**THE SCHOOL PROMISE**

We are peaceful with our words and actions. We are responsible for one another and ourselves. We are respectful of people and things. We are enthusiastic and always work with excellence.

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**THE SCHOOL SONG**

(To the tune of “Edelweiss” from *The Sound of Music*)

Harford Hills, Harford Hills,
Every morning we greet you.
Red and White, clean and bright,
We are happy to see you.
Just like flowers, we’ll bloom and grow,
Bloom and grow forever.
Harford Hills, Harford Hills
Bless our dear school forever!

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**Our Mission**

Harford Hills Elementary School strives for excellence and is committed to ensuring the academic achievement and social development of all students. Our instructional program will enable students to demonstrate growth in all academic areas as well as age-appropriate social skills.

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**Our vision Statement**

Harford Hills Elementary Schools believes that all students can meet with success when they are provided a safe, engaging, and rigorous learning environment. Our school community will work together to challenge all students to achieve. We will prepare our students for the demands and opportunities of the 21st century by promoting academic excellence, fostering appreciation of diversity, encouraging lifelong learning, and producing caring, respectful, responsible citizens.

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**Our Commitments**

To achieve the school vision, the faculty/staff is committed to:

- Actively involving students in the learning process.
- Engaging in meaningful, on-going staff development related to research-based instruction.
- Applying research-based instruction strategies in order to improve student achievement.
- Incorporating a variety of assessment strategies into daily instruction.
- Providing time for collaborative teams to meet on a monthly basis to analyze data, monitor individual and group progress, and address student needs.
- Using flexible grouping and differentiated instruction to meet individual students needs.
- Incorporating technology into all curricular areas.
- Using schoolwide positive behavior interventions.
- Providing timely and informative feedback to students and families.
- Welcoming, involving, and including parents/guardians in the school learning community.
- Developing a school community that is respectful, responsible, and ready to learn.

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**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Office</td>
<td>443-809-5236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Suite</td>
<td>443-809-7389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Spots</td>
<td>410-515-8750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Private Organization-Not affiliated with BCPS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I. THE SCHOOL DAY

General Arrival Information

Our School doors open for all students each morning at 8:40 AM. **Supervision of students is not provided before 8:40AM.** Students arriving at school before 8:40 AM must wait outside, so **please do not have your child arrive at school early.** There are three entrances to the building during arrival. Staff are posted at each entrance. Please see the map in the packet to learn where your student will enter. When students enter the building at 8:40 AM, they proceed directly to their homeroom. They will pick up breakfast in the hallway. Daily announcements begin at 8:50 AM. **It is essential that children arrive at school BEFORE the 8:50 AM bell.** Parents/Guardians will say good-bye to their children at the school door. Parents will not be able to walk students to class. This reduces the number of people in the building as we maintain the health and safety of our students. This helps our students develop independence in going to their classrooms. Students are supervised by faculty/staff members in the hallways to ensure safe passage to their classroom.

**School Hours**

- **8:00 AM** The school office opens
- **8:40 AM** The first bell rings. Students enter the building and proceed to their homeroom.
- **8:50 AM** The school day begins with homeroom and morning announcements.
- **11:20 AM** Morning pre-kindergarten program ends.
- **12:55 PM** Afternoon pre-kindergarten begins.
- **3:35 PM** The school day ends. Students are dismissed.
- **4:30 PM** The school office closes.

**Arrival of Car Riders**

Parents/Guardians who transport their children to school should enter the school property through the rear parking lot from Harford Hills Drive, stay to the right, and proceed into the staff parking lot area next to the cafeteria. Students will exit their car at the drop-off area outside the cafeteria with supervision by staff members. Students will enter the school at three entrances based on their grade (please see the map in this packet). Upon entering the school, students will go to their homerooms, picking up breakfast in the hallway. Parents/Guardians and students are asked to remain in their cars while the cars move up in single file to the drop off area. **Drivers are reminded to drive SLOWLY through the school parking lots. Drivers are also reminded to stop at all STOP signs on school property and at all of the CROSSWALKS.** State law requires all drivers to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. **No cars are allowed in the school’s front loop at arrival due to the buses.**
Arrival of Walkers

