

The Sarah Anderson School  
P.S. 9  
Parent Handbook  
3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Public School 9  
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New York, NY 10024  
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[www.ps9.org](http://www.ps9.org)

Community School District #3

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Welcome P.S. 9 Families:

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a ready reference to the policies and procedures for your family as you join the P.S. 9 community.

“Every child in P.S. 9 will succeed” is our school motto -- created, maintained and implemented by our diverse team of teachers, staff, administration, specialists and parents working together. We are committed to academic excellence and the fostering of a collaborative community of lifelong learners. Our goal is to enable P.S. 9 to provide an atmosphere of safety and warmth in which each individual child is encouraged and nurtured to grow.

We invite you to use the information and resources in the following pages as your guide to become familiar with the policies, programs and procedures of the school. Your child’s classroom teacher is the primary link between school and home should any questions or concerns come up, yet there are numerous other people on staff who can support you and your child whenever possible. We place a high value on strong home and school communication.

In addition to this handbook, you will be receiving an information booklet from the yearly elected Executive Board of the PTA with an updated list of events, committees and schedules each new school year. All families are encouraged to take advantage of the many valuable experiences that P.S. 9 has to offer by being an active participant within the school. Whether you have a little time or a lot, every minute you share getting involved is extremely appreciated and will only enhance our school’s community spirit.

Many of our P.S. 9 children and adults form friendships and bonds with each other that may be strong for years to come. As parents are the first teachers, we continue to encourage you to remain an active, supportive participant in your child’s development. P.S. 9 is the beginning of their educational journey and we are pleased to be a part of it.

I wish you all a very successful and happy year.

Sincerely,

Diane Brady  
Principal

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# General Procedures for P.S. 9

## Entering the Building

The main entrance to the school is on West 84<sup>th</sup> Street. Upon entering the building, all visitors (including parent volunteers) must stop at the security desk and sign in. No exceptions. From there, all adults and visitors must proceed to the Main Office. As a Department of Education safety rule, baby strollers and bicycles are not permitted past the security desk. Bicycles, scooters or wheeled shoes should not be ridden on or around school property during or after school hours. Also, bicycles are not allowed to be tied or chained to the school gates during school hours and will be removed if the school cannot locate the owner.

Parents / Guardians may not escort children beyond the security desk or Main Office during school hours.

*To protect the safety of the children, any adult authorized to pick up a P.S. 9 student will be asked to present a picture I.D. and must know the child's first and last names and classroom number.*

## Arrival

For your child's safety, no P.S. 9 student is allowed to enter the building until the designated time.

School begins at 8:30 a.m. Students who arrive after teachers pick up their classes and the outside gate has been closed, are late. Late students must go to the office to sign-in and get a late pass. Monitors will be called to escort your child to the classroom. Because this is a very busy time of day, and because the disruptions can upset normal routines and learning of all students, it is important that you help your child be on time each day.

### **Fair/Good Weather Procedure**

*Pre-K:* Enter through the main entrance and turn left past the security desk.

*Kindergarten:* After the initial phase-in period, children will be dropped off at the security desk and met by a school aide.

*Grades 1-5:* Gather in the main schoolyard on West 84<sup>th</sup> Street. Each student goes to the class line and waits for the teacher to escort them in an orderly way to their class.

### **Foul/Bad Weather Procedure**

*Pre-K:* Enter through the main entrance and turn left past the security desk.

*Kindergarten, Grades 1 & 2:* Enter through main entrance. Go to cafeteria for teacher pick-up.

*Grades 3, 4 and 5:* Enter through main entrance. Go to auditorium for teacher pick-up.

**School Bus Arrival:** Children are escorted off the buses by the school aides and walked to the school entrance. Upon entering the school, they are then directed to the cafeteria.

At all arrivals (school bus, main entrance and schoolyard) students are met and supervised by P.S. 9 school personnel.

## **Dismissal**

Except for Pre-K, all children are dismissed from the school yard regardless of weather conditions. Children are to be picked up from their posted designated area determined by grade and class. Children who are not picked up on time are brought to the Main Office where parents/guardians are contacted by phone. If it becomes too late in the evening and no one on the blue emergency card can be reached, the child can be taken to the 20th police precinct @ 120 West 82<sup>nd</sup> Street. Please make sure your emergency contact information is up to date. Late pick-ups are extremely upsetting to the child.

Children should not be picked up early from school except when parents are contacted by the school nurse for medical and dental emergencies. **We ask that you do not schedule routine doctor or dental appointments during school hours.**

**All public school arrival and departure times are set by the Department of Education and can change from year to year. You will be notified each summer as to the arrival and dismissal schedule for the upcoming school year. Please note these hours to ensure on-time arrivals and departures.**

**Saying Goodbye to the Teacher:** For your child's safety, before leaving the school area at dismissal, please make sure that the child shakes hands with his or her teacher and informs the teacher of the name of the adult picking them up. The person picking up the student should be acknowledged by the teacher.

**School Bus Dismissal:** Children are escorted from their class to the auditorium. There they are arranged by bus group and escorted directly to their bus. Because of insurance regulations, only those children scheduled for a particular bus are allowed to ride. Visitors, playdates, etc. are not permitted on the bus. Please be on time to meet the bus. Make an attempt to meet other parents/caregivers/guardians at your child's stop and exchange numbers. If no one is at the stop for pick-up, the child will remain on the bus until the driver can return the child to school. If it is too late in the evening and no one on the blue emergency card can be reached and if there are no personnel at the school to meet the student, the child can be taken to the 20th police precinct @ 120 West 82<sup>nd</sup> Street.

(For any concerns regarding bus routes or status, contact the Atlantic Bus Company at 718-585-8592.)

**Dismissal to P.S. 9 Afterschool:** The children are escorted from their class by their teacher or a school aide and are then taken to the cafeteria entrance where they are met by Afterschool personnel. The children are then directed to the table that is labeled with the class and time of the Afterschool program they are attending. They wait until their Afterschool teacher arrives. The Afterschool number is 212-787-1200 / 212-873-0088 (fax)

**PLEASE NOTE:** If any changes occur in your child's pick-up routine, you must send a note to the teacher. The student will not be released to any person not named on the blue emergency card without prior notification. If you have an emergency or will be delayed in your schedule, please contact the Main Office prior to dismissal time and note the child's name and classroom number. The main office number is 212-678-2812.

