

Lower School Policies and Procedures

In addition to the following Lower School information, please also refer to the [All-School Policies PDF](http://www.bbns.org/handbook) at www.bbns.org/handbook.

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Frequently Called Phone Numbers

BB&N Main Number	617-547-6100
Attendance Line	617-800-2406
Rebecca T. Upham, Head of School	617-800-2101
Rosemary Downer, Assistant to the Head of School	617-800-2101
Shera Selzer, Interim Lower School Director, Grades B-2	617-800-2464
Rebecca Geary, Interim Lower School Director Grades 3-6	617-800-2460
Sharon Cumberbatch, Assistant to the Lower School Director, Grades B-2	617-800-2464
Nastaran Hakimi, Assistant to the Lower School Director, Grades 3-6	617-800-2461
Geordie Mitchell, Director of Enrollment Management	617-800-2470
Dr. Jacqueline Kieff, Psychologist	617-800-2480
Kimberly Gold, Coordinator for Psychological and Learning Support Services	617-800-2227
Judith Koeckhoven, School Nurse	617-800-2488
Colleen Klein, Director of After School Programs	617-800-2784
Lynda Boyages, Bursar	617-800-2711

The BB&N Lower School encompasses eight grade levels, from Beginners through Grade Six. Beginners, Kindergarteners and First Graders are housed in the Morse Building; Second through Fourth Graders in the New Wing, and Fifth and Sixth Graders in the Brick Building. In an emergency regarding Beginners through Grade One, call Ms. Cumberbatch (617-800-2464), and regarding Grades Two through Six, call Ms. Hakimi (617-800-2461).

- ◆ Browne & Nichols, founded 1883
- ◆ The Buckingham School, founded 1889
- ◆ Schools merged, 1974

LS Calendar 2011-2012

2011

Tuesday, September 6	First day of school
Thursday, September 29	Rosh Hashanah (no classes)
Monday, October 10	Columbus Day (no classes)
Tuesday, October 11	Professional Day (no classes)
Friday, November 11	Veterans Day (no classes)
Thursday, November 18	Conference Day (no classes)
Wednesday, November 23	Thanksgiving Break (12 PM Dismissal)
Monday, November 28	Classes Resume
Friday, December 16	Winter Break (Begins after last class)

2012

Tuesday, January 3	Classes Resume
Monday, January 16	Martin Luther King Day (no classes)
Friday, January 27	Admissions Day (no classes)
Monday, February 20	Presidents Day (no classes)
Tuesday, February 21	Professional Day (no classes)
Thursday, March 1	Conference Day (no classes)
Friday, March 9	Spring Break (Begins after last class)
Monday, March 26	Classes Resume
Monday, April 16	Patriots Day (no classes)
Monday, May 28	Memorial Day (no classes)
Wednesday, June 6	Lower/Middle School Closing
Friday, June 8	US Graduation

**The calendar is current as of July 1, 2011*

Our Community Expectations

The Lower School campus at BB&N is a Responsive Classroom campus (*to learn more about Responsive Classroom, please visit the Lower School section of the BB&N website.*) The guiding principles of this ideology are instrumental in shaping our classroom communities. Below is an outline of what we feel shapes our educational philosophy at the Lower School.

The Lower School strives to create a warm, safe, and welcoming environment that encourages the growth and development of the whole child. We understand and firmly believe that:

1. Knowing the children whom we teach—individually, culturally, and developmentally—is as important as knowing the content of the curriculum that we teach.

2. We understand that research has shown that the greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
3. The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
4. How children learn is as important as what they learn; process and content go hand in hand.
5. Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to the children's education.
6. To be successful socially and academically, children need to develop a set of social skills that includes five particularly important skills. These skills are cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control (often referred to as the acronym CARES in the Responsive Classroom approach).
7. How we, the adults at school, work together is as important as our individual competence: lasting change begins with the adult community.

