



PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026

**Nysmith School
13625 EDS Drive
Herndon, Virginia 20171
Main Office: (703) 713-3332
Fax: (703) 713-3336**

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GENERAL INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NUMBERS & INFORMATION

Address:	The Nysmith School Inc. 13625 EDS Drive Herndon, VA 20171-3413
Main Office Phone:	(703) 713-3332; for daily status, press 2
FAX:	(703) 713-3336
Front Office Email	FrontOffice@Nysmith.com

WELCOME TO THE NYSMITH SCHOOL!

We're so glad you're here and look forward to partnering with you on your child's educational journey. Below you'll find helpful information about our school community, programs, and policies. We hope this guide answers many of your questions and helps you feel right at home.

Finding us is easy! From the Dulles Toll Road, take exit 9A for Route 28 South. Take the second off-ramp, which is McLearn Road. At the second street, turn right onto EDS Drive (both the first and second streets are named EDS Drive). The Nysmith School is the first building on the right. Visitor parking is available in the first lot on the left.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Nysmith, we believe that learning should be a joyful, enriching experience. We are deeply committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where children feel comfortable being themselves and excited to learn.

Our goal is to inspire students to think critically, solve problems creatively, and explore their passions. Through hands-on experiences and thoughtful guidance, we help children grow not just academically, but emotionally, socially, and physically.

We cherish the individuality of each child and strive to provide opportunities that help them flourish. Our community is made up of students from diverse cultural, religious, and national backgrounds, and we celebrate the unique contributions each family brings to our school.

GOALS

At The Nysmith School, we aim to:

- Help every child reach their fullest potential
- Support self-paced learning aligned with individual strengths
- Provide daily academic challenges in a joyful and stimulating environment
- Foster meaningful peer connections that support emotional and social growth

- Offer an accelerated, well-rounded curriculum
- Maintain low student-to-teacher ratios for personalized attention
- Employ educators with diverse experiences and a passion for teaching
- Integrate logical thinking into everyday learning
- Build a strong academic foundation that prepares students for future success

OUR FACULTY

Our teachers are the heart of Nysmith. Each one is a dedicated professional who brings not only academic expertise but also compassion, patience, and a love of learning. With prior teaching experience and advanced degrees, our educators understand how to support each child's unique learning path.

To ensure our classrooms remain dynamic and nurturing, teachers participate in ongoing training and professional development. Our staff also completes background checks and health screenings, maintaining the highest standards of safety and care.

SCHOOL POLICIES

SCHOOL HOURS

- **Homeroom:** 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM
- **Preschool Program:** 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM
- **Kindergarten – 8th Grade Program:** 8:30 AM – 3:00 PM
- **Morning Extended Care:** 7:00 AM – 8:00 AM
- **Preschool Afternoon Extended Care:** 2:30 PM – 6:30 PM
- **Kindergarten – 8th Afternoon Extended Care:** 3:00 PM – 6:30 PM

ADMISSIONS

We're excited to welcome new families to our school! Throughout the academic year, we host monthly Open Houses and offer private tours. In the summer, tours are available by appointment.

For Current Year/Mid-Year Admission (2025–2026):

Admission is offered based on space availability. We are always happy to talk with prospective families and explore possibilities.

Preschool & Kindergarten Applicants:

- Completed online application
- Application fee
- School progress reports (if applicable)
- Teacher recommendation (if applicable)
- A full-day student visit (for mid-year admission)

Note: No intellectual testing is required for Preschool or Kindergarten applicants.

Grades 1–8 Applicants:

- Completed online application
- Application fee
- Copy of an intellectual test indicating a high average, upper extreme, superior, or very superior IQ. (Accepted tests include CogAT, NNAT, WISC V, WPPSI IV)
- Report cards from the past two years
- Teacher recommendation
- Two-day student visit

For Next Year Admission (2026–2027):

Applications open on October 1. When in-person visits are not possible, we offer a warm virtual introduction with one of our School Directors—an opportunity to get to know your child and answer your questions.

To complete enrollment, we'll need:

- A signed Enrollment Agreement
- Tuition arrangements
- A copy of your child's birth certificate or passport
- Updated Emergency Care Form
- Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form

A SAFE, SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

From the very beginning, we teach children how to build healthy relationships, manage emotions, and respect others. Safety—both physical and emotional—is our top priority.

We promote positive behavior and address conflicts with compassion and guidance. From learning to “use your words” in preschool to discussing peer pressure and digital citizenship in middle school, our students develop essential life skills that serve them well beyond the classroom.

Character Education classes are part of our curriculum from kindergarten through 8th grade. These weekly sessions provide students with the tools and support to make good choices and feel confident in themselves. Every child knows that they are valued, heard, and supported by a caring adult.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The Nysmith School is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where every student and family is valued. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or family structure in any of our educational policies, admissions processes, financial aid, or school programs.

Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to, racism, sexism, ableism, religious intolerance, and anti-Semitism. Acts of

anti-Semitism, along with all other forms of bias, are in direct opposition to our values and our mission to provide a joy-filled, world-class education.

We expect and require all members of the Nysmith community, students, staff, and families, to contribute to a culture of respect, empathy, and belonging, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. The Nysmith School is committed to ensuring a school environment free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, military status, disability, and actual or perceived shared ancestry. The Nysmith School's school-wide non-discrimination policies and procedures prohibits discrimination and harassment in all academic, extra-curricular and school-sponsored activities.
2. The Nysmith School's nondiscrimination policies and procedures includes a prohibition on anti-Semitism based on actual or perceived national or ethnic origin or shared ancestry.
3. Consistent with Chapter 471 of the Acts of Assembly and Executive Order 48 (May 19, 2025), the Nysmith School has adopted as part of these nondiscrimination policies the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance ("IHRA") definition of anti-Semitism including its contemporary examples, <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>. When applying the nondiscrimination policy to evaluate complaints of anti-Semitism, the Nysmith School shall consider the IHRA Definition of anti-Semitism including its contemporary examples to the extent that they are useful as evidence of discriminatory intent, without diminishing or infringing any right protected under the Constitution and laws of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Conduct that falls within the IHRA definition including its examples will, provided the required elements under the policy are met, constitute prohibited harassment or discrimination in violation of Nysmith's nondiscrimination policy.
4. The Nysmith School will investigate all reports of discrimination and harassment, and the Nysmith School's nondiscrimination policies will be enforced equally, applying a single standard for all students. The Nysmith School will take appropriate remedial action to eliminate discriminatory conduct, to prevent its recurrence, and to address its effects on the any other affected individuals.
5. Students and their families are encouraged to immediately report incidents of discrimination and harassment. The Nysmith School, its administration, staff and students will not take any action to punish or intimidate students or families who report discrimination and harassment in good faith, or who participate in an investigation or related proceedings, and will take prompt and effective action to stop any form of retaliation that occurs as a result of a report of discriminatory conduct.

