

Portola Hills Elementary School

Parent Handbook 2025 - 2026

Alison Bruner, Principal

Mission Statement

Portola Hills Elementary School is preparing students for their future. Our balanced programs build skills in critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. We provide students with the technical and communication skills and the positive values that will allow them to be productive and successful citizens in the 21st century. We challenge and empower our students to strive for excellence and to become well-rounded PHE citizens.

Office Information:

Staff: Alison Bruner, Principal
Mrs. Cookie Rustigian, Office Manager
Mrs. Cindy Guerrero, Office Clerk
Mrs. Dina Allen, Office Clerk
Mrs. Rachel Ebarb, Health Aide
Mrs. Isabel North, Community Liaison

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Contact Numbers:

Phone: (949) 459-9370

Attendance: (949) 459-9370

Daily Schedule:

K – 6 8:00 a.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Modified Day Schedule (every Thursday):

K -6 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Non-Discrimination & Harassment (BP 5145.3)

Portola Hills Hills Elementary School desires to provide a safe school environment that allows all students equal access to and opportunities in the district's academic, extracurricular, and other educational support programs, services, and activities. The Board prohibits, at any district school or school activity, unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, targeted at any student by anyone based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

Visitors and Volunteers on Campus

Campus Visitors:

Campus Visitors during the school day or outside of the school day are defined as "spectators" – not helping (i.e. "watching" plays, performances etc, in classrooms or the MPR etc...). All parents who are visitors need to be checked in at the office in the Raptor Visitor System for classroom activities (inside or out on campus). Visitors as it relates to drop off or pick up are only permitted as far as the front courtyard area and visitors are not permitted on campus or in the Kindergarten play yard. Our

designated arrival/dismissal area has been identified as our main courtyard area which is located outside our Multi- Purpose Room (MPR) at the front of our school. We have posted signs in all areas to refrain from entering our internal campus.

Campus Volunteers:

Campus Volunteers during the school day or outside of the school day are defined as any parent “helping” inside or outside. Teachers shall schedule classroom volunteers on an as needed basis. Presently, all volunteers must complete a volunteer form, provide a copy of their drivers license and check in and out through the office Visitor Raptor System.

Lunch Program:

All students should eat something nutritious for lunch. We encourage students to bring their lunch or enjoy a free lunch from food services. Current menus and information about buying lunches is available online at: www.svusd.org. You may also find information from Portola Hills website. Use the “Food Services” button to find current information.” We ask that students do not bring anything from home in glass or breakable containers.

Absences and Reporting Absences- AR 5113:

In order to keep students safe, we verify student absences as early as possible each day. If your child will be absent from school, please call our 24-hour attendance line (**949-459-9370**) by 8:00 AM or email us at PHAttendance@svusd.org. Please leave your name, your relationship to the child, the child’s name, the date, and the reason for the absence.

It is critical that children attend school consistently. In addition to missing important classroom instruction, absent students are often frustrated by trying to catch up. The State of California considers a student with three or more unexcused absences to be truant. Students are excused if absent because of illness or other justifiable cause. **Children should not be sent to school when they are not feeling well.** If a pupil becomes ill or is injured at school, you will be called to pick them up. Students will be given ample opportunity to make-up work that is missed. If your child is absent for 2 or more days, you may request homework on our attendance line. The teacher will prepare homework on the 3rd day of absence and it will be ready at the end of the school day. Let us know if a classmate will deliver the homework or if you will personally pick it up from the office. Each absence must be verified, preferably by a telephone call to the attendance line on the day of absence. This is the quickest and surest method of accounting for the whereabouts of our students.

The following absences are excused:

1. Student illness or for the benefit of mental or behavioral health
2. Quarantine, under direction of a county or city health officer
3. Medical, dental or optometry appointment
4. Attending the funeral of a member of a student's immediate family. (Immediate family means mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or any relative living in the household of the student.)
5. If a child is to be absent for 5 or more days, the school may develop an independent study contract. This is a fairly simple procedure. Please notify the office ahead of time so the proper contract form can be prepared. It will require the signature of the parent, student and teacher. Upon

return from the absence, the teacher will verify that the work has been completed and will be forwarded to the District.