To create a caring community of learners in the BB&N Lower School, we hold a standard of:

- **Respect for ourselves;**
- **Respect for each other;**
- **Respect for our environment.**

At the beginning of each School year, children discuss with their teachers their hopes and goals for the school year. Using the simple rules listed above as a framework, teachers work with students to design classroom rules for the year. It is expected that Lower School students will show courtesy, respect, and consideration for the feelings, ideas, and work of others at all times. Students take care of themselves by being well rested, nourished, and prepared and ready to put forth their best effort.

Community members work to ensure that consequences for our actions are clear and logical. These consequences should also be respectful, relevant, and realistic.

The Goals of Logical Consequences

1. To give children the chance to regain self control (i.e. take a break);
2. To help children:
 - a. Recognize the connection between their actions and the outcome of their actions;
 - b. Fix problems caused by their mistake or misbehavior;
 - c. Make amends and preserve their relationships;
 - d. Avoid similar problems in the future;
3. To preserve the dignity of the child and the integrity of the group;
4. To keep children safe.

The Three Kinds of Logical Consequences

1. You break it, you fix it: this gives the student a chance to take responsibility for their actions and make amends;
2. Loss of privilege;
3. Take a break: a child who is beginning to lose control in a way that is disruptive or compromises safety is asked to remove him/herself from the situation.

Consequences for more serious violations

The following violations, handled by the Lower School Director and the Head of School, will result in the teacher or director notifying parents. The School reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student whose behavior is determined to be unacceptable. The decision of the School in this regard is final.

Serious violations may include:

1. possession of weapons;
2. violence;
3. drugs/alcohol;
4. repeated violations of academic integrity;
5. defacing school property;
6. harassment;
7. bullying (repeated, documented acts). For more, please read BB&N's [Anti-Bullying policy](#).

A safe learning environment requires that the following items are not permitted in school. Parents are asked to ensure that the following items stay at home:

1. Laser pens, beepers, and electronic games;
2. Toy or real weapons, matches, lighters, ropes, martial arts items, fireworks;
3. Roller blades, Heelies, roller skates, skateboards, or lacrosse sticks;
4. Gum, candy, or soda.

Portable music devices and cell phones are inherently anti-social, a distraction to the teaching/learning process, and an easy target for theft. Students should leave these devices at home. If a student is found in violation of this rule, the device will be confiscated by a teacher, and returned to the student at the end of the day.

If a family stays after school to play, it is critical that the parents or caregivers closely supervise all children during this time. BB&N accepts no responsibility for supervision of children not enrolled in the After-School Program. Parents and other caregivers are expected to comply with our Community Expectations (see page 4) when supervising children after dismissal. They should play in outdoor areas that do not impact on other After-School business.

Children should not come inside during this time as faculty are working in their rooms and need time and space to prepare for the next day. The After-School Program uses the Kindergarten and Grade 1 playground as well as the back field. It is impossible for the staff to supervise children in the program along with other children. Children staying to play may use the Brick Building playground. Finally, the Beginners playground is appropriate for younger children and these children should be closely supervised.

Student Life

After School Programs

The overarching goal of After School at BB&N is to offer students an enriching and fun environment that students can enjoy, and a stress-free, high-quality program upon which parents can rely. Parents can choose from options that range from the less structured pace of After School Care to the more structured opportunities available in the After School Activities Program (ASAP). All After School Programs are

offered on a per-semester basis. For any questions about After-School Programs, call Colleen Klein at 617-800-2784 or check out the website link, <http://www.bbns.org/lower-school/after-school/asap>

After School Care

Our regular After School Care Program offers children in Beginners through Grade 6 a balance of organized and unstructured activities that provide a pleasant and comfortable afternoon experience. Activities include free play, games, art, stories, computer time, and a quiet place for homework. After School Care is available for all Lower School students, Beginners through Grade 6, from 3:00-5:30 PM (2:00-5:30 PM on Wednesdays). After School Care is offered on a per-semester basis. Each semester coincides with the halfway point of the BB&N academic calendar. <http://www.bbns.org/lower-school/after-school/care>

After School Activities Program (ASAP)

The After School Activities Program (ASAP) consists of more structured activities for any students in grades K-6 who wish to participate. This program may include classes in chess, soccer, tennis, karate, dance, cooking, art, robotics, and more. These classes typically meet immediately following school dismissal for one hour after school once a week on the Lower School Campus. All ASAP classes are offered on a per-semester basis. Each semester coincides with the halfway point of the BB&N academic calendar.