Crossing guards are posted to assist walkers at the intersections of Joppa road and Old Harford Road and Hillford Drive and Old Harford Road. Walkers should plan to arrive between 8:35 AM and 8:40 AM. Prior to 8:40 AM, there is no adult supervision. For safety reasons, we remind all students to use the sidewalks and crosswalks at all times. **We also request that adults use the sidewalks and crosswalks when escorting their children in order to reinforce this safety procedure.** Taking a short cut across the circular drive, particularly in front of a school bus, IS very dangerous. Walkers will also enter the building using one of three entrances based on their grade level. (again, refer to the map in this packet)

Dismissal of Walkers and After Care Program Participants

Walkers are dismissed through outside classroom doors. Students should walk directly home using sidewalks and marked crosswalks. If you are meeting your child, please walk to the outside classroom door. Room numbers are posted in classroom windows. **Please use all crosswalks.** Students enrolled in the Hot Spots program will be dismissed to the cafeteria.

Dismissal of Car Riders

Car riders are escorted to the cafeteria. Parents/Guardians who are picking up their children at dismissal should enter the school property through the rear parking lot from Harford Hills Drive, stay to the right, and proceed into the staff parking lot area next to the cafeteria. Parents/Guardians are asked to remain in their cars in a single lane and move up slowly to pick-up area next to cafeteria doors. All cars must have a Harford Hills Elementary School car rider number visibly displayed in their car window in order to for the adult in the car rider line to pick up a student. **Parents/Guardians who do NOT have an assigned number displayed will be directed to the office** and asked to show picture identification in order to pick up a student.

Drivers are reminded to drive slowly through the school parking lots and circular drive, when not in use by buses. Drivers are also reminded to stop at all stop signs on the school property and at all of the crosswalk. State law requires all drivers to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks. **NO cars are allowed in the school's front loop during dismissal due to the dismissal of bus riders.**

Bus Transportation

Bus routes are established by the BCPS Office of Transportation. Bus transportation forms, showing routes and stops are available in the school office. These forms need to be completed to facilitate your child’s transportation by bus. Please note the following Baltimore, County Office of Transportation policies:

- Have your child at the assigned stop at least five minutes early and be patient, especially at the beginning of the school year when drivers are still learning their routes and when the weather is inclement.
- Students are permitted to ride **ONLY** their assigned bus and must get off **ONLY** at their assigned stop.
- Students not assigned to a bus may **NOT** ride it, even if going home with a friend assigned to the bus.
- Bus rules are discussed when the BCPS Student Handbook is presented at the start of the school year, and are reviewed periodically. Students are reminded during afternoon announcements to use appropriate and safe behavior on their bus ride. These rules apply for field trips.
Bus Rules for Students

Respectful:
♦ Listen to the bus driver
♦ Use kind words
♦ Use an inside voice

Responsible:
♦ Follow directions
♦ Report problems to an adult
♦ Keep the bus clean
♦ Wear a face mask (optional)

Peaceful:
♦ Keep hands, feet and objects to self
♦ Students must remain in their assigned seat
♦ Face forward

Early Closing Procedures

It is important that your child knows what to do when schools close early. In the event of an early school closing due to an emergency or for reasons as stated in the BCPS calendar, the following applies:
♦ If school closes three hours early, lunch will be served to grades K-5. School dismissal time for all students is 12:35 PM. All bus riders will go home on their assigned school bus.
♦ If school closes two hours early, lunch will be served to grades K-5. School dismissal time for all students is 1:35 PM. All bus riders will go home on their assigned school bus.
♦ If school closes one hour early, lunch will be served to grades K-5. School dismissal time for all students is 2:35 PM. All bus riders will go home on their assigned school bus.

NOTE: In cases of early school closing due to inclement weather, all planned use of the school facilities during after school hours are automatically canceled. This is the Hot Spots program.

Inclement Weather or Other Systemwide Emergency

Sometimes schools do not open or schools open late or close early due to bad weather or unforeseen emergencies such as a power failure. The early closing procedures are listed above. Please do not call the school for closing information because it is crucial that the phone lines remain open. Refer to “Closings, Delays, Cancellations, and Postponements” chart on page of this handbook for additional ways to access specific information about school closings, etc.