## **Attendance**

Each student's attendance is extremely important at P.S. 9 and adds to the success of the school year. Please make sure to have your child at school on time. Beginning on time promotes good habits, while lateness disrupts classmates and teachers. Children who arrive late must go to the Main Office where they will be issued a late pass and escorted to their classroom by class monitors. The Chancellor's regulations require each student have 90% attendance in a school year. Children who are registered in the public school system are mandated to attend school daily. Attendance is one of the measures used to determine grade promotions.

## **Absences**

Please call the Main Office (212-678-2812) if the student will be absent. We ask all parents/guardians to keep children at home during the early infectious period of a cold, illness or communicable disease. All students who have been absent from school must bring a note to the classroom teacher from their parent(s)/guardian or doctor stating the reason for their absence. The teacher forwards the note to the Main Office where it is kept on file. All absences must be explained with a note. Please check the school calendar carefully so that you can plan your family vacations and appointments during school breaks. **Taking your child out of school for family trips is against New York City regulations and strongly discouraged; more importantly it is academically and socially disruptive to your child's learning.**

If your family needs to travel for an emergency, please go to the Main Office and fill out the required forms which include providing the school with travel itinerary, address and valid phone number where you can be reached. Also, send a note to the classroom teacher. Attendance is carefully documented in the Main Office and any extended period of absence from school can result in a parent/teacher conference or notification to the Administration for Children's Services (ACS).

You may request that the teacher put aside work for your child to make up on his/her return to school after an illness so that the teacher can keep the child current with schoolwork. Make sure that the teacher has adequate time to fulfill your request. Also, find a Homework Buddy or another child in the class who lives near you and set up a partnership so that he/she can backpack class work to your child.

## Required School Forms

The following forms are essential for school records and must be completed and returned prior to or during the first week of school:

**1) Blue Emergency Cards:** The cards are “backpacked” the first week of school and are very important in maintaining communication between home and school. Please fill out the required information and make sure all alternate numbers are up to date in case the school cannot reach you. If any phone numbers change, please notify the office immediately. Changes of address need to be reported to the Main Office along with a copy of a utility bill showing the new address.

**2) Physical Exam Forms:** Physical exam forms are required for pre-K and kindergarten. Children entering kindergarten are required to have a physical exam performed by the pediatrician after their fifth birthday. If the exam submitted at registration was performed prior to the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) birthday, another exam must be performed after the fifth birthday, and a new form submitted to the school nurse. In addition, 5<sup>th</sup> grade students are required to have a physical performed by their doctor, complete with clearance for gym activities, before going on to middle school.

**3) Transportation Request Forms:** This form must be submitted to the school when you register in the spring in order for your child to receive Yellow Bus service or a Metrocard (See “Transportation” section for eligibility requirements). Please stop by the Main Office during the first week of school to confirm your transportation request.

## Rules for Children in the Building

P.S. 9 students are responsible for knowing, understanding and following the rules and routines established by their teachers and the principal. A copy of the school rules will be sent home for your review and signature at the beginning of the school year. We also ask the parents/guardians and caregivers to help the school and cooperate in observing these rules when in the building or on school grounds with the children. The rules are as follows:

- ? No cell phones are to be used on school grounds;
- ? No gum or gum chewing;
- ? No hats, caps or playful head pieces can be worn in the school building;
- ? No bicycles, scooters, skates or wheeled shoes or toys;
- ? No running in the building, excluding during gym;
- ? All students are to read and sign a behavioral contract that will be reviewed and signed by the parent/guardian.

## School Yard Safety

Once students enter the schoolyard in the morning they will not be allowed to leave. Students must take all their belongings from the schoolyard. Anything left behind will be taken to Lost and Found. The adult in charge can confiscate any equipment that could possibly hurt other students. At the start of the day, all students immediately go to their class line in an orderly manner and wait for their teacher. Any confiscated equipment will be held in the Principal's office until the end of the day. At drop-off and pick-up -- footballs, hardballs, frisbees, roller blades, bikes, skateboards and dogs are not allowed. Also, do not ride or allow students to ride bikes, scooters, skates or wheeled shoes on the sidewalks around the P.S. 9 building before, during or after school hours. It is very dangerous with so many people going to and from school at the same time. Please be considerate of others on the sidewalk.

## Illness

If your child becomes ill or an emergency occurs during school hours, the parent/guardian will be contacted. Again, **it is extremely important that parents/guardians keep the information on blue emergency cards up to date**, and that alternate emergency numbers are provided should the school be unable to contact you directly.

All parents/guardians should understand that P.S. 9 staff, including the school nurse, is prohibited from doing any invasive procedures (including splinter removal!) and dispensing medications without prior approval.

1. Please check your child's temperature at home in the morning. If s/he is feverish, please keep them at home.
2. Please make sure to notify the school immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease (i.e. strep throat, scarlet fever, chicken pox), so that classmates and staff can be alerted.
3. Notify the teacher and nurse if your child has an ongoing medical condition, i.e. food allergies, asthma.

Prescribed medications for chronic health conditions (such as diabetes, asthma, food allergy, seizure disorder) can be administered by the school nurse during school hours following approval by the Department of Education and the Department of Health. Please speak with the Guidance Counselor or the School Nurse for further information to obtain a form for administering medication during school hours.

**Very important to remember—a new form must be filled out each school year.** If you don't receive a form in the mail over the summer, contact the Guidance Counselor or School Nurse.

Medicine prescribed for short periods of time (for treatment of a cold, earache, or strep throat, etc.) that must be administered during the school day, must be given by the PARENT or a designated adult. Do not send medicine to school with a note requesting

the nurse or teacher to administer it. Medicines such as Motrin, Tylenol, and Advil, and throat lozenges cannot be stored in the medical room, and may not be left for a child by a parent. The nurse can only administer pre-approved medicine. Try to schedule administering your child's medicine around school hours, such as at 7:30 and 3:30, for doses required every 8 hours.