Athletics/Physical Education

For information on BB&N's Athletic program please refer to the [Athletics Policies & Information PDF](#) at www.bbns.org/handbook.

Physical education and interscholastic sports are an important part of student life at BB&N. We offer a well-rounded program of fitness education and team sports. Students are expected to participate in physical activity throughout their career at BB&N.

MS and US teams compete regularly, and parents are encouraged to bring LS children to cheer on the BB&N teams. Parents should check our web site for sports schedules.

Attendance

If a child will be absent for a day or will be late, parents should call before 8:15 a.m. If we do not hear from you by 9:00 a.m., we will place a call to your home.

Attendance Line

	617-800-2406
Morse Building — Ms. Cumberbatch	617-800-2464
Brick Building/New Wing — Ms. Hakimi	617-800-2461

Students are expected to be with their class or in their homerooms by 8:15 a.m. Attendance lists are sent to the Morse Building Office and the Brick Building office by 8:30 a.m. If a student arrives late, checking in at the Morse Building Office or Brick Building Office is required.

If an absence is health related, and more than a one-day absence, parents should call Judith Koeckhoven, our School Nurse, at 617-800-2488.

In the case of an extended illness, please speak with your child's teacher in order to receive assignments if appropriate. If a child will miss School for more than two days for any reason other than illness, **permission**

should be requested in writing to one of the Lower School Directors at least one month in advance.

Teachers are not required to provide schoolwork for these absences. We strongly discourage these absences and request that all families plan vacation during scheduled school breaks.

Parents should make every attempt to schedule doctor, dentist and other appointments outside of School hours. When circumstances require absence from School for any reason, a written note or email should be sent to your child's homeroom teacher. Students are expected to check in and out with Ms. Cumberbatch or Ms. Hakimi.

Buddies

The Lower School has developed a "buddy" program that pairs older and younger students, based on our belief that children of different ages learn much from one another. Teachers from two grades work together at the beginning of the year to match the buddies and plan activities during Community Time on Friday afternoons, once or twice a month.

Celebrations

Birthday Celebrations

Parents are asked to use discretion and sensitivity when planning birthday celebration outside of school to prevent feelings of exclusion. For inclusive school birthday celebrations, parents are invited to provide a simple, healthy treat to celebrate their child's birthday. Check with your child's teacher to find a date that works and to find out if parents attend the celebration. Please bring enough for the entire class and several teachers. **Also, please remember that the Lower School campus is nut-free; check with your child's teacher and Nurse Koeckhoven about food allergies in the class.** Invitations to personal birthday parties, and gifts for personal birthday parties should be handled outside of school.

Other Celebrations

Throughout the year, we encourage families to share celebrations and traditions with their child's class at school. Since we don't have extensive cooking facilities on campus, we ask that you bring food for celebrations already prepared from home. **Also, please remember that the Lower School campus is nut-free; check with your child's teacher and the Nurse Koeckhoven about food allergies in the class.**

Community Time

Community Time is built into the Lower School schedule on Fridays from 2:00 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. This time is used for all Lower School assemblies, building assemblies, and for get-togethers with buddies.

Daily Schedule

Before School Care, Morse Building:

The Morse Building door is unlocked at **7:45 a.m.** At that time, Before School Care begins in the music room with teacher supervision. Families arriving before 7:45 a.m. must wait outside until the door is unlocked. There is no teacher supervision prior to that time.

All children who arrive between 7:45 and 8:15 a.m. must go to Before School Care. Please do not send children or accompany children to their cubbies or homerooms on the second floor during that time because homeroom teachers are busy preparing for the day and are not available to supervise children prior to 8:15 am. To minimize confusion and congestion in the Morse Building lobby, we encourage all families to use

the carline each morning. At 8:10 a.m., children in Kindergarten and First Grade should go to their homerooms; children in the Beginner classes should check in their homerooms first before going to the playgrounds for supervised play with their teachers.