Media Announcements
The following message will be given to the television and radio stations:
“All Baltimore County Public Schools Closed.” (Harford Hills is closed)
On occasion, schools in Hereford Zone will be closed while other schools in Baltimore County remain open.
“Baltimore County Hereford Zone Only Schools Closed” (Harford Hills open)

One Hour Delayed Opening
One hour delay-HHES will open for students at 9:40 AM; students may not enter the building prior to this time.

Two Hour Delayed Opening
Two hour delay-HHES will open for students at 10:40 AM; students may not enter the building prior to this time.
II. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health Services

A full-time school nurse can be reached at 443-809-7389. All medication must be brought to school by an adult and given to the school nurse in the original pharmacy package. No child may carry medication during the day or bring medication in a lunch bag. Please remember, students should NOT be sent to school if they have any signs of illness (fever, sore throat, inflamed eyes, rash, nausea or any other signs of illness). Please call the school nurse if you expect your child to be absent three or more days.

⚠️ Emergency Information Release Form

At the beginning of the school year, every student takes home a two-sided form, which must be updated, signed, and returned immediately. This form provides the school with your address, phone numbers (home, work and cell) and other emergency information. Each child in your family must have an emergency information form on file at school. It is vital that these forms be UPDATED as needed. There are times during the school year when children become ill or are injured and parents, guardians, or another responsible adult MUST be contacted. Please be sure to list other contacts that have your permission to pick up from school for any reason. For families with custody issues, the school office needs to be advised of the details and be given written legal documentation.

If any of your personal information changes at any time during the school year, please notify the office immediately. In addition, if we do not have your correct information, you will not receive School Messenger emails and phone calls.

Behavior, Discipline, and Positive Behavioral Supports

As stated in the school promise, being respectful, responsible, and peaceful are the expectations for student behavior in school, while traveling to and from home, and on field trips. At the beginning of each school year, every student reviews the BCPS Student Handbook. This handbook outlines BCPS policies and procedures for safety and expectations of student behavior. It also describes the disciplinary measures that may go into effect if students disobey the rules. During the first few weeks of school, children participate in a counselor. All parents/guardians and students are required to electronically acknowledge their understanding of the expectations in the Student Handbook.

The school is committed to using positive behavior interventions to teach students self-discipline. Classroom behavior expectations are explained, taught, and reviewed by the faculty and staff through our school year. The administrators as well as the school counselor review the Student Handbook with students and families to review these documents with their children and keep them available for reference. More information about our Schoolwide Behavior Plan will be shared with families during Back to School Night. Students will learn about daily, monthly and quarterly incentives for following the school promise and displaying the virtues taught through our Virtues program.

We are excited to announce that we will continue to implement Conscious Discipline school-wide. Conscious Disciple is a comprehensive classroom management program and a social-emotional curriculum. It is based on current brain research, child development information and developmentally appropriate practices.

Smoke Free Zone

The School and School grounds are considered smoke-free zones. Please DO NOT smoke in the school or on school grounds.
Visitors

We welcome and encourage parent/guardian visitors. For security purposes, **ALL** visitors must register in the school office and obtain a **VISITOR BADGE**. State law requires all visitors to register at the school office before visiting other areas of the building. No one will be allowed to go to the classrooms to deliver lunches, or forgotten books or any items. Those items should be delivered to the main office, and staff will ensure students receive their materials.

The safety of all students and staff in Baltimore County Public Schools is of the utmost importance to all of us, so all schools use the Raptor identification system. When you visit a BCPS school, you will be asked to present a driver’s license or government photo identification to a staff member at the school. The identification will be scanned, Your photo, name and date of birth will be utilized to register you and compare your information with sexual offender databases throughout the country. The information collected through Raptor will not be shared outside of the school and is stored on a secure server. Once your identification is scanned and cleared, a visitor’s pass will be printed for you. You will only need to show your identification on your future visits.

**School Emergency Management Plan**

Harford Hills will have several emergency drills throughout the school year to prepare our students for a possible emergency situation. We will practice regular fire drills, ALICE drills, bus evacuation and severe weather drills throughout the year. The school has a safety plan that is filed with the Baltimore County School system and Police Department.

The emergency response procedures are listed below. Each evacuation procedure, for example a fire drill, is practiced throughout the school year. **NOTE:** This information comes from the Critical Response and School Emergency Safety Management Guide for BCPS.