Children diagnosed with contagious infections need a medical doctor's note stating the diagnosis and date the child may return to school. Contagious infections may include: strep throat, ringworm, scabies, conjunctivitis (pink eye), fifth disease and scarlet fever. If a child is prescribed crutches by a physician, parents need to notify the principal and school nurse before the child returns to school. They can attend school, but need to practice using the crutches up and down stairs before returning to school.

**Head lice** - If a case of lice is found in your child's classroom, a form letter is sent home with information on checking for lice, removing them, and treating lice infestations at home. Since head lice are extremely contagious, children who have an infestation must be kept home until all lice are completely removed from the hair. A child returning to school must be accompanied by an adult, and re-examined, by school personnel before they can re-enter class.

**If your child feels sick and becomes ill with any of the following: fever, vomiting, sore throat, unusual spots or rashes, diarrhea, loss of appetite, unusual behavior, conjunctivitis (pink eye), headache, stiff neck or infected skin patches, consult a doctor. Keep them comfortable at home or arrange other childcare and contact the school about the absence.**

We strongly recommend waiting 24 hours after symptoms subside before allowing the child to return to school. Upon return, a note from the doctor is required. Please be considerate of the other children, teachers and families. If your child develops an illness while at school, we will call you and ask you to take your child out of school. We strongly suggest that you consider plans for unexpected sick care for your child before he/she becomes ill.

## **Emergency At School**

Should your child become ill during the school day, the school nurse will call you and ask that you pick up your child as soon as possible. **In case we are not able to reach a parent/guardian or caregiver, we will contact the numbers on the blue emergency card as a back up.** If a serious emergency occurs at school, we first contact the parent/guardian, caregiver and emergency contacts, and the child's doctor. If the school is unable to reach any of the above-mentioned people, the child will be taken by ambulance, cab or car to the emergency room. In the meantime, all attempts will be made to continue contacting all the names on the blue emergency card.

In the event that the school needs to be evacuated, P.S. 9 students will be escorted to Brandeis High School (across the street) or P.S. 166 at 132 West 89<sup>th</sup> Street. If there is a matter of concern that causes all P.S. 9 students and staff to be removed from the premises, notes will be posted on the doors as to the designated pickup location and the PTA will be notified to assist in contacting the parents. In addition, call 311 for any information or updates. If you would like further information, a copy of the school safety evacuation plan is available for viewing in the Main Office.

## Discipline Code

At the beginning of every school year, New York City students will receive a copy of the Citywide Standards of Discipline and Intervention Measures and two copies of a Behavioral Contract which the parents/guardians are required to read together with the child. A signed copy must be returned to the child's teacher. These standards have been implemented to maintain a safe and supportive environment for all students in the school. Please read the documents and discuss them with your child. The documents are available in various languages that may be comfortable to the household. If a child's homework is late or incomplete on a regular basis, if there are signs of cheating, false or misleading information given to school personnel or if the child engages in or causes disruptive behavior in class, on the school bus or on school grounds, parents will be notified as to the appropriate steps the teacher, school and district must follow. If there is concern regarding a student, please bring it to the teacher's attention and/or the school administration so that it can be investigated immediately. Please read the discipline codes carefully.

## Holidays and Days Off

There are holidays and staff development sessions that are designated by the Department of Education as non-attendance days for students. Please keep track of these days and mark your calendar in advance. Use the following resources for a list of holidays when school will be closed:

- ? **P.S. 9 Bulletin Board-located at the main entrance**
- ? **P.S. 9 website ? [www.ps9.org](http://www.ps9.org)**
- ? **School Handouts**
- ? **NYC Department of Education Website? <http://schools.nyc.gov>**

## Weather Information / School Closings

By 6 a.m. on days with severe or unusual weather conditions, the Chancellor will decide to close or delay the opening of New York City public schools. School information will be announced on the following radio stations: WINS (1010 AM), WCBS (880 AM), as well as television --NY 1 (Channel 1 on Time Warner Cable). In the case of a two-hour opening delay, all students who arrive at the two hour delay time will be considered punctual and will not be marked late. On delayed days, regular school buses will run delayed two hours in the a.m. Regular dismissal times will be the same. Neither individual schools nor school districts can independently dismiss students early. Only the Chancellor can make that decision through radio and television announcements.

### **Remember the foul weather procedure for students arriving at school:**

Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2: Students go to the cafeteria for teacher pick-up  
Grades 3, 4 and 5: Students go to the auditorium for teacher pick-up

**In the event of extremely severe weather conditions (blizzard, torrential rain, etc.) Kindergarten children will be picked up in the classroom. 1<sup>st</sup> Grade students can be picked up in the auditorium. All other grades will be dismissed from the schoolyard as usual.**

## **Breakfast / Lunch Program**

The New York City Department of Education provides a healthy breakfast for students each morning at no charge.

Lunch in the cafeteria is available for everyone. Check the PTA monthly calendar or <http://www.opt-osfns.org/osfns/> for school lunch information. There are two consecutive lunch periods between 12:20 p.m. and 1:20 p.m. at which time all grades are served. Students in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades eat lunch during the first seating. Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades eat lunch during the second seating. Students eat lunch with their classmates at their assigned lunchroom table. After eating, children proceed directly to the schoolyard for outdoor play, weather permitting. During inclement weather (rain, ice, snow or temperature below 32° degrees) students may watch a video being shown in the auditorium or read or play quiet games. Children are supervised by school aides and assistant teachers.

*The school is happy to accept donations of grade/age appropriate videos and board games in good condition for students to enjoy during these periods.*

## **School Trips**

P.S. 9 students enjoy numerous field trips. Make sure to send in the required permission slip prior to the day of your child's class trip. Please check the permission slip if your child will need to bring a bag lunch and beverage (no glass bottles) from home that day. Parents are frequently invited to accompany their children's classes on trips as chaperones. The teacher and class parent will coordinate the specific number of chaperones needed for each trip and will rotate parent requests to give everyone an opportunity. Please remember—you are coming as a teacher's helper and will be assisting with the whole class or a small group. A parent or relative may not take the child's sibling out of another class to attend the trip with the student. Persons under the age of 18, whether or not related to the child, are not allowed to accompany any child's class on a trip in any capacity.