Before School Care, Brick Building/New Wing:

The Brick Building door and gate are unlocked at **7:45 a.m.** At that time, a green flag is placed at the Buckingham Street gate to inform parents that a teacher is onsite and children may be dropped off at that entrance. Families arriving before 7:45 a.m. must wait outside until the gate is unlocked. There is no teacher supervision prior to that time.

From 8:00 to 8:15 a.m., Brick Building students report to their homerooms

From 8:00 to 8:10 a.m., New Wing students report to playground or LS Gym (in inclement weather)

Homeroom Period begins at 8:15 a.m.

School Day:

Grades B-6	8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (M, T, Th, and F)
	8:15 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (W)

After School Program (B-6)	3:00 to 5:30 p.m. (M, T, Th, and F)
	2:00 to 5:30 p.m. (W)

Dress Code and Appearance

The intent of the dress code is for safety and to focus on academics. Students are expected to dress simply; clothing should be clean and in good condition. Students may not wear clothing with holes or tears. The expectation is that students will not wear clothing that inappropriately exposes skin or underwear. The School reserves the right to make decisions about the appropriateness of clothing worn to school. Students should use the following guidelines when dressing for the school day:

- No flip-flop sandals;
- No hats or bandanas worn inside buildings;
- No spaghetti straps, strapless tops, undershirts, shirts with bare midriffs and low necklines;
- No pajama pants/sleepwear;
- No clothing with inappropriate words, writing, or imagery;
- No shorts and skirts shorter than two inches above the knee (a dollar bill placed horizontally at the top of the knee should touch the hem of the shorts or skirt). This also applies if tights or leggings are worn;
- No shoes with heels over two inches.

All clothing should be labeled with the child's name. Boots should be worn to school during cold, wet weather, and left in cubbies during classes. During winter months, students should dress warmly because students go out daily for recess.

Specific to Morse Building: All Morse Building students must keep a complete change of clothing in their cubbies for emergencies. Long pants or tights are recommended during the winter term; Boots and snow pants are required whenever there is snow on the ground.

Concert Attire

Boys – plain collared shirts with tie and dark slacks. No sneakers or jeans.

Girls – Plain light shirt or blouse with sleeves, dark skirt or slacks. No sneakers, jeans, spaghetti straps, or heels over two inches.

Sixth Grade Graduation Attire

Boys – Blue blazer, plain collared shirts with tie and khaki slacks. No sneakers or jeans.

Girls – Semi-formal dress (not shorter than two inches above the knee) or slacks. No sneakers, flip-flop sandals, jeans, spaghetti straps, strapless tops or heels over two inches.

Homework

Beginners, Kindergarten, and Grade 1: read aloud with your child(ren) for a minimum of 15 minutes every night. In Grade 1, some unfinished work may be sent home, as well as extra practice on a skill or concept.

Grade 2: two assignments per week on average, which may include math, spelling, and/or handwriting practice, *and* 15 minutes of independent reading every night.

Grade 3: two assignments per week, *as well as* 15 minutes keyboard practice twice a week, *and* 15 minutes of independent reading every night.

Grade 4: up to 35 minutes of homework, *and* 10 minutes (*minimum*) of recorder practice four nights a week, *plus* 15 minutes of keyboarding practice twice a week *and* a minimum of 15 minutes of independent reading four nights a week.

Grade 5: up to 60-75 minutes of homework per night, in a combination of nightly assignments and research for projects or long-term assignments. This may involve one night of homework per weekend and also include reading for book reports or writing assignments.

Grade 6: up to 90-120 minutes of homework per night. This may include one night of homework per weekend.

Note: In Grades 5 and 6, nightly independent reading is encouraged, but not required.

Types of Homework:

Homework assignments at the Lower School vary in form and purpose: they may be given to prepare students for the following day's lesson; they may offer students the opportunity to practice newly acquired skills; they may allow students to delve more deeply into a specific subject area; they may provide an opportunity for students to be creative. Overlaying all of this is the opportunity to help students develop accountability and responsibility for their own work. This includes remembering to bring the completed homework to School on its due date.

