a variety of ways- handmade cards from friends in the class, a birthday crown, singing Happy Birthday at group time, are just a few examples. If you choose, you may bring in a favorite story to read to the class. As always, please discuss with the classroom teacher ahead of time.

**For safety and health we ask that you do not send in any food items, birthday projects, balloons or goody bags on your child's birthday.**

School policy states that invitations to birthday parties are not to be given out during school time unless they are being delivered to ALL students in the class. Teachers are not permitted to give out the addresses and phone numbers of students.

### **FIELD TRIPS Due to COVID19 - TBD**

Your child's teacher will provide you specific information about the trips. School board policy states that all field trips will be approved in advance by the principal, and will relate to the school curriculum in some way. Parents will be requested to sign a permission slip for their child to participate in the event. A limited number of parents accompany the classes as chaperones. Siblings are not permitted to join field trips.

There is money available through the PTA to pay for field trips or special events for any child whose family is experiencing financial hardship. Please call the principal if assistance is needed. This information is kept confidential between the family and the principal.

## **DRESS CODE**

Darcey school is a very active learning environment. Children should be dressed in comfortable play clothes. For your child's safety we ask that s/he wear shoes or sneakers. Flip-flops, open toed sandals or 'cros' are not appropriate footwear. We ask that you bring a change of clothes in a ziplock bag with your child's name on the outside. If your child is not toilet trained, please send in a labeled supply of wipes and diapers/pull-ups.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### Preschool students:

Bus transportation is provided door-to-door for those Early Intervention students who qualify. All other preschool families must provide their own transportation.

### Kindergarten students:

Bus stops are assigned by the Transportation Department. Kindergarten students must be accompanied by a parent or guardian to and from their bus stops. It is policy that the bus driver cannot allow a child to leave the bus if an adult is not waiting. The driver must return with the child to school, and a parent is notified by phone that they need to pick up their child at Darcey.

For the safety of your child, he/she will not be allowed to ride home on another bus or dropped off at another stop unless it is an emergency or a hardship related to a childcare situation, in which case the principal may issue a "day pass". Please follow Dismissal Manager instructions for dismissal changes.

A Bus Safety Program is conducted at Darcey during Kindergarten orientation and the first week of school. At that time all bus safety rules are reviewed with Kindergarten students and they will have a short "practice" bus ride at Orientation.

In addition to the Bus Safety Program, teachers reinforce all safety and behavioral expectations with students. For the safety of your child and other children, please do not attach keychains to backpacks. Any items that are left on the kindergarten bus will be returned to the Dattco office. Call Dattco at 203-699-8877 and report the loss. The article will be traced and you will be notified if it is found. For preschool students, call Cheshire Public Schools transportation at 203-272-2472.

School transportation privileges are extended to students conditional upon their satisfactory behavior on the bus. Students may be suspended from transportation services for unsatisfactory conduct while awaiting or receiving transportation to and from school which endangers persons or property or violates a Board policy or administrative regulation.

Please note that transportation issues or concerns should be directed to the Transportation Department at 203-272-2472.

## **HEALTH**

Physical examinations are required within one year of the start date of school for all new students entering or transferring to Darcey School

Each child must have a health assessment by one of the following medical personnel of the parents or guardians choosing to ascertain whether the student has any physical disability or other health problem tending to prevent him or her from receiving the full benefit of school work and to ascertain whether such school work should be modified in order to prevent injury to the student or to secure for the student a suitable program of education:

1. A legally qualified physician;
2. An advanced registered nurse;
3. A physician's assistant.

### Such health assessment shall include:

1. Physical examination which shall include hematocrit or hemoglobin tests, height, weight and blood pressure;
2. Updating of immunizations required ( refer to letters mailed home for specific grade requirements);
3. Vision, hearing, postural and gross dental screening;
4. Any other information including a health history as the medical provider believes to be necessary and appropriate.

The physical examination and immunization data must be reviewed and approved by the school nurse prior to the child's entry into the school. There is no grace period allowed for this requirement per Connecticut State Law. If such examination is contrary to the religious beliefs and practices of the child or the parent(s) a waiver shall be submitted and maintained in the child's health record. Such statement shall be signed by the parent(s). The parent(s) shall certify that he or she accepts complete responsibility for the health of the child and that, to the best of the parent's knowledge, the child is in good health.

## **ILLNESS**

If your child has had a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, please keep him/her home for at least 24 hours (home for one day) after the last episode of illness.

On occasion, the school nurse may need to contact you to come and pick up your child due to illness. It is critical that your child's POWERSCHOOL emergency contact information is accurate and up to date. To return to the program, your child must take any prescribed antibiotics and be free from fever, vomiting or diarrhea for a full 24 hours (home for one day), be free of infestations, be free of open, oozing skin conditions, and can participate comfortably in all program activities including going outside.