## Pre- Kindergarten

There are two half-day Pre-Kindergarten classes at P.S. 9. Each class lasts for 2 ½ hours a day--five days a week. The curriculum focuses on the importance of developing the whole child within their social, creative, physical and cognitive selves that encourages interaction with peers, expressing emotions, sharing, taking turns and enjoying independent activities. There is a teacher and educational assistant in class everyday. In addition, a family assistant and a social worker visit the class during the week. The room is divided into different centers designed to promote the children's social, cognitive, fine and gross motor skills. Some of the centers include: blocks, housekeeping, art, puzzles, a listening station and sand station. The students are served lunch in the class. Pre-K is considered part of the New York City system and attendance is carefully documented. Please send a note to the teacher if the child is ill or will be absent. A typical Pre-K day:

### A.M. Class

Arrival /Welcome and Hello  
Group Meets Together  
Story time  
Center time  
Playground  
Lunch  
Departure/Goodbye

### P.M. Class

Arrival / Welcome and Hello  
Lunch  
Group Meets Together  
Story time  
Center time  
Playground  
Departure/Goodbye

## Kindergarten

It's a big year of excitement and change --a time of "letting go" as the child starts a full day of school-- on the way to developing a greater sense of his/her own self. The kindergarten year starts off gradually with an orientation and phase-in period for the first three weeks of school. Information about the phase-in period will be sent to the families over the summer. As with all classes at P.S. 9, Kindergarten has a teacher and an assistant teacher working with the students. Kindergarten children are assigned homework beginning in February to instill a sense of responsibility and reinforce skills taught in school.

### A typical kindergartener's day:

Educational curriculum consisting of literacy, mathematics, science and social studies.  
Choice Time (the student selects an activity in the classroom)  
Snack (a healthy non-sugar, low sodium snack sent from home)  
Lunch  
Recess Time (usually in the small playground)  
Rest / Quiet Time  
Group Work

The New York State and New York City curriculum is taught in all kindergarten classes with an emphasis on two general themes: studying families and the exploration of the five senses. Kindergartners also begin chess instruction as enrichment through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

# **SUPPORT AND CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

## **Teachers in our School**

PS 9 uses the Open Market Transfer Plan, which allows the school to form a committee of administrators, teachers, union representatives, and a parent representative to observe the process. The committee establishes hiring criteria, formulates interview questions, interviews prospective candidates and observes demonstration lessons. This is a time-consuming process that requires hard work and dedication by the committee members. Most importantly, this format has allowed P.S. 9 to select staff members who have philosophies consistent with those of the school's. It also ensures that a new staff member cannot come on board in September without having first been interviewed by the school.

## **Coordination of Faculty**

Teachers work cooperatively within and across grade levels. Grade teachers meet regularly to discuss curriculum and share teaching methods and materials. Teachers in each grade appoint one faculty member to serve as Grade Leader for the school year.

## **Parent Coordinator**

The Parent Coordinator is the parents' first step in their search for information about PS 9; the New York City school system in general; or for issues or concerns which need to be addressed at the school. She is available during school hours, and some night and weekend hours via direct phone contact. The Parent Coordinator is a staff professional who works with her colleagues to solve problems within the school.

## **The Guidance Counselor**

The role of the school Guidance Counselor is many faceted. The counselor is available to students, parents, teachers and school administrators to promote a supportive environment in which all children can learn.

The school counselor has the responsibility of providing individual and group counseling to students mandated for counseling as part of an Individual Education Plan (I.E.P.). Assisting students who are at risk or in crisis is another important aspect of the counselor's work. It is also the role of the counselor to attend Educational Planning Conferences (EPC), Committee on Special Education (C.S.E.) reviews and other conferences that involve students. The counselor is able to support a wide range of students to reach their social, emotional and educational goals through meetings with special groups such as the Student Council, guided discussion groups and group counseling in the classroom.

Communicating with parents is an important part of the counselor's focus. Developing effective parent/teacher communication, making recommendations and observations,

crisis intervention, consultation with outside agencies and enhancing the developmental growth of all children are major components of the counselor's role.

The counselor provides information to parents, students and teachers to assist with the Middle School Choice process. Meetings are held for both parents and students to ensure equitable access to educational opportunities. Special attention is given to help students practice good interview skills. The counselor remains involved in helping students and parents through the process throughout much of the school year.

In addition, the administration works closely with the counselor to positively impact the student body and to ensure a safe and successful education experience for all students. The counselor consults with both the principal and the Instructional Team on an ongoing basis as well as participates in the weekly Pupil Personnel Committee (PPC) meetings in which children who are experiencing academic or behavioral difficulties are discussed.

Fostering a positive and cooperative school community that promotes the school's mission is an integral part of the counselor's goals.

## **Instructional Support Committee (ISC)**

The ISC is composed of a Social Worker and a School Psychologist. It is a multidisciplinary team assigned to P.S. 9 to conduct comprehensive evaluations for the Committee on Special Educations (CSE). ISC evaluates children referred to the CSE in order to determine if the student has a handicap that warrants a Special Education program or related service.

The purpose of the evaluation is to gain a precise understanding of the student's developmental, intellectual, social and academic functioning, given the context of his/her cultural environment. This information is then translated by the team into educational interventions to enable the student to function optimally in an educational setting.

A parent, teacher or anyone involved with the student can request a referral to the CSE. Prior to the CSE referral, this request needs to be brought up and discussed at the Pupil Personnel Committee (PPC). The PPC meets once a week and consists of the Principal, the Guidance Counselors, the school social worker, and the school psychologist.

The ISC schedule is available in the Main Office. The phone number is: (212) 678-2812, EXT 1100.

## **Special Education**

A strong emphasis is placed on integrating special education services into the fabric of PS 9. Specialized instruction and/or special services (speech, OT, PT, guidance, etc.) are offered to students that have an IEP (Individual Education Plan). This continuum of services is implemented in grades K-5.