- **Evacuation**- For use when conditions outside are safer than conditions inside
- **Lockout**- For use in securing access to buildings, usually resulting from an event in the community
- **Lockdown**- For use when protecting building occupants from imminent dangers in the building or immediately outside
- **Shelter in Place**- For use in securing access to a building and for controlling movement within a building
- **Severe Weather Safe Area**- For use in severe weather emergencies
- **Drop, Cover and Hold**- For use in an environmental threat such as an earthquake

**ALICE Protocol**- Used in a situation involving an active assailant or the imminent threat of an active assailant. ALICE stands for:
- Alert-receiving initial notice of a critical event
- Lockdown-securing occupants behind closed doors
- Inform-notifying staff and students of potential danger throughout the event
- Counter-creating noise, movement, distance, and distraction
- Evacuate-leaving the area of the danger

These responses are not implemented in any specific order.

**Use this link for more information:**
http://scs.bcps.org/departments/school_safety
III. GENERAL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**After School Clubs**

Students have opportunities to be involved in a range of after school activities. Parents must provide transportation for students participating in these programs. Students must be picked up on time. If a student is picked up late two times, it will result in his/her removal from the club. While participating in the after school clubs, students are expected to follow the School Promise. More information will be forwarded to parents as the time for these activities nears.

**Calendars**

Please visit [Calendar - Baltimore County Public Schools (bcps.org)](http://bcps.org) for a school system calendar for the school year. All calendar, events and activities are posted on our school website: [http://harfordhillses.bcps.org](http://harfordhillses.bcps.org)

**Monthly Newsletters**

The school newsletter, *The Chanticleer*, is sent home monthly through the school messenger system. It is important that the school office have your most up to date email address on file. If you prefer a paper copy, please call or email Ms. Flaherty at Dflaherty@bcps.org. Newsletters are a primary source of up to date information about the school and community as well as important events, activities, and school closings. Newsletters and other school information can also be accessed on the school website: [http://harfordhillses.bcps.org](http://harfordhillses.bcps.org)

**Homework**

Homework is an important extension of student learning and provides the following benefits for students:
- Encourages the development of independent study habits, skills and responsibility.
- Reinforces, enriches, and extend learning by providing a variety of educational opportunities outside the classroom.
- Provides additional opportunities for family involvement in a child’s education.

Children may be assigned homework on Monday through Thursday. A desirable environment for homework completion and study includes:
- A place free from distraction
- A comfortable work space
- Adequate lighting, temperature, and ventilation.

**Absence Homework Policy**

When a student is absent, it is encouraged that they obtain, complete and return the assignments missed. Keep in mind that not all assignments can be made up outside of the instructional day. This is based on the rich discussions, cooperative activities and small group instructions that occur on a daily basis within the classroom. Arrangements can be made by contacting the school office, or by sending an email to the student’s teacher. Teacher will need adequate time to gather materials and information for these assignments. Assignments will be available for pick-up within 24 hours of requests. Students will have the same number of days they were absent to make up the work. If the make-up work is not completed in the time given, the students will not receive credit for it. If your child is absent for an unlawful reason, your child is not entitled to receive make up work.
**Make-up Work for Prolonged Unexcused Absences (Vacation)**

BCPS policy considers absences due to vacation as “unlawful” absences, and students are not to receive credit for work missed. We realize that vacations are an important part of family life. Though we cannot condone these vacations during times when school is in session, we do understand the need based on parents'/guardians’ work schedules. Also, many of the vacation taken by our families are in and of themselves educational. Therefore, we will continue to work with parents and students to make-up work that has been missed when students return from their vacations. The work that children miss while on vacation will be collected and given to them upon their return to school. Students will have the same number of days they were absent to make-up work. If make-up work is not completed in the time given, then the students will not receive credit for the work.

**Report Cards**

Report cards for students in Grades 1-12 are issued at the end of each marking period. Progress reports are issued for prekindergarten and kindergarten students twice a year. Refer to the BCPS calendar or The Chanticleer for report card distribution dates. The BCPS *Grading and Reporting Procedures Manual* can be accessed through the BCPS website. (Parents-Grading and Reporting)

**Parent-Teacher Conference**

The home-school connection is critical, so we encourage parents/guardians to communicate with teachers and attend conferences. During the year, teachers will schedule conferences with parents/guardians to discuss their child’s progress and to share samples of their child’s work; however, at any time during the school year, parents/guardians may call the school or send a note or email to the teacher to request a conference to discuss progress and/or concerns. Scheduling a conference is the best way to ensure there is adequate time for both the teacher and the parent/guardian to address school performance and concerns. We will continue to utilize Google Meet for virtual conferences, when appropriate.