Absence and Tardy Policy:

Each year there are some students who are illegally absent from school and many others who are persistently tardy. The California Education Code, Section 48200, makes full time education compulsory for children from ages six to sixteen, or until high school graduation. It is the legal responsibility of parents or guardians to see that their school-aged children are enrolled and attending school every day, unless they have a valid excuse. Under the law, a child may be legally excused from attending school or for being tardy only for illness, for the benefit of mental or behavioral health, quarantine, funeral service of a member of the immediate family, or for medical, dental or optometric services.

Tardy:

In order to foster student responsibility, minimize classroom interruptions, and avoid unnecessary embarrassment, students should arrive at school on time. If being late is unavoidable, please call the office and let us know that your child will be late. A tardy is unexcused for any reason other than illness, medical appointment, or a late school bus.

Medication:

The Education Code allows school personnel to administer medications only if the following steps are taken:

- Physician's Request Form is completed and submitted to the office annually
- Parental release form is on file in the office
- The original pharmacy container that is labeled with name of the child, name of the medicine, dosage requirements, and physician's name
- Medicine is brought to school or taken home only by the parent. Students may not bring any medication including aspirin or vitamins, to school to keep in their possession.

Early Dismissal / Parental Custody:

Children leaving campus early must be signed out by the parent, legal guardian, or other adult listed on the child's Emergency Card. Please come to the office to sign out your child, rather than going directly to the classroom. **Photo I.D. is required.** We will call the classroom and have your child sent to the office. If there are specific limitations related to legal custody, we are required to follow the directions in the most recent legal custody documents signed by a judge on file in the office. Please be advised that the natural mother or father can obtain their child or information from the school at any time unless a court order is on file indicating otherwise.

Classroom Interruptions:

The PHE staff makes a concerted effort to establish a learning environment that is conducive to the development of strong study habits and uninterrupted instructional time. We seek your cooperation and assistance in this effort. You can help us by:

- Sending a note to the teacher if you need to pick up your child early
- Avoid calling the school and leaving messages for your child, unless it is an emergency

- Bringing forgotten items (lunch, books, instruments, etc.) to the school office. We will get it to your child at an appropriate time

Playground Supervision:

Playground supervision will begin at 7:48 a.m. After school supervision will end at 2:30 p.m.

Students should not arrive on campus before 7:45 a.m. or stay later than 2:30 p.m. Students remaining on the sidewalks on Saddleback Ranch Rd. or Pendleton Rd. at 2:30 p.m. will be brought into the front office. All students should leave campus at dismissal or be participating in after-school programs that provide non-school personnel adult supervision (such as our fee-based TLC child care program). Please be advised that PHE cannot assume responsibility for children on campus during unsupervised times.

The Learning Connection (TLC):

TLC is a positive option for working parents in need of childcare. The Portola Hills Learning Connection is located in three portable buildings near the back of the school. Hours are from 7:00 AM until 6:00 PM. If you would like additional information, including fees, please call 768-0981 (Ext. 2).

Textbooks / Library Books:

Textbooks and library books are school property and are loaned to students. Students are responsible for their safekeeping. All hardcover textbooks must be covered. Students are responsible for paying for lost or damaged books.

Homework:

The intention of homework is provided to review the day's lessons and practice important concepts, which have been introduced during class. Homework is to be assigned as stated in the School Board policy on the following basis:

Grade 1	10-20 Minutes	Grade 2	20-30 Minutes
Grade 3	30-40 Minutes	Grade 4-5	40-60 Minutes
Grade 6	60-90 Minutes		

Homework is intended to be an independent activity. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's teacher first if the average amount of time typically spent on homework differs significantly from the times above, or if your child requires a significant amount of assistance in order to complete his/her homework.

Behavior Management and PBIS:

The PHE staff believes that all children, with proper guidance and reinforcement, can behave appropriately at school. At PHE we follow a Positive Behavior Intervention & Support program named PBIS. Our rules in PBIS are based on our Explorer Expectations that specifically identify "Three B's" that are explicitly taught to our students.:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible

- Be Safe

Additionally a program titled, Second Step is taught weekly in all grades. The Second Step program is part of our social emotional curriculum and provides anti-bullying and pro-social behavior lessons for teachers.

Compass Coupons

- Students earn Compass Coupons for an opportunity to receive school-wide recognition when they demonstrate exemplary “Three B” behavior.