6. Staff members are required to promptly report all incidents of discrimination and harassment of which they become aware, regardless of whether a formal report and/or complaint has been submitted.
7. A working committee has been formed and is charged with the authority and responsibility for evaluating and investigating all reports or complaints of suspected or alleged discrimination or harassment, and for determining the disposition of such complaints or reports as warranted under these nondiscrimination policies and procedures and applicable law. The working committee shall be comprised of three members, at least one of whom is a parent of a Nysmith student, who is not employed by or receiving any form of compensation or benefits from the School. The names and contact information of the working committee members are available to all members of the Nysmith community on the School's website.
8. Complaints of discrimination may be submitted to the Nysmith School or directly to the members of the working committee, and may be made in writing, by email, by telephone or videoconference, in an in-person meeting or in any other way. The working committee shall inform the Nysmith School of all such reports. Complaints of discrimination based on a protected characteristic will be expeditiously evaluated and investigated. Upon the submission of a complaint, the person who has submitted the complaint shall be advised of the availability of interim measures, including separation of students, safety plans and accommodations.
9. The Nysmith School has engaged Crystal L. Tyler, an independent monitor who will review the working committee's investigation and disposition of each complaint of discrimination to ensure the evaluation, investigation and disposition meet the requirements of the School's nondiscrimination policies and procedures, and applicable law. Following the monitor's review of each complaint and the response thereto, the monitor will provide the School with a written assessment of whether the working committee's review, investigation and disposition of the complaint conformed to the School's nondiscrimination policies and procedures and applicable law. Based on the monitor's assessment, the School may suspend the working committee's disposition, and direct the working committee to take further action on its review and disposition of the complaint. The family and/or student who submitted the complaint of discrimination may request from the monitor a copy of the monitor's written assessment, which will be provided at the later of: (i) five business days from the date of the family and/or student's request, and (ii) one week from final disposition of the complaint.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PROCESS

The Nysmith School is a diverse, inclusive community that both celebrates and cherishes the unique backgrounds of all our students, families, and staff. Unkind comments, harassment, discrimination, or any conduct that undermines our shared values will not be tolerated. These behaviors may take the form of verbal or nonverbal actions, gestures, drawings, or any other form of communication, whether intended or not.

Every member of our community has the responsibility to report conduct that violates these expectations. Reports may be made by anyone to any teacher, administrator, staff member, or to our designated parent liaison listed below.

If a report involves an allegation of unkindness, harassment, disparagement, or discrimination based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, age, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state or local laws, the school will convene a working committee consisting of:

- The Upper or Lower School Director (depending on the ages of the students involved)
 - Lower School (pre-3rd)
 - Upper School (4th-8th)
- One or more school counselors
- A parent liaison

Upon receiving the allegation, the committee will investigate as quickly as possible, preferably the same day if the allegation is made during school hours. To ensure timely and developmentally appropriate communication with the students involved, most interviews will be conducted by school personnel, with ongoing communication to the parent liaison.

During the investigation, the team will work to determine:

- What was said or done
- To whom the behavior was directed
- Whether the allegation is substantiated, suspected, certain, or unclear
- Whether the behavior was malicious, thoughtless, or otherwise
- The student's level of remorse and understanding
- Any harm caused
- Are there any patterns of behavior that should be considered
- The likelihood of the behavior recurring
- Any additional relevant information

At the conclusion of the investigation, the committee will submit a brief summary to the Head of School, including a recommendation for any action the school should take. The Head of School is responsible for reviewing, approving, or denying the recommendation. Parents of the children will be contacted and provided with an update and additional information, if appropriate.

Within a reasonable time, a formal report will be written to be submitted to the independent monitor attorney for evaluation.

The school prohibits retaliation against any person who provides information about, complains about, or assists in the investigation of any complaint or report that involves an allegation of unkindness, harassment, disparagement, discrimination or other violation of this school policy.

CUSTODIAL RIGHTS

To help ensure student safety, all families must provide information about who is authorized to pick up their child. This information is included in the "Authorized Pick-Up Release" section of the Emergency Care Form, in accordance with Virginia law.

A DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Nysmith's low student-to-teacher ratios allow us to tailor instruction to meet the needs of each learner. We use a variety of engaging, hands-on methods to encourage curiosity and independence.

Students who benefit from accommodations are supported with compassion and understanding. If your child requires accommodations, we kindly ask for documentation from a healthcare provider to help us provide the best possible support.

CALENDAR AND IMPORTANT DATES

Every family receives a school calendar before the year begins. If there are updates, we'll notify you via email, Wednesday folders and the calendar on our website.

Nysmith follows federal holidays and is also closed on:

- Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve
- The Wednesday before Thanksgiving
- A full week for Spring Break

Extended care is closed during federal holidays and the dates noted above. As needed, we may add additional teacher workdays.

COMMUNICATION

We believe that clear, timely communication is key to a strong school-family partnership. Our primary communication channel is email via **news@nysmith.com**, where you'll receive:

- A weekly newsletter ("The NysNews")
- Field trip details
- Health alerts
- Schoolwide updates

Our **Community Portal** at nysmith.com/community-portal also provides helpful resources.

ELECTRONICS POLICY

At Nysmith, we strive to ensure that school is a place where students can focus on learning, building friendships, and developing the confidence to be their best selves. Our cell phone

and electronics policy is designed to create a healthy balance between technology and in-person connections.

- Preschool–3rd graders should leave electronic devices (including smartwatches) at home.
- All connected electronic devices (cell phones, iPads, smart watches, etc.) must be turned off and stored in lockers or backpacks upon arrival at school.
- Students may check their devices at dismissal before heading home.
- Students who stay for aftercare or clubs may use their devices once they are dismissed from those programs.
- There is no exception on indoor recess days; devices must remain put away until the end of the day.
- If a child is unwilling to comply with the policy, they will not be permitted to have an electronic device at school.

Enforcement Procedures

- **First infraction:** The student will be asked to put the device back in their locker or backpack and an administrator is notified.
- **Second infraction:** The student is brought to the front office with the device, the parents are called to come in to pick it up, and a conversation with Brian will take place.
- **Third infraction:** Parents are contacted and the student will no longer be permitted to have an electronic device at school.

If communication is needed during the day:

- Parents should call the main office, and we will either bring your child to the phone or relay your message.
- Students who need to reach a parent may come to the office to use the phone, or they may use their personal device in the presence of a teacher, administrator, or staff member.

For students with personal laptops: These may be used for schoolwork, provided your child complies with the above expectations. If the policy is not followed, the privilege of bringing a laptop from home will be revoked.

We ask that all parents continue to partner with us in teaching children how to use technology responsibly. A good rule of thumb is to check in on your child's online activity several times each afternoon or evening. When adults guide children in this way, they learn that their digital words and actions should reflect the same respect and kindness they show in person.

We strongly encourage families to label all electronics and remind students that Nysmith is not responsible for lost or stolen devices.

VIDEOTAPING ON CAMPUS

To respect the privacy of students and staff, video recording is not permitted on school grounds, except during public events such as plays, concerts, and open-house programs.

Videos taken at school may not be shared on social media. Please note that the school may record common areas for security purposes. These recordings are confidential and used solely to protect our community.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

To maintain consistency and safety, teachers and staff may not transport students to or from school or school-related activities, including after-school clubs, tutoring, or events.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

At Nysmith, the safety of our students, families, and staff is always our top priority. We recognize that inclement weather can create family challenges, and we are committed to providing clear, timely information to help you plan accordingly.

To simplify our procedures, Nysmith generally follows **Fairfax County Public Schools** for decisions related to the **Instructional Program**, and **federal government guidelines** for our **Extended Care Program**. However, sometimes we make an independent decision based on what we feel is best for our community.

In the event of **delayed openings, early closings, or school cancellations**, we will share updates through the following channels:

- Nysmith.com website
- Email notifications
- SMS messages (for emergencies or urgent updates)
- The Nysmith Status Line: **703-713-3332 ext. 2**

Because weather conditions can change quickly, we encourage families to monitor updates closely. If you feel that road conditions are becoming unsafe, you are always welcome to pick up your child early—your judgment is respected and appreciated.

In the event of a federal government **early closing**, we ask that **all students be picked up within two hours** of the announced time. If you are unable to make it within that window, please notify us immediately by:

- Fax: 703-713-3336
- Email: frontoffice@nysmith.com

Let us know your child's alternate pick-up arrangements so we can ensure a smooth and safe dismissal.

Ultimately, our goal is simple: to get everyone home safely and as early as needed when weather becomes a concern.