The faculty at the Lower School works with students to teach them how to complete assignments accurately and on time. Working on homework assignments allows students to develop self-discipline and independent study habits. The consequences for not turning in assignments when they are due are not dire, and we ask parental cooperation to help children remember, rather than delivering or faxing homework to school.

Faculty strive to assign work that will have a clear purpose, will relate to the material being studied in the classroom, and will be likely to engage students. It is important for both students and their parents to understand that there are many types of homework, some of which may not fit the traditional image of a student sitting at a desk, paper and pencil in hand. Assignments may include, among other types, three-dimensional constructions, collecting newspaper articles, making collages, and practicing musical instruments, reading, or watching selected television programs.

There may be instances when a special subject teacher (art, drama, music, science, etc.) assigns homework for students. In these instances, the student would factor the time allotment for completion of this homework into the total time assigned by the homeroom teacher to avoid a double time commitment. Such collaboration among faculty regarding homework assignments is common and part of the flexibility the Lower School practices when dealing with homework.

Feedback and Expectations from Faculty: In all instances where homework is assigned, students can expect there will be some type of feedback. Just as in the types of homework assigned, this feedback can take many forms.

There may be verbal responses to each student or to the class as a whole; responses which are a written summary of the homework; standard corrections on homework papers returned by the teacher; and in some cases, feedback from peers.

When assigning homework, teachers strive to explain the purpose of the assignment, the expectation of the time allotted for completion, and how the homework is going to be used.

Within each grade, teachers determine when the homework is assigned and when it is due. This information is communicated to parents early in the academic year at Back-to-School nights or in other teacher-parent communications.

Balancing Homework for Individual Student Work Rates: The issue of how rapidly or how slowly individual students work, both at school and at home, is always of concern to faculty when homework assignments are created. In general, Lower School faculty members hope and expect that at least 80 percent of the students will finish the homework in the prescribed time allotted. Parental support can be very helpful around this issue. Parents who set aside a quiet study area, who are clear about television, computer and telephone usage, and who are interested in their children's work and supportive of the process will help their children realize the greatest benefit.

Parents' role: Many parents are uncertain of the role they should take in supervising their children's homework. BB&N encourages all parents to provide structure for your child, with a set time and place for homework; to be involved and interested in your child's work; to realize that teachers do not expect error-free assignments, and to talk with your child's teacher if or when tensions arise at home over homework.

Religious Holidays Policy: All members of the BB&N community are entitled to excused absences to observe religious holidays. The Lower School Director and teachers will be supportive of the needs of students. No tests, papers, project due dates, or homework assignments may be scheduled for a religious holiday. Homework may be given over any long weekend except the Thanksgiving holiday. There will be no written homework assigned over the winter and spring vacations. There may be long-term assignments, the duration of which may span religious holidays, long weekends, and extended vacations. We strongly encourage all students to read independently over these vacations.

Plagiarism: “Plagiarism means presenting another person’s words, organization of material, or ideas as though they were your own. The term applies whether or not the attempt to plagiarize is successful and whether it is due to intentional deceit, carelessness, or misunderstanding. It refers not only to written works but also to songs, paintings, sculptures, computer programs, websites, and films. In other words, you must give credit for any aspect of a work that you have not invented. Putting your name on a paper, a poem, a sketch, etc. is your pledge that, except where specified, it is completely your own work.”

- Sharon Hamilton, *Solving More Common Writing Problems*

Libraries

The Lower School has two libraries: one in the Morse Building for B, K, and Grade 1 and another in the Brick Building for Grades 2-6. Students go to the library weekly and may check out one or two books to be taken home and returned in one or two weeks. If a book is lost, please inform the librarian. The books usually turn up, and the child may continue to check out books. If books are truly lost, however, parents are responsible for the cost of the book. The librarians are happy to talk with parents about appropriate books or strategies and allow parents to check out books for their children. Please feel free to call Heather Lee (617-800-2462) for Grades 2-6 or Lynda Dugas (617-800-2414) for B, K, and Grade 1 to find a convenient time to meet. Parents are welcome to stop by to browse as long as there is not a class in the library.