**Parent-Teacher Association**

The Harford Hills PTA encourages all families to join the PTA and participate in all school activities. A membership drive is conducted every fall. Membership is open to everyone for a $10 annual fee. All members are invited to attend the monthly PTA meetings on the third Tuesday of each month. You can visit their website at www.harfordhillspta.org for joining information.

**IV. School Services**

**Office**

The school office is open from 8:30-4:00 on all school days. IF the office closed, you may call the school 443-809-5236 and leave a voicemail message, which will be answered as soon as possible.

Please note the following:

♦ It is mandatory that your child’s contact form with emergency information be returned to the school no later than the second day of classes and updated during the school year as needed.

♦ IF your child forgets something needed for the school day, it should be dropped off in the office, not in the classroom. Please make sure you clearly mark your child’s name on the package.

♦ Urgent messages for children can be called into the office.
**Cafeteria**

Children may bring a packed lunch from home or receive a lunch from school if they qualify based on the free and reduced meal application. Applications will be given to students in their welcome packets. If you have any additional questions, please call the office. The following information should be read carefully.

- Students will be able to purchase snacks as well as lunch. More information will be shared.
- If a child’s lunch is left at home, it can be dropped off at the office and it will then be given to the child.
- Due to limited space and continuing safety concerns we will limit the number of visitors during lunchtime. If you would like to have lunch with your child please call the office to schedule a time.
- Students are not permitted to share food with each other due to food allergies.
- Baltimore county provided a menu to students each month. Use this link for menu information: [http://bussinessservices.bcps.org/departments/business_dervices_operations/food_and_nutrition_services/breakfast_and_lunch_menus](http://bussinessservices.bcps.org/departments/business_dervices_operations/food_and_nutrition_services/breakfast_and_lunch_menus)
- A peanut-free table will be available for those with peanut allergies. Please notify the school nurse if your child requires this seating.

Students are scheduled for 30 minute lunch periods. The following positive cafeteria routine and commitments have been established and agreed upon by the students:

**Respectful:**
- Wait patiently in line
- Use an indoor voice
- Clean up your area
- Use table manners
- Speak politely to others

**Responsible:**
- Follow directions the first time
- Raise your hand if you need help
- Use your time wisely—eat first

**Peaceful:**
- Use walking feet
- Touch and eat only what is yours
- Stay seated unless given permission
- Keep your body to yourself

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**Transfer of Students**

If you are relocating from our school or school district, please contact the office with your new address, the name of the new school your child will be attending, and your child’s last day of expected attendance at Harford Hills Elementary. A transfer packet containing all of the information necessary to enroll your child in his/her new school will be prepared. This can take 3-5 business days. On your child’s last day attending Harford Hills, the packet must be picked up by a parent/guardian. Please be sure to return all Harford Hills Elementary School books and materials prior to your child’s last day.
V. GENERAL INFORMATION

Attendance

Being present is an important role in academic achievement. If a student is late or absent, they miss valuable academic time that cannot be replaced in the classroom. It is the family's responsibility to get their child to school on time. The Baltimore County attendance expectation is 94%. This means students should not miss more than (2) days per quarter. Under Maryland State Education Code 7-301, each person between the ages of 5-18 years of age shall attend public school regularly during the entire school year. Good attendance is extremely important. Personal illness, religious holiday's, and death in the immediate family are considered legal or excused absences. Please see that your child is at school every day and on time. Please note the following absences/tardy information:

♦ Our school doors open for students at 8:40 AM The school day begins at 8:50 AM. After 8:50 AM, students are considered tardy.
♦ A parent/guardian must escort a late arriving student to the office and provide an explanation for the lateness.
♦ State law requires attendance each day of school. Your child must be present for at least four hours to be counted present for a full day.
♦ When a child is absent from school, he/she must bring a note, signed by a parent/guardian or doctor, on the day he/she returns to school. The note should indicate the date(s) and reason for the absence. If we do not receive a note, we must mark the absence as unlawful.
♦ If you expect that your child will be absent three days or more due to illness, please call our school nurse (443-809-7389) and inform her of your child’s illness.
♦ Please call the school if you need to discuss a prolonged absence with a teacher and/or an administrator.
♦ BCPS utilizes an automated communication system to call parents/guardians when students are absent.
♦ The Attendance Committee will meet regularly to monitor student attendance and tardiness.
♦ Repeated absences and/or chronic tardiness will result in the school contacting the Pupil Personnel Worker to assist in improving attendance. Failure to comply on the part of the parent/guardian may result in legal procedures.