Quick Reference: 2025–2026 Inclement Weather & Snow Policy

Condition	Fairfax County Schools	The Nysmith School
Closed	Schools closed	Instructional Program closed Extended Care open (7:30 AM – 6:30 PM)
Closed due to extreme cold	Schools closed	Decision made case-by-case by Nysmith
2-hour delay	Schools open 2 hours late	Nysmith opens 1 hour late (9:00 AM) Extended Care open (7:30 – 9:00 AM & 2:30 – 6:30 PM) Bus service TBD based on road conditions
Early closing	Schools close early	Nysmith follows same schedule (e.g., 2-hour early closing = 1:00 PM dismissal) Extended Care closes at 5:00 PM *See bus/transportation note below
Condition	Federal Government	The Nysmith School
Closed	Government closed	All Nysmith programs closed
Early closing	Government closes early	All Nysmith programs close 2 hours after the government closure time

Important Notes

- **Bus/Transportation:** On days with delayed openings, morning bus service may not be available. Nysmith reserves the right to cancel bus service or adjust drop-off locations if road conditions are unsafe.
- **Extended Care Fees:** Extended Care ends promptly at announced times. A late fee of **\$1 per minute** will be charged after closing. Drop-in care is available at **\$25 per hour**.
- **Your Judgment Matters:** If the weather worsens during the day, you do **not** need to wait for an official announcement to pick up your child. We trust your decision to head out when you feel it is safest for your family.

Thank you for your partnership and flexibility as we navigate unpredictable weather. We are grateful for your support in keeping every member of the Nysmith community safe and cared for.

FIELD TRIPS

Forms granting permission for local field trips are signed at the time of enrollment. *Local field trips* include any trip within a 15 mile radius of the school. Additional permission slips will be sent home as field trips are scheduled. **WRITTEN PERMISSION MUST BE SUBMITTED BEFORE THE DEPARTURE TIME. NO ORAL PERMISSION WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR LONG-DISTANCE FIELD TRIPS.** If a fee is required for a field trip, we ask that the money be sent in with the permission slip in advance. Suggestions for field trips are always welcome.

REPORT CARDS, CONFERENCES, COMMUNICATION

Students are evaluated formally four times a year. Parents will have a scheduled conference in early November and receive four written reports, one at the end of each quarter. During the November conference, the emotional, social, and intellectual growth of your child will be discussed. Written report cards will include grades, a checklist of social skills, and a written evaluation of brief comments from each teacher.

Additional conferences may be requested by either the teacher or the parent(s). Should you wish to contact a teacher, please send a note or email to the teacher with a suggested time you would like to meet and a brief description of the issues you would like to address. Advance knowledge of the issues permits the teacher to gather any pertinent information or materials that may be useful in the conference.

Students in grades K-3 will bring home a colored folder daily. Students in grades 4-6 will bring home a colored folder on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. The folder will contain homework, class work, important notices from the administration, PTO, etc. Teachers will post class information in their Google Classroom.

CONTACTING A TEACHER

Teachers are generally unavailable during school hours unless an appointment has been made. Appointments can be arranged by contacting the teacher directly. All efforts will be made to accommodate a requested date and time. Messages for teachers can also be left through the voice mail system via phone number 703-713-3332 or the school's email system. Please leave your phone number and the hours you will be available at that number. Please note that not all teachers have access to email during the school day.

MEET THE TEACHERS OPEN HOUSE

An Open House to meet the teachers is held the day before school begins each year. This is a good time to visit classrooms and meet teachers prior to the first day of school. For returning students, this event may be held virtually.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

Back to School Nights are scheduled early in the school year. Teachers introduce themselves, present an overview of their course, and share expectations and goals for the year. We realize however that many families are not able to attend in person for a variety of reasons. Therefore the teachers will record and distribute a video recording that will cover the introduction, overview of their course, share goals and expectations so that all parents will have access to the critical information. During the Back to School Night, parents are welcome to meet the teacher and ask general questions. Please note that this is not the time for questions concerning individual students.

NOVEMBER CONFERENCE DAYS

The instructional program is closed for two days when the pre-scheduled conferences are held. Parents of preschool students will conference with the lead teacher; parents of K-8 students will conference with a core-subject teacher. (Extended care is open for currently enrolled students in the aftercare program.) To make it easier for all parents to meet with teachers, parents are welcome to meet in person or via Zoom. Please watch for an email with a sign-up link.

ATTENDANCE

Children may be dropped off in the morning between 8:00 - 8:30 AM. Classes begin promptly at 8:30 AM. Please be sure that you drop off your child so that he or she has ample time to go to his or her locker, greet friends, and get ready to start the day. Students arriving late must be signed in by an adult at the main office. It is important that parents drop off their child prior to 8:20 AM to ensure they do not feel rushed to class or arrive late. When a student is habitually late to school, it disrupts the entire class and puts all of the students at a disadvantage. Habitual tardiness is not condoned. Parents need to leave the building by 8:30 AM.

Attendance Policy for Lower School

Students who miss 15 days or more of a class per quarter will receive Incompletes (I's) on their report card for grades.

Attendance Policy for Upper School

Students who miss 15 or more days of a class during a single quarter may receive an "Incomplete" on their report card if arrangements have not been made to complete missed work during their absence.

Families should contact the Upper School Director in advance of any planned absence or as soon as possible during an extended illness. This communication will allow the school to coordinate with teachers and ensure that appropriate academic support is provided while the student is out.

Please note that the eighth-grade transcript, which includes grades from sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, also reflects absences for each of those years.

MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

If your child is absent from school for several days, please contact your child's director, who will coordinate the collection of missed assignments in a file which will be available at the office for pickup. We are unable to submit homework to the office for pickup on a daily basis.

TRIP POLICY

While we understand that children are occasionally absent from the school for a variety of reasons, we discourage planning trips during the school year. If you know that your child will miss school for an extended period of time due to vacation, travel, etc., please notify your child's homeroom teacher. It is the student's responsibility to submit all projects that are assigned prior to the absence which will become due during the absence. Any work, including tests, that is missed while the student is away may be made up upon his/her return to school. Because our curriculum is differentiated, teachers will be unable to send work with the student to be completed during their trip. It is the student's responsibility to pick up missed assignments upon return to school.

HOMEWORK

At Nysmith, we believe children thrive when there is a healthy balance between schoolwork and personal time. Our approach to homework is intentionally light, focusing on meaningful practice rather than repetition. As a general guideline, students should set aside time for ten minutes of homework per grade level per night. For example, a third grader might have approximately 30 minutes, while a seventh grader may have about 70 minutes, four to five times per week. Every child works at a different pace, so this may vary. Most children find their assigned homework take substantially less time, we encourage parents to have their children read for the remaining allocation of time. If you find assignments taking longer than expected, please contact your child's teacher. We are always happy to collaborate with families to ensure students are challenged without feeling overwhelmed.

Our primary goal with homework is to help students build good academic habits and foster responsibility. We encourage families to create a consistent "academic time" that works within their routine. Students may complete assigned homework, finish classwork, read for pleasure, or engage in other screen-free, enriching activities during this time.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Each spring, fourth and sixth graders participate in the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. This nationally normed assessment provides valuable experience with standardized testing and

helps us continue to support each child's academic growth. Nysmith students consistently perform highly, a testament to their hard work and the dedication of our teachers.

CLUBS

Our after-school club program is a fun and enriching way for students in kindergarten through eighth grade to explore interests beyond the classroom. Clubs meet from 3:00-4:00 p.m. and offerings vary each year, based on student interest and faculty availability. Past clubs have included Math Olympiad, Chess Club, Yoga, Creative Writing, Art Club, Drama, Debate, Bug Club, and many more. Leadership opportunities are also available through the Student Council Association and the National Junior Honor Society. There is something for everyone, and we encourage students to try something new and connect with friends in a relaxed setting.

SCHOOL TRADITIONS

Our school year is sprinkled with joyful events that celebrate our vibrant community and enrich the student experience. Some of our beloved traditions include:

- Halloween Party
- Winter Holiday Party
- Valentine's Day Party
- End of Year Party
- Grandparents' Day
- Concerts
- Eighth Grade Graduation Ceremony
- International Fair
- Career Day
- Pajama Bingo
- Field Day
- Book Fairs
- Student Productions
- Movie Night
- Pre-School Gatherings
- SCA Dances (Grades 6-8)
- Special Olympics Basketball Event
- Parent Education Workshops

These traditions help build lasting memories and a strong sense of community.