## English as a Second Language

P.S. 9 has a freestanding **ESL** (English as a Second Language) program for grades K-5. Approximately 30 students from more than fifteen countries are currently entitled to ESL services. Their native languages include: Spanish, Haitian Creole, Chinese, Japanese, Serbo-Croatian, Russian, Portuguese, French, Bengali, and Urdu. Through a variety of methods which tap into the "K.T.A.V." (Kinesthetic, Tactile, Auditory, Visual) learning modalities, students' English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing is developed. In addition, multicultural appreciation is a springboard for learning, promoting self-confidence and respect for others.

## Literacy and Math Support

P.S. 9 supports literacy and math intervention programs which assist children who are not meeting grade level standards. These programs include small group instruction, guided and strategic lessons, one-to-one instruction, and morning academic programs. These interventions are supplemental to classroom instruction.

## Curriculum Overview

P.S. 9 provides a mixture of integrated and differentiated curriculum that is strongly enriched with instruction in computers, art, and music for all grades. It promotes high academic achievement with challenging content for all of its students. Its academic programs allow each student to learn in a cognitively and developmentally appropriate environment. The cluster curriculum enrichment program is integrated through all programs and unifies the diverse population of the school. A strong network of support services and the school leadership team contribute to P.S. 9's success in fostering a cohesive and cooperative educational community.

The **Literacy and Math curricula** are sequentially developed and aligned across grades. The school utilizes a reading/writing workshop approach. Classroom libraries contain trade books for leveled independent reading and guided reading. Additionally, the school has a guided, leveled reading resource library.

All Pre-K, Kindergarten and Grade 1 classrooms are supplied with shared reading materials (big book libraries). All classrooms have book boxes to aid in the leveling and categorization of books. Upper grade level classroom teachers incorporate novels, poetry and non-fiction from a variety of sources as part of a content-based literacy program.

Publishing Celebrations are planned and organized by the teachers after a unit of study. These academic events are a way for the community to share and celebrate student work and/or projects. Some of the celebrations include families. It is important to remember that these are academic in nature and highlighting students' efforts and accomplishments. P.S. 9 does not permit food at these events.

The **Mathematics** program is aligned with New York State and City standards. Constructivist thinking is supported through Everyday Mathematics and problem solving strategies. On-going professional development helps to support this program.

All PS 9 classes are utilizing an inquiry-based, hands-on approach to the standards-based **Science** curriculum. A combination of FOSS and INVESTIGATIONS materials support our program. Additionally, an on-site science coordinator, funded through the PTA, serves as a facilitator one day per week.

The **Social Studies** themes for all grades are supported through trade books, research, curriculum-related trips, textbooks, as well as teacher-generated units and collaboration across grade levels. Teachers integrate the social studies curriculum into their classrooms using an interdisciplinary approach. Project Arts funding has provided major support to social studies theme development. Staff development, museum and other related trips occur throughout the year. The structures for our current program in social studies originated through an Annenberg Grant.

## Enrichment

The **Arts** transcend language barriers, ethnic differences, and standardized levels of academic achievement. For this reason, the curriculum is enriched by an integrated arts program designed to complement and strengthen the academics through affiliations with cultural institutions such as: The New York City Ballet, Carnegie Hall and The School of Visual Arts. P.S. 9's close proximity to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The American Museum of Natural History, and Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts allows teachers to build the arts into the students' everyday experiences.

### **Clusters:**

Teachers in New York City are by contract entitled to a certain amount of time during the school day to prepare lessons. During this "prep" time, students are engaged in enrichment classes, known as "clusters". Clusters are taught by Department of Education teachers who work with all P.S. 9 students. The scheduling of clusters varies from class to class and from grade level to grade level. Every P.S. 9 student will receive experience in all cluster areas by the end of his/her time at P.S. 9. Our cluster program includes classes in Physical and Health Education, Music, Art, Computer, Technology and Library. Our cluster schedule is enhanced and enriched by experiences in instrumental music (grades 3, 4 and 5), and ORFF Movement/Instrumental Music.

### **Spanish:**

All students in grades K-5 will be offered instruction in learning the Spanish language.

### **Chess:**

P.S. 9 students receive chess instruction starting in kindergarten. The chess program at P.S. 9 is one of the strongest in the city. In addition to the availability of after- school chess instruction, students also have the opportunity to compete in chess tournaments throughout the year.

## Gym

Students participate in gym once a week and go outside for recess on good weather days. Please make sure your child is dressed comfortably on these days. Children will need **sneakers** on gym days, or they will not be allowed to participate. No wheeled shoes are allowed at any time in the school building or on school property.

# HOME & SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

New York City Information (schools, parking, weather)	311
PS 9 Main Office (between 11am-2 pm for non emergencies)	212- 678-2812 / 2813
PS 9 FAX Number	212-873-4681
Afterschool Program	212-787-1200 / 212-873-0088(fax)
Afterschool Program Website	<a href="http://renaissanceafterschool.org">http://renaissanceafterschool.org</a>
Atlantic Bus Company	718-585-8592
Custodian's Office	212-501-8151
CSD3 Office	212-678-5857
Department of Education Website	<a href="http://schools.nyc.gov">http://schools.nyc.gov</a>
PS 9 Website	<a href="http://www.ps9.org">www.ps9.org</a>
Guidance Counselor	212-678-2812, EXT. 2190
School Nurse	212-579-0752
PTA E-mail	<a href="http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NewsfromPS9PTA/">http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NewsfromPS9PTA/</a>
Parent Coordinator	212-628-2812, EXT.1101 Cell: 347-563-4382
Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT)	718-784-3313
School Psychologist	212-678-2812, EXT.1102

## **School History**

P.S. 9 originally opened as an Episcopal Church School in the early 1800's. On May 22, 1826 it was incorporated into the Public School Society. Three years later, for the sum of \$250, land was purchased in the midst of green fields and market gardens on 82nd Street between 10th & 11th Avenues. A one-story clapboard schoolhouse was erected and opened a year later to 50 students. In 1890 the schoolhouse was razed and a new building, complete with electricity and a ventilation system, was built on the site.