Early Dismissals

If you child is to leave school early for any reason, you must go to the school office to meet him/her and sign the early dismissal book. Parents/Guardians may want to have their child released early from school to other family members, neighbors, or friends for appointments, etc. Please send a note stating the time, reason and the person designated to pick the student up for early dismissal. This person MUST be listed on the child’s emergency form. The designated person must show a picture ID before the child will be released.

Lost and Found

Please mark all of your child’s belongings clearly, and have your child check the Lost and Found area in the cafeteria if a personal belonging is missing.
Use of Cell Phones

Baltimore County Public Schools does not permit the use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes during regular instructional hours. The ban on the use of electronic devices for non-educational purposes also applies to buses while being transported to and from school-sponsored activities and events, as included in the BCPS Student Handbook. At Harford Hills Elementary School, we expect cell phones to remain powered off and secured in a student's locker or Backpack during the school day. When it is necessary to communicate with parents/guardians during the school day due to illness or a behavior concern school staff will make the contact. If parents/guardians need to change their child's dismissal plans, they should contact the school and the message will be communicated to their child. Violation of this rule may result in the student's phone being held in the office until a parent/guardian picks it up. The BCPS cell phone policy will be sent home.

Parent/Guardians—your cell phones must be turned to silent or off when entering the building. Our office is a very busy place; please refrain from using the cell phone when visiting the school. We are modeling polite cell phone behavior for our students.

Books

Students are issued various school textbooks and novels during the school year. Once issued, these books are the responsibility of the student. It is expected that the student will return in the same condition as when issued. If books are lost or damaged, parents/guardians are expected to reimburse the school for the replacement cost of the book.

Personal Property

It is Harford Hills Elementary School policy that students NOT bring toys, games, sports equipment, trading cards, etc. to school. These items sometimes get broken or lost. These items may also interfere with student learning by causing distractions or disagreements between students. Students should only bring items listed on the school supply lists. Students are expected to use the sports equipment provided by the school. Also, please note that Baltimore County Public Schools does not accept responsibility for students' personal property, as stated in the BCPS, Student Handbook distributed at the beginning of the school year. If students bring a cell phone to school, it must be kept in a locker and the school is not responsible for it if lost or broken.

Dress Code

Children should be dressed appropriately for safety, personal hygiene, climate, and consideration of others. Please note the following dress code guidelines:

♦ Shorts should not be too short or too tight. Shirts should cover the entire torso. Halter-tops and bare midriff tops should not be worn.

♦ Tennis shoes or rubber sole shoes are recommended for safety reasons since they protect feet from injury and insect stings. This is essential for taking physical education classes and for playing on our playground equipment. Sandals, Flip-flops, and other open shoes are not recommended for school.

♦ Clothing advertising alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or inappropriate language should not be worn to school.

♦ Hats and hoods are to be removed in the building. The BCPS Student Handbook, states that heads may be covered in the school building for religious or health reasons only.

If we work together to set and maintain clear and consistent expectations for student behavior and dress, we will continue to maintain a positive learning environment for all of our children.
School Pictures

Twice during the school year, usually in fall and spring, a photographer comes to Harford Hills Elementary School to take individual and class/group photographs. A make-up day is scheduled for children who are sick on the day the individual pictures are taken. Purchase of school pictures is optional. More information about school pictures will be included in newsletters.