TOYS

To help students stay focused during the school day, we kindly ask that toys be left at home. Toys can often become distractions or sources of unnecessary stress among classmates. If a special circumstance requires your child to bring a toy, please speak with your Director or one of our school counselors.

GUM

No gum is allowed on school property.

LOST AND FOUND

We understand how easy it is for items to be misplaced. Please label all personal belongings—including coats, boots, mittens, and lunchboxes—with your child's full name. Lost items are stored in the Blue Pod. More valuable items such as glasses or electronics are held in the main office. **Unclaimed items are donated to charitable organizations at the end of each month, so we encourage families to check the lost and found regularly.**

HIRING NYSMITH TEACHERS

Our dedicated teachers are often sought out by families for additional educational support. We are proud of the talent and dedication of our staff. However, when a Nysmith teacher is hired privately to work outside of school hours, please know that those arrangements are made independently, and the school is not responsible for supervision or performance in that setting. Families are encouraged to take all appropriate steps to ensure their child's safety and well-being outside of school.

At Nysmith, we maintain a safe environment on campus through thoughtful safeguards, including classroom windows and team-teaching models. These measures are part of our commitment to your child's safety during school hours.

HEALTH POLICIES

PHYSICALS & IMMUNIZATIONS

A completed and signed physical examination form must be on file in the office at all times. Newly enrolled students and all kindergartners must have a physical examination dated within twelve months prior to enrollment. Students who enroll midyear must submit a current physical examination within 30 days of enrollment and an immunization record before attending the first day of class.

Evidence of the following immunizations is required by Virginia State law: MMR (Measles, Mumps, & Rubella), DTP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, & Pertussis), Varicella (Chickenpox), Polio, PCV (Pneumococcal), Hib (Haemophilus Influenza Type B), and Hepatitis B. Booster doses of MMR and Varicella are required by law as a prerequisite for entry into kindergarten. All prospective seventh graders must provide verification of a Tdap booster. Please contact the office if your child has medical or religious exemptions precluding him or her from receiving immunizations.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The Code of Virginia requires that certain communicable diseases be reported to the local health department. Please see the list below. Those listed in UPPERCASE must be reported within 24 hours of suspected or confirmed diagnosis by the most rapid means available. All others are required to be reported within 72 hours of

suspected or confirmed diagnosis. The most up-to-date [reportable disease chart](#) can be found on the website of the [Virginia Department of Health](#).

- Amebiasis
- ANTHRAX
- Arboviral infection (e.g., EEE, LAC, SLE, WNV, Zika)
- BOTULISM
- BRUCELLOSIS
- Babesiosis
- Campylobacteriosis
- Candida auris
- Carbapenemase-producing organism
- Chancroid
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Chlamydia trachomatis infection
- CHOLERA
- CORONAVIRUS INFECTION, SEVERE (SARS-CoV, MERS CoV)
- Covid-19
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Cyclosporiasis
- DIPHTHERIA
- DISEASE CAUSED BY AN AGENT THAT MAY HAVE BEEN USED AS A WEAPON
- Ehrlichiosis
- *Escherichia coli* infection, Shiga toxin-producing
- Giardiasis
- Gonorrhea
- Granuloma inguinale
- HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE INFECTION INVASIVE
- Hantavirus pulmonary syndrome
- Hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS)
- HEPATITIS A
- Hepatitis B (acute and chronic)
- Hepatitis C (acute and chronic)
- Hepatitis, other acute viral
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)
- Influenza
- INFLUENZA-ASSOCIATED DEATHS IN CHILDREN < 18 YEARS OF AGE
- INFLUENZA A, NOVEL VIRUS
- Lead-elevated blood levels
- Legionellosis
- Leprosy (Hansen's disease)
- Leptospirosis
- Listeriosis
- Lyme disease
- Lymphogranuloma venereum
- Malaria
- MEASLES (Rubeola)
- MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE
- MPOX / MONKEYPOX
- Mumps
- Neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS)
- Ophthalmia neonatorum
- OUTBREAKS, ALL (including but not limited to food borne, healthcare-associated, occupational, toxic substance-related, and waterborne)
- PERTUSSIS
- PLAGUE
- POLIOVIRUS, including POLIOMYELITIS
- PSITTACOSIS
- Q FEVER
- RABIES, HUMAN AND ANIMAL
- Rabies treatment, post-exposure
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever (Spotted fever rickettsiosis)
- RUBELLA, including congenital rubella syndrome
- Salmonellosis
- SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS)
- Shigellosis
- SMALLPOX (Variola)
- *Staphylococcus aureus*, infection (invasive methicillin-resistant and any vancomycin-intermediate or vancomycin-resistant)
- Streptococcal disease, Group A, invasive
- *Streptococcus pneumoniae* infection, invasive, in children <5 years of age
- Syphilis (report PRIMARY and SECONDARY syphilis by rapid means)
- Tetanus
- Toxic substance-related illness
- Trichinosis (Trichinellosis)
- TUBERCULOSIS, ACTIVE DISEASE (MYCOBACTERIA)
- Tuberculosis infection
- TULAREMIA
- TYPHOID/PARATYPHOID FEVER
- UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE OF DISEASE OF PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN
- VACCINIA, DISEASE OR ADVERSE EVENT
- VIBRIOSIS
- VIRAL HEMORRHAGIC FEVER
- YELLOW FEVER
- Yersiniosis

NOTE: In addition to informing the health department, parents are to inform the school within 24 hours of the next business day after their child, or any member of the immediate household, has developed any of the above reportable communicable diseases, except for life threatening diseases, which must be reported to the school immediately.

If deemed advisable by the Head of School, the appropriate letter will notify the parent community of the potential health risks.

ILLNESS POLICY

Illness spreads rapidly in school environments. **If your child has vomited or has an above normal temperature (100° F or above), a contagious disease, or any other condition that could be detrimental to the other children or adults, they may not come to school.** Likewise, if a student is absent due to a contagious illness, they may not attend school events that are held after hours. As disappointing as it might be for a student to miss Bingo Night or a social event, it is more important that others are not exposed to an illness.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be contacted immediately and expected to pick your child up immediately. Your child must stay home for the rest of that day and the following day. At that point, if your child has been symptom-free and fever-free (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for a full 24 hours, they may return to school.

Examples:

Scenario	Return to School
At 9:00 AM on Monday, you are asked to pick up your child because they have a high temperature. Their fever breaks on Monday night.	Your child must stay home for the rest of Monday and the following day. They may return on Wednesday.
At 2:00 PM on Monday, you are asked to pick up your child because they vomited.	Your child must stay home for the rest of Monday and the following day. They may return on Wednesday.
At 2:00 PM on Monday, you are asked to pick up your child because they vomited. They vomit again at home on Tuesday.	Your child must stay home for the rest of Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. They may return on Thursday.
At 7:00 PM on Sunday, your child vomits. They feel fine on Monday morning.	Your child must stay home on Monday. They may return on Tuesday.

MEDICATION POLICY

Medications that need to be administered at school are carefully regulated. Specific requirements necessary to dispense prescriptions and other medications vary, depending on

the classification of medication. The office has complete information and the forms necessary for a parent's and/or a doctor's signature, as required by the Virginia Department of Social Services. In general, medication must be in the original container with the original directions clearly printed. Both long term prescription and long term over-the-counter medication may be administered *with a physician's signature*. Prescription and over-the-counter medication may be administered for ten days or less when a parent completes the required form. We are not permitted to administer medication of any kind without a written statement of informed consent, signed by the student's parent, guardian, or physician, absolving the school of any liability.