On March 12, 1965, at a cost of \$2,400,000, the existing P.S. 9 building at 100 West 84th Street was opened to 800 children from Pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade. It was named in honor of John Jasper, who came to P.S. 9 as a teacher in 1857 and served as its principal from 1867 until 1897, when he became Assistant Superintendent of Schools and then Borough Associate Superintendent of Schools for Manhattan and the Bronx in 1898.

Sarah Anderson was a dedicated and well-loved paraprofessional at P.S. 9 who shared her care and talents throughout the school district. Mrs. Anderson was founder of the District Parent Association Executive Committee, the first President of the Martin Luther King, Jr. High School, chairwoman of the District Title 1 Committee, UFT Chapter Chairperson and paraprofessional delegate to the UFT. P.S. 9 was named the Sarah Anderson School in her honor in March of 1981.

Finally, in 1993, under the stewardship of Principal Dr. Joan Gutkin, P.S. 9 received magnet school funding to champion the enrichment of P.S. 9 students in music and art. As a result, the school is also known today as the Sarah Anderson School for Music and Art.

## **Parent Involvement**

Along with all the essential components that make a public school successful, it is extremely important to have a motivated and involved parent body. Parent involvement at PS 9 is a key to its success. The parents in our school realize the importance of making a contribution that not only benefits their individual child, but all the students. Our students come from all over the city and from different parts of the world, with parents that work in a variety of occupations. Each experience that is brought forth is a wonderful and unique contribution to our community.

They are many opportunities for parents to become involved in the fabric of PS 9:

**Parent Teacher Association** - Every PS 9 parent is automatically a member of the PS 9 PTA. But other opportunities exist to become involved in PTA activities. The Executive Board is elected in for a one-year term from July 1<sup>st</sup> – June 30<sup>th</sup>. The officers of the PTA include: Co-Presidents, 3 Vice Presidents, 1 Recording Secretaries, 1 Corresponding Secretary and ½ Treasurers. In addition, there are various Committees such as Membership and Parent Involvement, Budget, Fundraising, Hospitality, Communications, Class Parent Liaison, Grants, and Political Action. See the separate PTA Addendum Handbook for more information or visit [www.ps9.org](http://www.ps9.org)

**The School Leadership Team** consists of parents, P.S. 9 staff and administrators who formulate a Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) as well as a budget for our school. School Leadership Teams are mandated by the Department of Education. This group is responsible for developing school-based educational strategies and ensuring that resources are available for implementing those strategies. SLT members serve as the communication link within the school and to the greater school community. They evaluate the school's educational program, focusing on the goal of continuous student achievement and improvement to reach the school-stated mission. The P.S. 9 School Leadership Team meets one to two times each month. Meetings are open to the entire school community and minutes from the meetings are posted on the PTA bulletin board in the school's entrance hall.

**Class Parents** – These parents are the first level of support in the school. Class Parents work closely with the teacher to communicate information to the parents in their classrooms, and organize events involving the students and teachers. Also these parents report and discuss issues or concerns to the P.S. 9 Class Parent Liaison who

represents our parents' concerns to the principal. These positions (usually two per class) are selected at the Meet the Teacher Night in early fall of the school year.

**Become certified to be a Parent Volunteer** – “Learning Leaders” is a Department of Education-recognized volunteer training and certifying group for P.S. 9. The three 2-hour training sessions can qualify parents to volunteer within the building during the school day, i.e. helping out in the library. The training sessions are available on-site in the fall.

**Accompanying class trips** - P.S. 9 students go on many interesting class trips during the school year, and parents are invited to go along as a chaperone. It is a great way to share an event with your child, as well as a good opportunity to get to know his/her classmates and teacher better.

## **P.S. 9 PTA Email Group**

The school maintains an email group that sends emails from P.S. 9 and the school's parent coordinator. To access the PS 9 News Group, type in : <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NewsfromPS9PTA/> ---from there you can join the Yahoo group to receive the group's news. All new parents should receive an invitation to join the News Group over the Summer or in early Fall.

## **Communication With The Faculty**

P.S. 9 takes great pride in the quality of its teachers and staff and the level of commitment they offer the students of the school. Setting up a good line of communication between parents and teachers helps make for a successful school year. Teachers work cooperatively across grade levels and meet regularly to discuss curriculum and share teaching methods and materials. Teachers in each grade appoint one faculty member to serve as Grade Leader for the school year.

If you have questions/concerns/suggestions about a school-related issue, the following steps may be taken:

- 1) For class phone numbers or classroom activity information-- Contact the class parent or other parents/students on the class phone list.
- 2) For matters of concern regarding your child's classroom work performance or problems in class -- contact the teacher via backpack note or leave a note at the reception desk in the Main Office. The teacher will try to contact you within 24 hours. Please leave a current phone number to reach you within that time period.
- 3) For matters regarding school problems or parental concerns -- Contact the Parent Coordinator at 212-678-2812, EXT. 1101 or leave a note at the reception desk in the Main Office.
- 4) Contact the PTA chairs for committee related ideas, suggestions, volunteering or concerns.
- 5) Contact the Principal after all levels have been contacted or if your concern is more immediate and needs administrative level input.

Please keep your communications with school staff respectful. All personnel are here to assist in ways that benefit the students. If you have a positive remark about a teacher, staff member, activity or event, please tell us. We like to hear good news.

## Parent / Teacher Meetings and Conferences

Parent - Teacher conferences occur in late fall and early spring. At these conferences, report cards will be discussed and distributed. Parents must sign and return them to the teacher within one week. Teachers will contact the parents about setting up a conference time. Scheduled times will either be in the afternoon or evening; please select a time that works best for you.

If more time is necessary, parents may contact the teacher for a meeting or telephone conference to discuss a particular issue by sending a note in your child's backpack or leaving a message in the Main Office.