The Birthday Book Program is a tradition at BB&N for families to give a book to one of the School libraries in celebration of a child’s birthday. A favorite book or a book selected from the libraries’ wish lists may be donated. The child’s name, age, and date of birthday are written in the front of the book, which is placed in the permanent collection. Please speak with Heather Irving-Lee (Grades 2-6) or Lynda Dugas (B-K-1) for suggestions or help.

Both Lower School libraries have web pages. The web address for the Morse Building Library is <http://fc.bbns.org/lsmorselibrarywebsite>. The web address for the Brick Building Library is <http://bbn-school.org/knightline/ls/library>.

Lost and Found

There are Lost and Found boxes in the Morse Building, New Wing, and the Brick Building. All unclaimed items are displayed before the winter and spring breaks as well as the last week of School in June; unclaimed items are donated to charity.

Lunch and Snack

Parents are encouraged to pack healthy lunches for their children. Chewing gum, candy, and carbonated soda are not allowed. If a child repeatedly brings these items to school, parents will receive a telephone call asking for cooperation. Glass-lined thermos bottles are not permitted. The School provides a choice of low-fat, and nonfat milk each day at lunch (with low-fat chocolate milk offered on Wednesdays) and offers juice and crackers for snack. Trading or sharing food at lunch is not permitted. **We have no method for heating food or keeping food cold so please keep this in mind when packing lunches. Microwaves, refrigerators, or hot plates are not permitted in classrooms.**

Outdoor Recess

The faculty at BB&N believe that outdoor play is an integral part of the school day, therefore our students at all grade levels have regular recess breaks. We go outside in all kinds of weather, unless it is raining or the temperature is dangerously cold. Please be sure that your child has appropriate clothing each day for outside play.

Communication

Back-to-School Nights

Back-to-School Nights are for parents to meet all of their child's teachers, visit their child's classroom, learn about the curriculum for the year ahead, and hear from the Head of School and the Lower School Directors.

Channels of Communication

The home and school partnership is a very important part of a child's education at BB&N. Good lines of communication help to strengthen that partnership, so we have established the following procedure for parents who have questions or concerns about their child at school.

1. Parents should first talk to their child's teacher about a question or concern. Parents should leave a message by voicemail or email and the teacher will respond within 48 hours. (Standard format for ***all BB&N faculty and staff*** email addresses is: ([firstinitiallastname@bbns.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@bbns.org), e.g. jdoe@bbns.org)
2. If a parent conference is needed, either the parent or the teacher may request the presence of one of the Lower School Directors.
3. If, after a conversation with the teacher, parents feel the question or concern has not been fully addressed, they can contact the appropriate Lower School Director, Shera Selzer or Rebecca Geary by telephone or email. An appointment can also be scheduled by calling their Assistant, Ms. Sharon Cumberbatch in the Morse Building or Ms. Nastaran Hakimi in the Brick Building Lower School offices at 617-800-2464 or 617-800-2461 respectively. This step may also include a meeting with the parents, teacher, and the Lower School Director.
5. If questions still remain, parents may contact the Head of School, Rebecca T. Upham. An appointment can also be scheduled by calling the Assistant to the Head of School, Mrs. Rosemary Downer, at 617-800-2101. This step may also include a meeting with parents, teacher, and the Lower School Director. The Head of School will review the issue(s) and decide upon a course of action.

Guidelines for Effective Parent/Teacher Communication

1. Express questions and/or concerns to the teacher/parent as soon as possible. Do not wait until an issue becomes frustrating.
2. Call (or email) the teacher to schedule an appointment to discuss concerns; avoid discussing issues at pick-up and drop-off times when the teacher or Director is busy with other children. Response to emails and voicemails by teacher or parent should be within 48 hours.
3. Please maintain appropriate confidentiality in all communications by refraining from having conversations, including those on cell phones, in public places such as hallways or anywhere on School grounds.
4. Avoid discussing a student in social settings, such as potluck dinners and Back-to-School Nights.
5. Communicate in a problem-solving manner; ask for clarification before making assumptions. Please show respect and grace.