SEASONAL ALLERGIES

In order for your child to stay indoors during recess, please submit a physician's note stating that the child is exempt from outside activity due to allergies. There will be a table in the cafeteria designated for indoor recess where children can do a quiet activity such as reading or drawing, etc. Electronic devices are permitted if the sound is disabled as long as it does not create a problem. If a student is disruptive, the child will either need to go outside with the rest of the class or a parent will need to supervise the child. Each physician's note will be effective for no longer than two weeks. A new form will need to be signed by the physician for each two-week period.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Several students in the school have potentially fatal peanut, dairy and/or wheat allergies. There is a No Nut Table in the lunchroom for students with allergy sensitivities. For snack time, please send in a No Nut Snack in a separate container, labeled with the student's name and class, to eat in the classroom.

HEAD LICE

If we encounter cases of head lice, it is usually during the first semester of school before the students leave for winter break. If we do discover a case or cases of head lice, we will send a notice home immediately. If a case of lice can be caught early, the problem can be eradicated rather easily. Once a child's head is fully infected, treatments become more involved and other family members and classmates run a greater risk of becoming infected. If you find that your child has nits (the unhatched lice eggs attached to the lower end of the hair shaft) or lice, you must treat every place and everything with which your child has come in contact...car seats, rugs, bedding, sofas, drapes, etc. All cloth items, including stuffed animals, should be sealed in plastic bags for at least two weeks, OR washed in hot water and dried in the dryer on HIGH for 20 minutes, OR dry-cleaned.

Recent information indicates that head lice are becoming immune to some of the standard treatments, and the nits have a four-day period during which they are immune to any treatment. Please talk to your doctor or pharmacist about all available options. Manual nit removal and environmental clean-up are just as essential as pharmaceutical treatments in eradicating head lice.

If lice or nits are found on a child a parent must pick up the child and treat him or her, and the child may not return until the next day. Our policy on treating head lice is as follows: Children must be NIT-FREE before they may go back in the classroom. Upon your child's return to school after being treated for lice, you must accompany your child into the office and wait until a staff member checks your child's scalp. If nits are found the child must go home again and may return to class the next day if no nits are found upon the second check by a staff member. If there is a second occurrence, you must accompany your child into the office every day for two weeks and wait until he or she is checked. You also must bring in the bottle from the treatment that you used. Should there be a third occurrence, your child must remain at home for three days for thorough treatment. After the third day, you must follow the second occurrence. If it is discovered that your child does have lice, we will call you to pick up your child immediately.

EXCLUSION FROM ACTIVITIES

Written notification from a parent or guardian is necessary anytime a child is to be excused from regularly scheduled activities such as physical education, an academic class or outdoor activities due to illness. If your child needs to be excused from physical activities for over a week, you must provide a doctor's note.

ABSENCES AND LATE ARRIVALS DUE TO ILLNESS

If your child will be absent or late due to illness, please advise the school by phone at 703-652-0032 or email Frontoffice@nysmith.com. Please let us know if your child has any highly contagious illness such as chicken pox, strep throat, head lice, etc. We always like to keep other parents informed of illnesses that are going around.

EMERGENCY CARE FORM

All new parents must complete an emergency care form online. Information should be updated regularly; please let us know anytime a phone number, address, place of employment, e-mail address, etc. changes. The purpose of the form is to help us locate you in the event of an illness or emergency. For parents who travel, locally or interstate, please leave detailed information about where you may be contacted. Please be sure to provide a current email address so that you can be updated regularly about school events and emergency information. A parent or pre-designated adult must be within telephone contact at all times. Please be certain to list on the form the names and telephone numbers of individuals authorized to pick up your child if you cannot be reached. No child will be released to persons not authorized to pick up. Please remember that a sick child may not remain in school until the end of the day, and he or she may not ride home on the bus.

In the appropriate section on the **Emergency Care Form** please list:

- All allergies, chronic illnesses, or special health needs your child may have. Parents must state a course of action for each of these concerns. This will help to ensure a healthy and pleasant learning environment for all.

- Any special concerns such as asthma, history of seizures, reactions to bee stings, hearing or sight impairments, etc. should also be noted on the emergency care form.

Any emotional concerns or changes in your child's development should be mentioned to the director or the child's teacher; this information will be held in the strictest confidence.

PLAYGROUND

The playground is supervised at all times while children are present during designated class times. The staff checks and reports any unsafe equipment. They are instructed to anticipate when situations between children are becoming volatile and redirect when possible. The Preschool playground has equally distributed, resilient surfacing to assist in preventing serious injury from falls. Use of cell phones and electronics will not be permitted during recess at any time.

BACKPACKS

All backpacks must fit in the designated lockers.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

If there is a serious accident or injury, you will be notified immediately. If the injury is minor, first aid attention will be given, and the parents will be notified.

REQUIRED REPORTING

All Nysmith employees are required by Virginia Law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services (CPS). Employees will also notify their respective Director.

MEALS

BREAKFAST

Any child in the morning extended care program may bring a simple breakfast from home to eat during extended care. We do not provide breakfast for the students.

LUNCHES & SNACKS

All students in preschool through eighth grade are responsible for bringing their own lunch, snacks, and drinks. **As a reminder, social service regulations require that all preschool lunches must be dated and labeled with the student's name.** Snack time is scheduled for pre-kindergarten through third grade, but snacks must be provided from home.

Nysmith offers hot lunch ordering from local restaurants through Hotlunch.com (<https://nysmith.ahotlunch.com/login>). Please note that lunch must be ordered eight days in advance. For information on registering for Hotlunch, see the Look Ahead or contact the front office.

THIRD PARTY LUNCH ORDERS

If you wish to order lunch for your child through a delivery service (Doordash, Uber Eats, etc.), be sure to include the child's name, grade, and section in the order notes. Please note that when lunch is delivered for an upper school student (either by a parent or a delivery service), the office will only notify the student if the parent has requested it. If a student does not have a lunch, they are responsible for coming to the office to check whether food has been delivered for them.

If a student does not have a lunch and no food has been delivered for them, the office will call their parents to arrange for lunch, or give the student a pantry lunch. A pantry lunch consists of snacks like apple sauce, fruit cups, chips, crackers, and cheese sticks; \$5 will be billed to the parents when a student receives a pantry lunch.

Students are permitted to order individual meals through delivery services such as Uber Eats or DoorDash but may only pick up their orders during their designated lunch period. Ordering drinks or snacks throughout the day and leaving class to retrieve them is not allowed. Group food orders for multiple students are prohibited.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Parents may send in an individual, nut-free treat for each child in the class on a child's birthday. Please give your child's teacher advance notice if you would like to send in a treat. Please be sure to ask your child's teacher if there are any allergies or dietary restrictions in the class. Treats for students with allergies must list all ingredients on the package and must not be homemade.

If you are planning a party outside of school, please do not hand out invitations unless all students are invited. No gifts or party favors should be brought to school. Please counsel your child not to discuss any such outside parties in front of uninvited children. We strongly recommend that you do not invite all but one or two children from your child's class.

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

Since parents are the primary and principal influence on their children's lives, it is essential that both parents and staff afford themselves every opportunity to establish a positive relationship in support of the students. Effective communication between the adults in a child's life will allow for coordination between actions at home and at school to modify behavior and enhance individual progress.

At Nysmith, we believe that discipline means teaching and not *punishing*. We are devoted to nurturing children and helping them develop positive self-esteem, practice self-control, and

achieve a sense of self-respect. Careful supervision by skilled teachers enables us to redirect negative behavior.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Discipline shall be constructive in nature and includes techniques such as:

- Using limits that are fair, consistently applied, appropriate and understandable for the child's level
- Providing children with reasons for limits
- Giving positively worded directions
- Modeling and redirecting children to acceptable behavior
- Helping children to constructively express their feelings and frustrations to resolve conflict
- Arranging equipment, materials, activities, and schedules in a way that promotes desirable behavior

TERMINATION OF STUDENT'S ENROLLMENT

Although Nysmith's behavior management procedures are preferred as the method of controlling student behavior, the administration reserves the right to terminate a student's enrollment on the basis of his or her behavior at any time during the behavior management process. Please see your tuition contract for the conditions of termination/withdrawal.