## Folders and Assignments

You probably will hear the term "backpacking" or "to back pack". It simply means that information or correspondence will be placed in the student's backpack to be relayed to and from school. **After every school day, parents/guardians are advised to check the student's backpack for any notes from the teacher, assignments or necessary school information.** Also, every student will have a **red pocket folder** for corresponding back and forth with the teacher. Red folders are checked every morning by the teacher and should be opened every evening at home.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is an extension of schoolwork and is an integral part of each child's education. Through homework, children further develop a sense of responsibility and independence. Homework reinforces the classroom learning experience by following up on concepts and skills acquired during the day. Homework also extends the learning experience as children complete long-term research and special projects. A combination of daily practice and long term projects will be assigned during the school year.

Assignments vary in the length of time needed for completion. Research projects, dioramas, artistic renderings and book reports are examples of long-term assignments. Children are given time lines and completion dates well in advance of the due dates. The time needed to complete short term or one night assignments will vary as each child works at his or her own pace. Teachers will keep families informed of curriculum, activities and upcoming events through newsletters. The following are general guidelines for one night assignments:

- Grade K 0-10 minutes (commences in late spring)
- Grade 1 15-30 minutes
- Grade 2 30-45 minutes
- Grade 3 30-45 minutes
- Grade 4 45-60 minutes
- Grade 5 60 minutes

**If your child is spending more time on short-term assignments than these guidelines suggest, please notify your child's teacher.**

One of our goals is for our students to develop an appreciation for reading, whether it is for pleasure or for gathering information. We encourage all of our students to read independently each night. Grades K-1 can have quiet one-on-one reading time with an adult.

## **Afterschool Program**

P.S. 9 has a very popular afterschool program offering a wide range of choices and scheduling options. In addition to a fascinating variety of Enrichment Classes offered Monday through Friday, Homework Supervision is also taught by P.S. 9 teachers. There are two sessions daily; the first runs from 3:30 to 4:30 pm and the second from 4:45 to 5:45 pm. You can register your child for one or both sessions as many days a week as you prefer. The programs fill up quickly, so be sure to register your child as soon as possible. For more information, please contact the Afterschool Office (Room 117) at 212-787-1200 or visit the website at <http://renaissanceafterschool.org>

## **Other Afterschool Programs**

The following afterschool centers pick up children at P.S. 9 5 days a week. Parents must contact them directly if interested:

### **The Jewish Community Center in Manhattan**

334 Amsterdam Avenue (at 76<sup>th</sup> Street)  
New York, NY 10023  
Phone: 646-505-4445 Fax: 212-799-0254  
[www.jccmanhattan.org](http://www.jccmanhattan.org)

### **St. Matthew's & St. Timothy's Neighborhood Center**

26 West 84<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10024  
Phone: 212-362-6750, EXT. 316/317  
[Gcrichlow@smstny.org](mailto:Gcrichlow@smstny.org)

### **Strycker's Bay Neighborhood Council, Inc.**

61 West 87<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10024  
Phone: 212-874-7272 Fax: 212-874-2730  
[info@stryckersbay.org](mailto:info@stryckersbay.org)

### **Corbin's Crusaders Sports Club**

424 West End Avenue, Suite 5E  
New York, NY 10024  
Phone: 212-875-8174 Fax: 212-579-7212  
[www.CorbinsCrusaders.com](http://www.CorbinsCrusaders.com)

### **Uptown Athletic Club**

1636 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10128  
Phone: 866-321-8221

### **YMCA of Greater New York**

32 West 92<sup>nd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10025  
Phone: 347-563-5314

## Stay Informed

Check your child's backpack and lunchbox daily for all messages and announcements that are sent home. Also take note there are many other ways to stay in touch with school happenings:

- ? News at Nine—school newsletter
- ? Bulletin Board--- check the bulletin board along the front entrance hall for information on activities and meetings, including PTA, district and city event notices.
- ? [www.ps9.org](http://www.ps9.org)
- ? <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NewsfromPS9PTA/>

## THE PARENT'S ROLE

1. Provide a regular working space such as a desk or table. A quiet environment without T.V. and other distractions is suggested.
2. Provide necessary materials: paper, pen or pencils, library or resource books, markers, scissors and art materials.
3. Establish a schedule or routine for working on homework assignments such as before dinner, after a snack, etc.
4. Arrange an appropriate schedule of extra curricular activities so that your child has time to complete assignments without undue pressure or stress.
5. Have discussions, take trips to museums and parks, or visit the library to enrich concepts discussed in class.
6. Assist your child with the memorization of facts and rote learning such as math facts and spelling words.
7. Assist with projects by helping your child locate resources. Children in grades one and two may need help reading difficult material. Please keep in mind that **all** projects should be your child's work. You may wish to help your child practice oral presentations.
8. Most short term assignments are given to reinforce and review classwork. Your child should work independently on these types of assignments. It does not benefit the child's learning process if the work is done for them.
9. Parents of first and second graders might help their child think about how to arrive at answers, but parents should not give their child the answer. Parents might give minor help and at the same time keep abreast of what is being taught in the classroom. Homework should only represent your child's effort and it helps a teacher know what areas to work on individually.
10. Parents are encouraged to read nightly with their child. Even older children like to listen to stories read aloud. The sharing of literature should be a joyful interaction between you and your child.

## **TRANSPORATION**

If you live within the school zone and walk to school, you are not eligible for school transportation. Only students in the G&T program or coming to school through the “No Child Left Behind Act” may be eligible for public school transportation. The New York City Department of Education has established rules and regulations regarding school transportation. Your child may receive one type of service only for round-trip transportation to and from school. Also, please note transportation eligibility and changes can be reviewed after Grade 2.

If your child is in grades **K, 1 or 2** and resides **less than ½ mile from school**, he or she is eligible for [half fare on Public Transportation](#).

If your child is in grades **K, 1 or 2** and resides **½ mile or more from school**, he or she is eligible for a [Yellow School Bus](#) or [free fare on Public Transportation](#).

If your child is in grades **3, 4 or 5** and resides **at least ½ mile and less than one mile from school**, he or she is eligible for [half fare on Public Transportation](#).

If your child is in grades **3, 4 or 5** and resides **1 mile or more from school**, he or she is eligible for [a Yellow School Bus](#) or [free fare on Public Transportation](#).