- Head lice has occasionally been a problem in recent years. If you discover head lice or nits (eggs) call your pediatrician or school nurse for directions to follow on how to treat and what preparations are recommended (some are not as effective as others and lead to rapid reinfestation). The school nurse needs to be notified so that classmates can be checked.

- If your child has conjunctivitis (“pink eye”) or a rash, please keep your child at home and consult his/her doctor for evaluation and treatment.
- Please notify the school nurse if your child has contracted any of the following: strep throat, scarlet fever, chicken pox, fifth’s disease, head lice, coxsackie virus, conjunctivitis, lyme disease, ringworm or impetigo.
- For safety reasons, we do not permit children to use cough drops at Darcey School.

Posting of Infectious Disease Notice of infectious diseases which have been reported to the school will be done through Powerschool Parent Portal. The school nurse will contact the public health department to report and obtain advice when outbreaks of communicable disease do occur.

### **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION**

Only the school nurse or an authorized staff member, having successfully completed a Medication Administration Training, will administer medications upon written medical orders signed by a physician and with parental authorization. A special form is available in the nurse’s office for this purpose. The medication, in its original container and properly labeled, should be delivered directly to the school nurse by the parent or a designated adult. All medication will be stored in the Nurse’s office. It is illegal for a child to carry any medication to or from school.

No staff member is authorized to apply sunscreen. Parents are required to apply prior to coming to school.

At least one teacher at all times is trained in Child & Infant CPR and First Aid, and trained to administer an asthma inhaler or EPIPEN injection for medical emergencies in the absence of the school nurse.

### **ALLERGIES**

Please be sure to inform the nurse if your child has a severe allergy, which requires any special handling at school, so that we can work together to make sure your child’s health needs are met in school.

### **THE TITLE 1 PROGRAM AT DARCEY SCHOOL**

Darcey is fortunate to be the recipient of the Cheshire school district’s Title 1 funds from the federal government. These funds are used to enhance the educational program for our kindergarten students. With these funds we have hired Instructional Assistants for the classrooms to assist the teachers in providing for the individual instructional needs of our wide range of kindergarten students, particularly in the areas of literacy and math.

### **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

The Darcey School community believes that each family’s involvement in their child’s education can have a positive impact on that child’s success.

Families and the entire school staff shall share responsibility for improving student academic performance by:

- Fostering the sharing of the mission of the school, which is the “development of young children in a secure and nurturing environment that promotes curiosity, a love of learning and the joy of discovery”;

- Providing family members with opportunities to learn about the curriculum and instructional strategies at evening workshops focused on literacy, at the Open House, at parent/teacher conferences, and through regular written communication between school and home related to the curriculum areas
- Striving to involve family members in their child's learning through involvement in the classrooms, special classes and at school events;
- Requiring annual parent acknowledgement in the Darcey Family Handbook of the following points:

To encourage this involvement the principal will address the parents at the orientation sessions and the Open Houses each school year to:

- Inform parents of the various student support services available to students at Darcey School;
- Seek input from parents with regards to these services;
- Inform parents of the variety of ways they can be involved in their child's education at school and at home.

School-Parent Compact:

"The Darcey School community believes that each parent's involvement in their child's education can have a positive impact on their academic success. I agree that I will:

- Encourage my child's love of learning.
- Take advantage of opportunities to learn more about what and how my child is learning at Darcey School.
- Read and if needed, respond to communications from the school (look through the backpack each evening!).
- Be involved with my child's learning.
- Establish routines at home that foster learning.

Parents are encouraged to be involved in many capacities, such as: volunteering in the classroom to support learning, membership in the PTA, serving on PTA committees, serving as room parents, volunteering in the art, music, physical education, and library classes, and organizing and running special projects and activities throughout the year. We also encourage parents to visit the classrooms to get a better understanding of the strategies, curriculum and every day happenings.

We are particularly interested in learning about the various cultural traditions of our Darcey families. Parents are welcome to share information about their family's culture with their child's class. Please contact your child's teacher if you would like to come to school and speak with the class about such topics as your country of origin, a special holiday or a tradition. This is a wonderful way for all of our students to learn about different cultures represented in our school community.

Please contact the classroom teacher to set up a visit or to determine the most appropriate use of parent volunteers. Please remember to leave siblings at home when visiting the classroom. This is important for safety reasons and to avoid disruptions of instructional time in the classrooms.

#### **A COMMITMENT TO HIGH QUALITY STAFF**

The Cheshire Public Schools has always had a commitment to hiring, training and retaining teachers of the highest caliber and we are very proud of the strong teaching staff that we have. For your



information, because Darcey School receives Title I funding, parents may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their child’s classroom teacher.