Consequences for infractions of the PHE Rules can range from a simple word of caution to suspension from class or school. Though consequences are based on our district’s Discipline Policy, we make every effort to be reasonable, to take the circumstances into account, and to respond so that students learn from the experience.

Student Conduct & Behavior

Though we strive to resolve conflict before it occurs, PHE follows the district’s board policies outlined below.

- [BP 5131 Conduct](#)
- [AR 5131 Conduct](#)
- [BP 5144.1 Suspensions and Expulsion/Due Process](#) (English)
- [AR 5144.1 Suspensions and Expulsion/Due Process](#) (Español)
- [BP 5131.2 Bullying](#) (English)
- [AR 5131.2 Bullying](#) (Espanol)

Dress Code:

We have found that there is a correlation between a student’s behavior and attitude, and his/her manner of dress. There is a wide range of available clothing styles that reflect a positive attitude and personal appearance. We ask that students attending PHE wear clothing that is comfortable, clean, and appropriate for an elementary school. Because our instructional program includes active play, students should wear appropriate clothing. Items that students wear must not disrupt the educational process, create safety concerns, nor create any distractions. Many popular fashions may not be appropriate for an elementary school setting. Any combination of clothing or specific items or apparel that law enforcement considers to currently be gang-related is prohibited. As trends change, this may change over time.

Board Policy 5132 Dress & Grooming:

<https://svusd.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=1264&public=true>

Administrative Regulations 5132 Dress & Grooming:

<https://svusd.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=2020&public=true>

Board Policy 5136 (Gangs)::

<https://svusd.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=1268&public=true>

Administrative Regulations 5136 (Gangs):

<https://svusd.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=1842&public=true>

Mobile Communication Devices (MCD) Policy: (Cell Phones, Smart Watches, Laptops and Electronic Communication Devices):

Students may have cell phones and mobile communication devices (MCDs) on campus and may be used before the arrival bell rings and after the dismissal bell rings, however, they must be turned off and put away at all times during the school day, including recess and lunch. Staff may confiscate cell phones & MCDs for violation of this policy when the possession/use of the cell phone or device poses a safety issue or threat to the campus as determined by administration. Teachers may confiscate the MCD if it is disruptive to the classroom environment. Staff/Teachers will issue two warnings to students when the MCD is used during the school day and on the third warning the device may be confiscated and picked up from the office at the end of the day. Even if confiscated, the school or district is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged cell phones or devices brought to campus. For electronic watches with communication features, the watch may be powered on during the school day but the communication features must be disabled or not used during the school day. See Board Policy 5131.8 for more information.

Bicycles, Skateboards, Rollerblades, and Things With Wheels:

Children in grades **3-6** may ride their bicycles to school. Each bicycle must be in safe working order, be equipped with a lock, and be parked in the bike racks. California law requires that all school age bike riders wear safety helmets. Children are expected to follow all traffic safety laws when going to and from school. School rules include walking bicycles when they are on school grounds. Riding a bicycle to school is a “privilege” which may be taken away if safety rules are not followed. A **Bicycle Parent Consent Form** must be kept on file in the school office.

Students are not allowed to ride scooters, skateboards, “Heelies,” or roller blades to school or on the school grounds at any time. This includes before, during, or after school, or at school-sponsored events.

Personal Toys and Electronic Devices:

Personal play equipment, such as toys, balls, games, and electronic devices, such as iPods, MP3 players, iPads, hand held games, etc. should not be brought to school unless special permission has been granted by the teacher or principal. These items will be collected and held in the office until after school.

Pets:

Pets should not be on campus unless special permission has been granted by the administration. Once permission has been granted, all pets must remain in an appropriate cage or enclosure so that both the pets and our students are kept safe from injury or allergic reactions.

Please be aware that DOGS ARE NOT TO BE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS AT ANY TIME, INCLUDING NON-SCHOOL HOURS. (O. C. Ordinance 41.46) Should you choose to bring your dog

when walking your child to and from school, please wait for your child off the school grounds. Service animals are permitted.

School Site Council:

The School Site Council (SSC) is an elected group of staff and parents from Portola Hills that acts in an advisory capacity to the Principal and staff. The Council's task is to develop, implement, and update a Single School Site Plan as outlined in Assembly Bill 65. The SSC serves as a communication link between the community and the school.