Check the Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT) at [www.opt-osfns.org](http://www.opt-osfns.org) for further information.

## **METROCARD**

Student Metrocards are valid on NYC buses and subways between 5:30 am and 8:30 pm, Monday thru Friday only on days when school is in session. Students are issued either a full- or a half-fare Metrocard, which is determined by the Office of Pupil Transportation computer system and based on your home address and grade level. Half-fare Metrocards are good on buses only. Metrocards are sent to classroom teachers for distribution and are backpacked home. Eligible students receive two Metrocards a year—the first in September is valid for the first half of the school year. The second card will be issued in February. Students must always print their name on the white strip on the back before they use it. Also, please make a note of the card’s number and keep it in a safe place.

If the Metrocard is lost or stolen, please send a note to the P.S. 9 Main Office as soon as possible so the student can get a replacement. Getting a new card may take some time, so make sure the student has another way of getting to and from school until the replacement card arrives. Do not allow anyone else to use the card.

## **YELLOW SCHOOL BUS**

Applying for yellow bus service does not ensure that you will receive bus service. All bus stop requests are submitted to the Office of Pupil Transportation for approval. These requests are reviewed by the OPT who use a mileage formula to determine the availability of creating new bus stops. New bus requests are submitted at the end of the summer. Please be patient during

the first week of school. You will be notified as to the status of whether your bus stop request is approved or denied.

**If you have requested yellow bus service, you will not be able to change to a student Metrocard during the school year unless you move after September. Proof of address (Con Edison bill) is always required when moving to a new address.**

Confirm Yellow Bus Service: You are required to confirm yellow bus service after drop-off during the first two weeks of school. "YELLOW BUS INFORMATION CARDS" that are sent home are completed by the parent after confirming that the information is correct. Cards should be kept in the child's backpack. We suggest you laminate these cards and tie a string to them so the child can wear them for the first few weeks of bus service.

Yellow School Bus service to P.S. 9 is provided by the Atlantic Bus Company. Your child will get bus service to and from a designated Yellow Bus stop within ¼ mile of your residence only if you reside in Manhattan.

If you have requested and receive Yellow School Bus service, you will be notified of your designated bus stop ("STOP" number) along with 2 "RUN" Numbers (BUS # M\_\_\_\_\_ am & BUS # M\_\_\_\_\_ pm) which identify your child's morning bus and afternoon bus. **Make sure that you record these numbers carefully**, and have them on hand when you need information from the bus company or the school about bus service.

Yellow Bus Service starts:

- the first day of school for Grades 1 through 5 for P.S. 9 students who were on a bus last year
- the second day of school for new entrants to Grades 1 through 5 \*
- the middle to the end of second week of school for K students \*

\*unless a new stop has to be created which can delay availability for a couple of weeks.

Please call **Atlantic Bus Company @ 718-585-8592** if you are experiencing problems. If the child's bus is late arriving for pick-up or drop off, **please do not call the school**. Call the Atlantic Bus Company directly and have your child's bus number, stop and other information available.

Students who ride the school bus are asked to maintain proper discipline and respect for all those riding the bus. If a child is reprimanded for behavioral offenses, that child can unfortunately be suspended from using the bus. This can be repeated if necessary.

# SOCIAL MATTERS

## Birthday and Holiday Parties

Classroom birthday celebrations are limited to one treat (cupcake, fruit, pretzels) per child. Party favors are not permitted and will be sent home. Candles are not permitted. The school cannot accommodate lavish parties for students during school time due to individual student dietary concerns as well as pest control issues. If your child has allergies or any dietary restrictions, please inform the classroom teacher so that they can inform you in advance of upcoming celebrations.

**Holiday Parties** --- Because P.S. 9 has such a diverse student body, religious and other holiday parties are not celebrated in school and we feel these joyous occasions are best celebrated with family and close friends.

**Valentine's Day**—If the child is not bringing in Valentines for the entire class, we ask that students and parents support our policy of having these notes mailed to the recipients' homes.

**Halloween** – This day is not celebrated during school hours. Please do not allow your child to bring in masks or wear costumes, decorated head pieces, etc. to school.

## After School Activities and Playdates

Only those children scheduled for a particular bus are allowed to ride that bus. Visitors, playdates, etc. are not permitted on the bus because of insurance regulations. If you have arranged for your child to go on a playdate with another child directly after school, you must **send** a note to the classroom teacher stating the name of the person who will be picking up your child for a playdate that day and a contact number where you can be reached.

## Gifts

The exchange of gifts between students is not permitted during school hours or on school grounds. Holiday gift giving to teachers should be handled as per the DOE Chancellor's Regulations online at [www.nycenet.edu](http://www.nycenet.edu). Please consult them for any and all NYC public school related information.

## NEIGHBORHOOD ACTIVITIES

P.S. 9 is in a great location for activities after school, as well as having many "parent-friendly" sites nearby if you find yourself with a bit of time in between. Looking to do things in and around the city check out <http://gocitykids.parentsconnect.com/>

For after school snacks, there are numerous delis, diners, and restaurants around school on Columbus and Amsterdam avenues and on Broadway.

### PARK PLAYGROUNDS

#### **Spector Playground**

85th @ CPW Central Park

#### **Mariners Gate Playground**

84th @ CPW Central Park

#### **Diana Ross Playground**

81st @ CPW Central Park

#### **83rd Street Playground**

83rd @ Riverside Riverside Park

### MUSEUMS

#### **American Museum of Natural History**

CPW/79th (212) 769-5100

#### **Children's Museum of Manhattan**

212 W. 83rd (212) 721-1234

#### **NY Historical Society**

77th/CPW-Columbus

### POST OFFICE

#### **Planetarium Station**

83rd/Amsterdam-Columbus

### BOOKS

#### **New York Public Library**

St. Agnes Branch 444 Amsterdam/81st-82nd

#### **Barnes and Noble**

Broadway/82nd-83rd

### SCHOOL / ART SUPPLIES

#### **Staples**

Broadway/81st-82<sup>nd</sup>

#### **Price Wise**

81<sup>st</sup> & Broadway

#### **Duane Reade**

Broadway/83rd-84th