Cheshire Public Schools  
Safe School Climate Plan

The purpose of the Safe School Climate Plan is to promote consistency of approach and to create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable. Attitudes and practices can contribute to bullying, to lower levels of confidence, self-esteem and lack of achievement.

The following plan, “The Cheshire Public Schools Safe School Climate Plan,” addresses the mandated areas of compliance which are required under C.G.S.10-222d as amended by P.A. 11-232. In addition to the following current efforts, the administration, faculty and staff of the Cheshire Public School District commit to continue to improve, enhance, and update both the Plan and its implementation biennially in order to best serve the students, parents, guardians and the community. The Board of Education promotes a secure and happy school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior. Therefore it shall be the policy of the Board that bullying of a student by another student is prohibited.

I.. Prohibition Against Bullying

The Board of Education prohibits bullying (a) on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board, and (b) outside of the school setting if such bullying (i) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, (ii) infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or (iii) substantially disrupts the education process or orderly operation of a school.

II. Definitions

“Bullying” means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student’s property,
- B. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, oral or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics. The student (or students) against whom the activity is directed and the student (or students) directing the activity must be attending school in the Cheshire Public Schools.

“Cyberbullying” means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.

“Mobile electronic device” means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted.

“Electronic communication” means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system.

“Hostile environment” means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate.

“Outside of the school setting” means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a local or regional board of education.

“School employee” means (a) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school Superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional Board of Education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (b) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional Board of Education.

“School climate” means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.

#### General Intervention Strategies to Promote a Safe School Climate

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying and direct intervention when acts of bullying are verified, other actions may ameliorate potential problems with bullying in school or at

school sponsored activities. While no specific action is required and school needs for such interventions may vary from time to time, the following list of potential intervention strategies shall serve as a resource for administrators, teachers and other professional staff members in each school:

Strategies May Include

1. Use of peers to help ameliorate the problem.
2. Modeling by teachers of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior toward students.
3. School-wide meetings to encourage positive relationships.
4. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere.
5. Creating a school atmosphere of team spirit and collaboration that promotes appropriate social behavior by students in support of others.
6. Teachers and other professionals may find opportunities to educate students about bullying behavior through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior.

**Safe School Climate Plan 2021-2022**  
**(revised 7/29/2021)**  
**DARCEY SCHOOL**

School-Wide Activities

- Monthly Town Meetings are held to promote a strong school community
- Buddy classes promoting full inclusion
- Times for families to come together as part of the school community: Summer Playground Playdates, Family Pizza Night, Ice Cream Social
- Peaceable Bus Project- supporting a safe and friendly bus ride. Parents, bus drivers, and students are invited to Town Meeting
- Fun days in the winter and spring- play games and enjoy the outdoors
- Mindful moments in the classrooms
- Special days: World Kindness Day, PJ Day for the Kids, etc.

Staff Development/Trainings

- Affirming culture and preventing bias book study
- Responsive Classroom training- effective classroom practices, teacher language, managing misbehaviors, building classroom community
- CASEL standards
- Mindfulness
- Circle of Security/Looking at Behavior through the Attachment Lens
- PMT
- Instructional Assistant Training

Instructional Practices

- Responsive classroom practices: morning meeting, rule creation, interactive modeling, positive teacher language, logical consequences, guided discovery, academic choice, classroom organization, working with families, collaborative problem solving
- Classrooms develop classroom rules based on Hopes and Dreams
- Preschool teachers have parent “Hopes and Dreams” meetings prior to the start of school
- SRBI for social-emotional learning
- Social groups
- RULER ~ mood meter
- Using attachment theory (Circle of Security) to build strong relationships with teachers/students
- Yoga and Mindfulness

Targeted Supports

- Parent Center
- Outreach program
- Circle of Security Parenting Program
- Grade level transition meetings
- Anonymous reporting of bullying, harassment, and other concerns
- Safe School Climate meetings held four times per year

CHESHIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
29 Main Street  
Cheshire, CT 06410

Mr. Jeff Solan, Superintendent  
Mrs. Kim Dessert Principal

Phone Numbers to Remember

Darcey School	(203) 272-3343	Darcey Birth-to-Three	(203) 272-9108
School Closing & Information Line	(203) 250-2410	Special Education	(203) 250-2422
Transportation Department	(203) 272-2472	Dattco Bus Depot	(203) 699-8877
Board of Education	(203) 250-2400	Superintendent	(203) 250-2420
Assistant Superintendent	(203) 250-2431	Adult Education	(203) 250-2421
Buildings and Grounds	(203) 250-2574	Business Office	(203) 250-2429
Curriculum & Instruction	(203) 250-2412		

[www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/Darcey](http://www.cheshire.k12.ct.us/Darcey)