

Kindergarten Registration F.A.Q.

Happy Valley Elementary

<i>Frequently Asked Question</i>	<i>Answer</i>
Transportation:	
What is the drop-off procedure in the morning?	The buses drop students off in the back of the school and students proceed through the cafeteria. Students have the choice of getting breakfast or going out to recess prior to the first bell. If students are being dropped off by car: please stay in the car loop at the front of the school. A school staff member will support your child to exit the vehicle near the reader board. If walking, students can either go straight to the playground or inside for breakfast.
What time can I drop my child off? Where can he/she go before school starts?	The earliest a student can be dropped off is 7:30. The student can go on playground - from the playground they can go to the café back doors for breakfast.
What is the pick-up procedure in the afternoon?	Prior to the school year, you will receive a '4-digit pin number' from SchoolPass. This pin notifies your child's classroom teacher that a guardian has arrived and the teacher will send student out to your vehicle or to walk home. If your student rides the bus home or participates in the YMCA After school childcare program, a staff member will walk your student to their respective places.
Is there something that tracks my child if they are on the bus?	Bellingham Public Schools issues 'Hamster Passes' to all bus-riding students. This card allows for the transportation office the ability to verify if a child is on the bus, providing the child swipes the card. When swiping, we can verify when a student boards the bus and when they get off the bus.
What if my student leaves their belongings on the bus?	Transportation does not have a 'lost and found.' The items usually remain on the bus for 1 day and then they are taken to the lost and found at the school.
How does my student remember how to get home?	Your child's classroom teacher will make a 'go-home' plan with your family during your initial entry conference. We will work with your child so they can independently know their go-home plan.
What if my student misses the bus stop or forgets to get off the bus?	If the student does not get off the bus, we activate the 'reconnect plan' which will take the student to the next school site on the route, typically one of our high schools. The parent will be notified and would need to meet their child at the high school.
Will the bus driver drop off my student if an adult is not there to meet them?	Yes. Transportation will drop the student off if no one is there to meet them <i>unless</i> the student tells the driver they're supposed to stay on the bus, or they indicate they feel unsafe. Additionally, if the bus driver recognizes the environment bus stop is unsafe for any reason, the student will remain on the bus.

How do we change the 'going home' plans? Playdates, second homes, etc.	If your 'go-home' plan changes, please notify the office before 11:00 am. Please do not e-mail the teacher as they might not receive the notification prior to dismissal.
Attendance:	
What is the procedure if my child is late to school?	Please support your child to the main office in the event of tardiness. Please check in at the main office you're your child will walk to their classroom.
What is the procedure if my child is absent from school?	Please e-mail or call the main office. If e-mailing, please use both of the following e-mail addresses: Julie.goodwin@bellingshamschools.org laura.murdzia@bellingshamschools.org If calling, please call: 360-676-6420 and select the attendance option.
What is the procedure if my child needs to leave school early?	The family/guardian comes to the main office and the child will be sent down with their belongings, ready to go.
Health:	
What is the allergy policy? Can I pack nuts in my child's lunchbox?	If there is an allergy in the classroom, the classroom teacher will communicate this information privately so that other families are aware. Students can pack nuts/allergens in their lunch. Students who have the allergy will have specific and special seating options in the cafeteria and allergens will not be allowed in the classroom to keep everyone safe.
What is the procedure if my child gets hurt or feels sick at school?	When students get hurt or feel sick at school, we will attend to them and make sure they are okay. Students will go to the main office to be assessed and if needed, staff will call home or in the event of a serious emergency, both family and 9-1-1 will be called.
What is procedure if my child has a toileting accident at school?	Happy Valley is equipped with extra clothes in the event of an accident. If possible, we encourage families to pack a full set of clothes in a ziplock bag and place at the bottom of the student's backpack. The student has the option to change clothes by themselves or an office staff member will support them.
What does my child need to bring to school with them? Can I pack extra clothes?	Backpacks are the only needed student supply. All student supplies are provided. It is strongly encouraged to have extra clothes and face masks in backpacks.
Meals and Snacks	
Can my child eat breakfast at school?	Yes!
Is there a snack time? Who provides it?	Yes, there is typically snack time set aside in classrooms. We encourage families to pack a snack, if possible; however, Happy Valley can always provide snacks for students.
How do families pay for school lunch?	Families can set up an account on the Happy Valley website or send payment directly to school. If needed, free-and-reduced lunch forms can be found on the District website or in the District handbook.

How do I know what choices my child can make for school lunch?	A lunch menu is online at the District website. If you would like a hardcopy, we can provide that for you.
What happens if my child doesn't finish their lunch?	Students can save what they have not eaten and return the uneaten food to their lunch pale. If eating school lunch, students can bring their food back to the shared space or eat inside the classroom.
What do I do if my child has food allergies or sensitivities?	Please make sure to fill out the food form provided on the District website for sensitivities. Please indicate any allergies on the health concern document that is provided every year. If there is a life-threatening allergy, please make sure to discuss the allergy with the classroom teacher and the school nurse.
General:	
What can I do to prepare my student for kindergarten?	Bellingham Public Schools strongly believe it is not the child's job to be 'ready' for kindergarten. It is our job to be ready for them. We recommend engaging your child in play-based learning activities that make sense for your family routine and structure. Please visit our website or click here for suggested activities.
Are there before and after school options for childcare?	There is no AM preschool option at Happy Valley. However, there is a YMCA program that offers after school care. Please inquire with the YMCA.
Do parents get contact information for another child's family?	If a family would like to connect with another family, this is facilitated by the classroom teacher. Please let your classroom teacher know and they will be happy to assist in making that connection.
Is there a school lost and found?	Yes, the lost and found is near the office area. Please check regularly if you are finding that you are missing an item of clothing.
When is recess? Will my child have to go out if it is rainy or cold?	There is typically an AM recess and a recess before lunch. Many fresh air breaks are taken, if needed. Kids will go outside, rain or shine so please pack appropriate clothing for any kind of weather.
Can my child bring toys to school?	Unfortunately, we highly discourage bringing toys and/or personal items from home. Happy Valley is not responsible for lost, broken or stolen.
Classroom:	
When will we know who the classroom teacher is?	Families will be contacted before the start of the school year by your classroom teacher via postcard, phone call, e-mail, etc.
Is there a conference or time to meet my child's teacher prior to school starting?	Yes. Prior to school starting, you will be contacted by school personnel to schedule a 30-minute entry conference.
What does the classroom look like?	Every classroom reflects a play-based, developmentally appropriate environment ready for your student. Each classroom has the following areas: block, home, toy, writing, library, art, quiet corner, whole group and small group learning spaces. Each classroom environment is unique to the classroom teacher and provides opportunities for experimentation, exploration, discovery, inquiry, challenge, and peer interaction.

<p>What does a typical daily schedule look like?</p>	<p>The kindergarten daily schedule is a balanced one that accommodates play-based learning across content areas. Quieter and more active moments are balanced throughout the day. Because schedules vary slightly from school to school and classroom to classroom, your student's teacher will review the daily schedule during the entry conference.</p>
<p>How should I communicate with my child's teacher?</p>	<p>The classroom teacher and the family will set up a communication plan that works for everyone.</p>
<p>How do I volunteer?</p>	<p>Please contact your student(s) teacher or school for volunteer application and opportunities.</p>
<p>Who do I contact to learn more about PTA?</p>	<p>Please visit the Happy Valley school website and navigate to the PTA section under "Families." Information about the PTA can be located there.</p>