TUITION PAYMENTS & FEES

Tuition payments are due on the first day of each month, as your monthly statement will indicate. If a child is enrolled after the first day of the school year, a billing statement will be sent to the party responsible for payment within one week of the child's first day of classes. The tuition schedule will be prorated to the date of the child's first day of class. Payments for field trips are handled through classroom teachers. Fees for late student pick-ups are due on the day the charges are incurred. If you need a financial reimbursement receipt to submit to your place of employment, please notify the finance office in advance and a statement will be prepared. Please specify the information required by your employer.

CONTRACTS FOR ENROLLING NEXT YEAR

Re-enrollment contracts will be made available to current students in their Parent Portal (where online applications were completed) during the first week of January. All re-enrollment contracts are due to Nysmith (signed contract and Enrollment Fee) **by January 31st**. Access to online re-enrollment contracts may be denied after January 31st so we may determine how many openings we have in each grade, and thus, how many new applicants we may offer admission to for the following year. Please contact the Nysmith Admissions Office for further information.

LATE PICK UP CHARGES AND POLICIES

There is a late pick up charge for children in the instructional program who are not picked up within 15 minutes of dismissal time for preschool (2:45 PM) and 30 minutes for

elementary and upper school students (3:30 PM). In this case, children will be sent to extended care for a charge of \$12.00 per hour or any part of an hour.

For any child in extended care who is picked up after closing time (6:30 PM) there will be a charge of \$1.00 per minute. After the fifth late pick-up, the charge becomes \$5.00 per minute. Charges are automatically billed to parent accounts by the finance administrator. If the child is not picked up and no one on our "authorized to pick up" list can be reached, our only option will be to call CPS (Child Protective Services).

ADDITIONAL FEES & MONEY

Anytime you need to send money or checks to school with your child, please seal the check or cash in an envelope and clearly mark the envelope to be delivered to the appropriate teacher or administrator. Tuition payments may be dropped off in the finance office or the front office. Please encourage your child to drop off any money or checks before classes begin. Children should also be discouraged from bringing extra money to school.

RETURNED CHECK FEE

There is a \$25.00 charge for all returned checks.

TRANSCRIPTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSCRIPTS

We are happy to support your family in providing academic records when needed. If you need a transcript or teacher recommendations, please email the registrar. Include a signed transcript request form from the school/program to which you are applying. Electronic transcript request forms (through Ravenna, Veracross, etc.) should also be delegated to the registrar. Kindly allow up to ten business days for processing.

Students' transcripts include their grades without teachers' comments. Nysmith does not include the results of the IOWA tests in students' transcripts. You may access your child's results on Focus, if needed.

Please note that IQ test reports are always kept confidential and used only during the admissions process. These reports are never part of a student's permanent record and are securely shredded after an enrollment decision has been made.

TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

All teacher recommendations and rating scales are handled thoughtfully and confidentially. Because evaluations must be current, we are only able to complete recommendations for students currently enrolled at Nysmith. We appreciate your understanding and ask that you allow up to ten business days for us to complete your request with the care it deserves.

FCPS ADVANCED ACADEMIC PROGRAM

If your child is applying to the FCPS Advanced Academic Program, please contact the admissions director for information and deadlines. The registrar will provide the required records and coordinate with your child's teachers to complete the HOPE Rating Scale.

EVALUATIONS FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL TESTING

If you need teacher evaluations because your child is undergoing psychological or educational testing, please contact our guidance department.

PRESCHOOL AND BEGINNER PROGRAM NOTES

CHANGE OF CLOTHES

We know that preschoolers are busy learners—and sometimes that means spills, splashes, or tumbles! Please send in a complete change of clothes in a labeled plastic bag on the first day of school. If your child needs to change during the day, we'll send the soiled clothing home in the same bag. Feel free to send a fresh change of clothes whenever needed. As seasons change, please update the clothing so your child stays comfortable in all weather.

CLOTHING GUIDELINES

We want our little learners to be comfortable and confident as they explore their world. Please dress your child in play-friendly clothes that allow them to run, jump, and fully enjoy hands-on activities. Rubber-soled shoes are best for safety—we kindly ask that sandals and jellies be saved for home.

TOYS FROM HOME

To help children stay focused and minimize the chance of losing special items, we ask that toys stay at home. However, teachers may invite children to bring in items for special "show and share" days, which are a fun way to connect classroom learning with your child's interests.

QUIET TIME

Preschoolers will enjoy a daily quiet time, giving them a chance to rest and recharge. The school provides sheets for cots/rest mats, which are sent home each week for washing. Children who don't fall asleep within the first 30 minutes may engage in quiet play. If your child does nap, they'll be gently woken at the appropriate time or allowed to rest until dismissal.

TRANSITION CARE

We understand that families have different schedules. Supervised care is available (for a nominal fee) for preschool students who are waiting for older siblings or carpool partners in the upper grades.

EXTENDED CARE PROGRAM

We're pleased to offer a flexible and nurturing Extended Care Program for children age three through grade eight. Our morning care begins at 7:00 AM and runs until the start of the school day. Afternoon care begins at 2:30 PM for preschoolers and 3:00 PM for older students, with all programs ending at 6:30 PM.

The after-school program includes time outdoors (weather permitting) and enriching, age-appropriate activities. Families may choose to enroll full-time or use care on an as-needed basis.

Full-time Extended Care includes coverage on Teacher Workdays, Winter/Spring Breaks, and certain snow days (when the Federal Government is open). For information about enrolling in full-time care, or to arrange for drop-in care (\$12/hour or any portion of an hour), please contact our finance administrator. Monthly billing for drop-in care is coordinated directly by the finance administrator.

PARENT GROUPS

Our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) is very active at the Nysmith School. The PTO exists as an unincorporated association of its members. This organization meets periodically throughout the school year and elects officers each spring. The PTO fosters a close relationship between parents and teachers, handles fund-raising activities, organizes parent education seminars, and orchestrates student-parent social activities.

Nysmith has a support group of parents working closely with the teachers and administration to provide parties and activities, etc. for the children. Examples of activities include coordination of the Book Fair and Field Day. All parents are welcome to attend PTO Executive Committee meetings as scheduled and join in the activities provided. Parents in this organization send a volunteer form to the parents each fall to give parents the opportunity to indicate an interest in the various social functions.

Please keep in mind that while the Nysmith School is a very child friendly environment and siblings are eager to participate, the activity at hand or field trip is meant only for the children in the class. On most occasions, class parties, field trips, and other events at the school are only for adults and the students; siblings may not be allowed. Occasionally there are activities in which siblings are welcome to participate. If you have any questions about whether a particular event is sibling friendly, the office staff will be happy to provide assistance.

BOOKS FOR PARENTS IN THE MEDIA CENTER

Nysmith has a collection of books for parents in the Media Center. Many of these books have been purchased using Book Fair funds. These books are in a separate shelf area, and are available for parents to check out whenever the Media Center is open. You can come in and browse the books, or you can use the Nysmith Library Search to locate a book.

You are also encouraged to donate books that you no longer need at home, and that you would like to share with other Nysmith parents. Just drop those books off, or send them in to the Media Center with your student. Once donated, they can't be returned.

To help narrow your search to only the parent books, a reading list for parents has been created. The books in that list have also been tagged with "Parent Ed" as a keyword for the search.

The Nysmith Library Search (<https://nysmithschool.library.site/>) allows you to search by Author, Title, Series Title, and Subject. The search results show you whether a book is Available, but you cannot use the system to reserve or checkout a book. Once you have located a book that you would like to check out, please feel free to stop by the library and check it out..

Nysmith and the PTO hope that parents find this resource a valuable tool and encourage its use.

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

NETWORK

The Nysmith School is pleased to offer student access to the internet through the Nysmith computer network. This is an exciting opportunity that brings with it added responsibilities. Guidelines for appropriate network use are outlined below.