Field Trips

Every grade level plans field trips during the school year. On each occasion, a permission form will be sent home for a parent/guardian signature. The slip must be signed and returned in order for your child to attend. Parents/Guardians of ESOL students may contact the ESOL teacher if they do not understand details in the note sent by the classroom teacher. All fees must be paid in cash or through the electronic school payment system. We will not be able to accept checks. Due to BCPS Board Policy 6104, money cannot be refunded if you have paid for a field trip and your child is then unable to go. Adult chaperones often accompany classes on field trips. Teachers will ask volunteers to chaperone as needed. **ALL chaperones must complete the BCPS online Volunteer Training every year prior to submitting a chaperone agreement.**

School Supplies

The school provides all textbooks and instructional materials. A list of supplemental supplies needed for the year. (pencils, scissors, pocket folders, etc.) is available on the school website: [http://harfordhillses.bcps.org](http://harfordhillses.bcps.org)

Celebrations/Birthday Parties

Birthdays are an exciting time for children. Due to continuing COVID health measures, student allergies and BCPS food safety regulations, food is not permitted for birthday celebrations. Should parents/guardians wish to send something extra to school, please limit those small trinkets, stickers, pencils. Another alternative is to purchase a special game for your child’s class to use during recess. As a school, we continue to celebrate our students’ birthdays by providing a special birthday pencil to each birthday child. We also announce “happy birthday” during our morning announcements.

**Birthday Party invitations are not able to be distributed at school.**

Volunteers

Harford Hills School has a strong tradition of volunteerism. This is one of its underlying strengths. There are many opportunities to volunteer. These include, but are not limited to:

- Volunteering to help with a PTA organized event
- Donating goods, services, or time to school activities
- Helping teachers with curriculum-related activities in the classroom (varies depending on grade level and the individual teacher)
- Helping with special events (e.g., picnics, field trips)
- Being a room parent: organizing class parties, making phone calls, coordinating parent volunteers from the class for PTA events
- Clerical/administrative work for teachers (copying materials, etc.)
- Chaperoning field trips

If you plan to volunteer at any time, it is important to participate in the BCPS online Volunteer Training. This information is on the BCPS website under “Community” or can be accessed through the Harford Hills Elementary School website: [http://harfordhillses.bcps.org](http://harfordhillses.bcps.org)
Volunteer screening helps ensure that students and staff work in a safe environment. Before volunteering in any BCPS school or being eligible to chaperone a field trip or assist with activities such as Field Day, each volunteer candidate must complete a BCPS Application for Volunteer Services Form and the online Volunteer Orientation/Training. Volunteer training should be completed early in the school year if possible, and no later than one week prior to the field trip or activity such as Field Day.

Volunteers must register in the school office and pick up a volunteer badge each time they volunteer.

**COVID UPDATES**

As of August 2022 BCPS is not mandating a universal mask policy. All students, staff and visitors are not required to wear a mask in the schools and offices of Baltimore County Public Schools. BCPS will continue to monitor COVID-19 transmission, trends, and guidance from the state, CDC, and local experts input to guide its mitigation plan. Any updates will be available on the BCPS COVID-19 webpage. If you choose for your child to continue wearing a mask, please be sure to provide them with a mask covering for daily use. It is encouraged for them to bring extra to keep in their backpacks.

**Screening**

All are asked to refrain from entering schools or offices if they are ill or have symptoms of COVID-19, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, or are awaiting results of a COVID-19 test.

**BCPS Health Services Updates**

**COVID Testing Program:** In the Fall, all school nurses will be offering COVID tests to students and staff who develop illness/symptoms during the school day. Parent consent is required for all students who are tested. Most persons will be tested with rapid antigen tests only: some may have follow-up PCR testing as directed by the Department of Health. This program was piloted in the Spring and was very well received.

**Closed Contacts:** On July 9th, CDC changed the definition of close contact for student exposure in schools. Students who are fully masked and 3 feet apart will not be considered close contacts if one becomes ill with COVID.

**Masks:** Masks remain the most effective COVID prevention strategy, second only to vaccine.

**Physical Distancing During Lunch:** There are no absolute distances that students must be distanced at lunch. However, we will be scheduling lunches and structuring seating in a manner that provides for seating chart that can be used when contact tracing is needed.

**Isolation:** Students who become ill with symptoms of COVID will still be separated from their healthy peers in a room that is “separate and distinct from spaces that are used for other purposes”. This space is on the back of the health suite.

**Visitors to School and Offices**

Virtual visits are encouraged, when appropriate, based on the purpose of the visit or meeting. Indoor visits and volunteers are permitted. Plans for indoor visits and volunteers should allow physical distancing. Volunteers must follow the established BCPS volunteer guidelines as outlined in Superintendent’s Rule 1260.