WHAT IS POSSIBLE

Access to the internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information. Families should be aware that some material accessible via the internet might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive. While the school's goal is to use internet resources for constructive educational pursuits, students may find ways to access other materials. Although no computer program is fail-proof, the internet content monitoring program, SmartFilter, has been installed as part of the Nysmith computer network. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the internet in the form of information resources and opportunities for collaboration exceed the disadvantages. Ultimately, parents and guardians of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their children should follow when using media and information sources.

WHAT IS EXPECTED

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with school standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's computer resources. The students are advised never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

PRIVACY

Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Technology staff members may review student files to maintain system integrity and to ensure that students are using the system responsibly.

Storage capacity: users are expected to remain within allocated disk space and delete material that takes up excessive storage space

Illegal copying: students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives or disks, unless they have *written* permission from the Technology Director. Students should not copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files.

Inappropriate materials or language: profane, abusive or impolite language should not be used to communicate, nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. A good rule to follow is never view, send, or access materials that you would not want your teachers and parents to see. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately.

SUCCINCT ADVICE

These are guidelines to follow to ensure a safe and productive learning environment for all students using computers at the Nysmith School.

- Do not use a computer to harm other people or their work
- Do not damage the computer or the network in any way
- Do not interfere with the operation of the network by installing illegal software, shareware, or freeware
- Do not violate copyright laws
- Do not view, send, or display offensive information, to include text or pictures
- Do not waste limited resources such as disk space or printing capacity
- Do not trespass in another's folders, work, or files

CHROMEBOOKS

We are excited to offer our upper school students Chromebooks for daily in-school use. We hope that the use of the personal Chromebook will be an added positive educational experience for our students and teachers. The Chromebooks are the property of Nysmith which we are supplying for the benefit of our students during school hours. Each morning, students may check out their individual Chromebook, use it throughout the day and then check it back into its assigned dock before leaving school for the day. We expect students to be responsible and treat all the school's Chromebooks with care by not leaving them in precarious situations where damage or loss could be caused to them. Safe practice would be to store them in a padded section of backpacks, in the student's locker, or in the appropriate docking station when not being attended. Each student will be responsible for their assigned Chromebook. Chromebooks abandoned in the hallways, classrooms, playgrounds etc., can lead to the loss of usage privileges. If the administration feels the need to restrict any student or students' usage of the Chromebooks, they may do so.

Chromebooks that become damaged will be sent for repair and the student will be issued a loaner until their Chromebook is returned. If a Chromebook is damaged beyond use by the student a second time, the student will need to provide their own laptop going forward as a loaner will not be issued.

Students who lose their Chromebook will not be issued a new Chromebook. The IT will department will help the student try and locate the device based on the last login (to the best of their ability), but a loaner will not be issued to the student for the first 24 hours that the Chromebook was reported lost to a Director.

TOOLS

To enhance student skills and their learning experience, some classes will offer the students the usage of tools such as lab equipment, hammers, saws, drills, screwdrivers, scissors etc. Every reasonable effort will be used to teach safe practice procedures and proper usage of tools in school. To follow safe practices, students may only use these tools while being directly supervised by their classroom teacher. If a student continuously disregards safety procedures and uses the tools inappropriately, possibly endangering themselves or others, the teacher may limit further usage of the tools and/or other disciplinary action may be taken. If the inappropriate use of tools by a student takes place during an elective, the student may be required to transfer into a different available elective.

UPPER SCHOOL AI USE & INTEGRITY POLICY (Grades 4–8)

Whether or not teachers use AI in class, students will encounter it outside of school. Our goal is to teach responsible, transparent, and ethical use of AI, while maintaining academic

integrity and supporting skill development. Mistakes can lead to reteaching, while repeated or intentional misuse leads to consequences.

FOUNDATIONAL EXPECTATIONS (APPLIES TO ALL CLASSES)

1. Transparency and Clarity

By default, AI is not permitted on assignments. If AI is allowed, teachers will clearly indicate one of the following:

- AI Allowed for Specific Tasks (listed)
- AI Allowed with a Required "How I Used AI" Note

Students should assume AI is not allowed unless a teacher explicitly states otherwise.

2. Process Expectations (Protect Students & Teachers)

To support fairness, learning, and integrity:

- Major writing assignments must be drafted in Google Docs (or another teacher-approved platform) so the writing process is visible through the version history
- Students should not delete drafts or any documents that showcase progress until the assignment or unit is complete
- If a plagiarism/AI detector raises concerns, teachers will speak with the student first to review their process. To better understand a student's authorship and learning process, teachers may also ask the students to provide a brief handwritten summary explanation, or oral response related to the assignment. These checks focus on understanding, not punishment, and help to ensure the work reflects their own thinking.
- Automated detectors are used as conversation starters, not evidence of wrongdoing.
 - Some checkers that may be used are:
 - GPTZero: Detects text likely generated by large-language models. Provides sentence-level AI probability and "human vs AI" scoring.
 - Copyleaks: Combines AI detection with plagiarism detection, offers detailed reports, and handles essays and research-type writing well.
 - Scribbr AI Detector: Offers human vs AI detection, flags content generated or heavily refined by AI, works across multiple languages.

- Winston AI: Built for educators and provides visual “human vs AI” breakdowns, supports bulk uploads, integrates with LMS, and claims high accuracy; useful for large classes or frequent submissions.
 - It should be clearly noted that though AI detectors are helpful, they are not foolproof and give False-Positives and/or False-Negatives. So the use of Google Docs (for example) where an instructor can view the students editing process and progress is critically important.
 - AI Detection tools are not able to reliably identify all AI-generated content, especially when text has been heavily revised. For this reason, the writing process, version history, and student explanation are more important than detection results alone.
 - A flagged sentence, or a few, does not mean the work is AI created, or demonstrates academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty occurs when AI is used in a way that replaces a student’s own thinking, planning, or expression on an assignment that is meant to reflect their own independent work.
- Mistakes lead to reteaching. Repeated choices lead to consequences.
- Teachers may reduce credit within the suggested range, based on student effort, honesty, and quality of revised work at their discretion.

3. What Counts as AI? (Student-Friendly Definitions)

Allowed (unless teacher says otherwise):

- Spellcheck/grammar check
- Formatting tools

Requires teacher permission:

- Sentence rewriting or rephrasing
- Translation tools
- Paragraph-level revision suggestions
- Generating images, charts, or diagrams
- Generating ideas, concepts, characters, or themes

Not allowed unless explicitly assigned:

- Generating sentences, paragraphs, essays, or answers
- AI problem solvers for math, science, or coding
- Paraphrasing to hide copied material

- Using AI to misrepresent one’s thinking

Important Note: The planning, brainstorming, and conceptualization stages of an assignment are a critical part of the learning process. Unless a teacher explicitly allows it, students should not use AI to generate ideas, themes, characters, or project concepts. Students may request permission for limited AI use for specific tasks within an assignment.

GUIDELINES:

- **Indicators of Authenticity**
 - Work shows conceptual understanding
 - Document history supports student authorship
 - Student can explain ideas and revisions
- **Indicators of Concern**
 - Student denies AI use despite evidence
 - Entire sections appear suddenly in final draft
 - No meaningful revision history

TIERED CONSEQUENCE SYSTEM FOR AI MISUSE

How Consequences Are Determined

Consequences are determined by the severity of the misuse, the student’s intent, and whether a pattern of behavior is present. This means that repeated misuse in different classes is considered part of the same pattern and may result in escalated consequences.

Tier	Intent	Pattern	Impact	Involvement
1	Mistake	None	None	Parent notification is optional
2	Poor Judgement	Emerging	Partial	Parents emailed, student notes updated
3	Dishonesty	Clear	Zero+Recovery	Parents and Admin are emailed
4	Severe	Repeated	Restrictive Plan	Parents and Admin are emailed

TIER 1: FIRST INSTANCE (LOW-LEVEL, ACCIDENTAL MISUSE, MISTAKE, OR CONFUSION)

Examples

- Student uses Grammarly, ChatGPT, etc. to “improve wording” when not allowed
- Student uses a translator instead of writing in English or foreign language
- Small portions of AI-generated text appear in the work
- Student seems confused rather than malicious

Response

- **Restore & Repair:** Student revises or redoes the work without AI (or with proper disclosure)
- **Teacher–Student Conversation** (short, documented)
- **Light parent notification** (email)
- **Mini-lesson:** Teacher reviews class AI expectations
- **No academic penalty** if misunderstanding appears genuine

Goal: Clarify expectations early, prevent shame, and build responsible habits.

TIER 2: SECOND INSTANCE (PATTERN OR DISHONESTY)

Examples

- Student uses AI to write significant parts of an assignment
- Multi-class pattern emerges
- Student denies AI use when version history or process evidence suggests otherwise
- AI used on independent work or homework meant to show their thinking

Response

- **Redo assignment** with teacher guidelines
- **Reduced credit on redo** (typical range: –10% to –25%)
- **Parent email**
- **Student notes updated**

Goal: Address pattern behavior, reinforce honesty, support skill-building.

TIER 3: THIRD INSTANCE (MAJOR INTEGRITY VIOLATION)

Examples

- Entire assignment or major portion is AI-generated
- AI used on a **quiz** or assessment
- Evidence of intentional misrepresentation or evading teacher expectations
- Repeated offenses despite support and reteaching (from Tiers 1 and 2)

Response

- **Assignment is scored as 50%**, with the option to complete a recovery assignment for partial credit
- **Mandatory Family Meeting** (student, parent, teacher, and Upper School Director)
- **Potential loss of Chromebook/laptop** will be evaluated given the contributing factors behind the AI misuse

Goal: Reset the pattern, restore trust, and reinforce academic integrity.

TIER 4: SEVERE OR REPEATED VIOLATIONS

Examples

- Using AI to harass, impersonate, or generate harmful content
- Repeated academic dishonesty after Tier 3 interventions
- Circumventing school filters, using unauthorized accounts, or bypassing restrictions
- Coordinated academic dishonesty involving AI or shared AI outputs

Response

- **Assignment is scored as a 50%** with no opportunity to make it up
- **Mandatory Family Meeting** (student, parent, teacher, Upper School Director, and Head of School)
 - Evaluate the situation to determine whether an at-home reflection period is needed

- **Quarter-long AI-restricted plan** will explore:
 - Hand-written assignments
 - Loss of Chromebook/laptop privileges

Goal: Protect the community, uphold integrity, and ensure digital safety.

CARPOOL PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF

Please be patient and remember that the Nysmith carpool line is a NO CELL PHONE ZONE.

MORNING ARRIVAL/ DROP OFF

The Nysmith School encourages parents to drop off children in the dismissal drop off line between 8:00 AM and 8:15 AM. Children need to be in their classes at 8:30 AM sharp.

Main Entrance: All students may be dropped off at the Main entrance. Families dropping their children off in the drop off lane should proceed past the transition lot entrance, past the Directors parking island, to the front of the school. Parents may choose to pull forward to the front of the line where teachers are positioned to assist children getting out of the car. Students are welcome to exit their cars on their own in the blue striped area in front of the Main entrance. Parents are asked to remain in their cars at all times. After dropping off your child, please exit via the secondary entrance.

Silver Wing entrance: If all the students in the car are 4th grade and above—and do not need assistance getting out of the car—they may be dropped off in front of the Silver wing where a teacher will be on duty to ensure the children’s safety. Because of the traffic patterns in the drop off area, please do not drop children at *both* entrances. If there are children 3rd grade and below in your car, please be sure to drop off all the students you are transporting at the Main entrance.

AFTERNOON PICKUP

Be sure to bring your pick-up pass every day.

Preschool Dismissal

Preschool students may be picked up in front of the Main entrance from 2:30-2:45 unless they are enrolled in childcare or riding the bus. When their car reaches the entrance, parents will show their pick-up pass to the teacher and the child will be brought out and helped into the car.

Main Entrance

All students can be picked up from the Main entrance, where parents will be required to show their pick-up pass to the administrator on duty. The administrator will then call the children from their classroom to the Main entrance to be dismissed. Teachers will be on duty outside the entrance to assist children into their cars.

Lunchroom Walk-Up (Kindergarten and older)

When you arrive at Nysmith, please park in the Transition Parking Lot and proceed through the gate at the back of the lot. Turn right on the path to pick up your child from the lunchroom Walk-Up. Show your pick up pass to the teacher on duty, the teacher will release your child to you. Please note that there are a lot of families that choose to pick up their children from the Lunchroom Walk-Up, when your child is dismissed into your care, please proceed to the parking lot so that other families may pick up their child as well.

Silver Wing Pick-Up (5th grade and older: direct texting to the student is required)

Children being picked up at this location must be able to get into the car without assistance.

When you arrive at Nysmith, please text your child to have them come outside to be picked up. We regret that if your child does not have a phone, they will need to be picked up from the main entrance.

DRESS CODE

****The dress code applies to students in kindergarten through eighth grade****

GENERAL STATEMENTS

- Clean, presentable, appropriately sized clothing is required.
- No torn/shredded clothing of any kind may be worn.
- Logos or writing of any kind must be no more than 1½" by 1½".
- No jeans or denim are allowed.
- Hair color and make-up must be a natural hue.
- Ear piercing is the only body piercing that is permitted.

SHIRTS, BLOUSES, SWEATERS, SWEATSHIRTS, AND DRESSES

- Shirts, blouses, and dresses must have collars.
- Dresses must be solid colors; may have design of same color.
- Turtlenecks are allowed.
- No tank tops or bare midriffs are permitted.
- All tops must be solid colors without stripes, pictures, or other designs. Solid colored shirts with white collars are acceptable.
- All solid colors are acceptable.
- T-shirts are allowed *under* collared shirts.
- Appropriately fitted, solid-colored sweatshirts, including those with hoods, are permitted. They may not have logos larger than 1½" by 1½".

- Plain sweaters, sweatshirts, and jackets may be worn inside the school. **Heavy coats may not be worn inside**

PANTS, SKIRTS, CAPRIS, SHORTS, CULOTTES, SKORTS, AND JUMPERS

- Colors allowed: Any solid color.
- Jeans, sweatpants, and other athletic wear (joggers, running shorts) are not permitted.
- Shorts, skirts and skorts must be no higher than 6" above the knee in length.
- Leggings worn as tights under a dress or skirt may be patterned.

HATS/ HEADBANDS

- No hats of any kind may be worn in the building.
- Head coverings worn for religious purposes are permitted.

SHOES

- Shoes must be in good condition.
- If laced shoes are worn, they must be laced and tied.
- Please do not wear black soles that leave marks on the floors.
- No mules, clogs, flip-flops, slippers, or other heel-less slip-ons are allowed.

JACKETS AND COATS

- Any coat design will be acceptable, but all coats must remain in the lockers.
- Students may wear plain, one-colored sweaters/vests or solid blazers.

MIDDLE SCHOOL (6TH – 8TH) PE DRESS CODE

If changing for PE, the acceptable uniform will be plain solid shirts (with or without collars, all colors acceptable), and solid colored *mid-thigh (no higher than 6" above the knee)* shorts, or pants (black, beige or navy acceptable). Stripes and piping are allowed. Logos may be no larger than 1½" by 1½". As is policy, bare midriffs, tank tops, and spaghetti straps are not allowed.

HOLIDAY ATTIRE

- Holiday attire will be allowed on the day of holiday parties.
- "Theme" days and dress down days will be held periodically.

ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

- **First infraction:** A reminder will be sent home in the student's backpack, including a copy of the dress code with the relevant rule highlighted.

- **Second infraction:** A reminder will be emailed to the parents, including a copy of the dress code with the relevant rule highlighted. The upper or lower school director will be copied on the email.
- **Third infraction:** The student will be sent to the office and the parents will be called to bring a change of clothes. The student must remain in the office until a change of clothes is brought.