Teachers will let parents know, early in the school year, how and when they can be contacted. A list of all teacher email and voicemail numbers can be found in the Community Directory or on the School website.

The Faculty Parent Liaison Committee developed this policy and these guidelines during the 2002-03 school year.

Emergency Messages to Children

In case of a genuine family emergency, call Ms. Sharon Cumberbatch at 617-800-2464 or Ms. Nastaran Hakimi at 617-800-2461 and we will arrange to contact a student immediately.

Gifts for Teachers

Children and families of the Lower School often wish to give gifts to teachers at holidays and/or the end of the year. Our policy concerning such gifts is intended to keep them appropriate and reasonable, and to respect the wishes and comfort level of teachers. We hope to downplay differences in families' financial status or values, which can sometimes be emphasized in gift-giving to teachers. The School has a PA Faculty Gift and Appreciation Policy, which parents should refer to for guidance with gift-giving.

Parent Classroom Visits

The School encourages parents to visit your children's classes. Classroom visits should be scheduled between November 1st and May 1st. These should be arranged with your child's homeroom teacher. In addition, many teachers request parent help during the year for special projects. We ask that parents refrain from disrupting your child's class during the day. If you need to leave a message for your child, please call or stop by the offices in the Morse or Brick Buildings.

Parent/Teacher Conferences and Reports

Parents learn about their child's academic progress through parent/teacher conferences and written reports. Letter grades are given at BB&N beginning the second term for Grade 6.

Conferences: Twice a year, in November and March, there are conference days when no classes are held so teachers can meet with parents to discuss their child's progress. You will receive a letter explaining the online sign up procedure. In order to consistently communicate information to both parents about a student, we can only facilitate one formal fall and one formal spring parent conference per family. Childcare is offered for BB&N students on both of these days during your scheduled conference with the teacher.

Reports: Reports, from homeroom teachers and specialists, are mailed to parents three times a year. For Beginners through Grade 5, reports are intended for parents only and should not be read to students. It is appropriate for parents to share progress reports with Grade 6 students. (Parents can sign up online to meet with specialists on conference day).

Publications

Homework Guide for Parents: A guide to assist parents of children in Grades 2-6 with the responsibility of homework. It is given to parents of students in these grades on Back-to-School Nights in September.

The Link: An All-School electronic publication containing news and up-to-date calendar information, as well as Parents' Association newsletters. *The Link* is posted on BB&N's website on the first day of the month (six times a year) and an e-mail notification is also sent to parents.

BB&N Bulletin: Contains information from the three campuses, information for and about alumni/ae, faculty, students, and parents. *The Bulletin* is published three times a year.

The Vanguard: Published monthly by US students, this award-winning newspaper contains information primarily about US academics, arts, sports, theater productions, student concerns, etc. Lower School families may subscribe to *The Vanguard* by calling *The Vanguard* office at 617-800-2171.

When Parents Are Out of Town

Please let your child's teacher know if you will be out of town for any length of time. It is important that the School has:

- 1) The name of the person caring for your child;
- 2) How that person can be reached during the day, in case of illness or injury.

Transportation

For General Transportation Guidelines and Information, please refer to Transportation section on Lower School section of the [BB&N Website](#).

Bicycles

Students with written parental permission on file may ride a bicycle to School. Students in grades B-3 should be accompanied by a parent and students in grades 4-6 may ride independently. A helmet must be worn, the bicycle must be walked onto campus, and all bicycles must remain locked to a bike rack during school hours.

Walking to School/Walking Home

Sixth grade students may walk to and from school, without a parent, if written permission is on file with Ms. Hakimi in the Brick Building office and they live less than a mile from the LS campus. Students who participate in the Social Dance Program at the Armenian Church must have adult supervision walking from BB&N to the church.

Carpools

Carpools are arranged between families. Traffic congestion in the LS neighborhood is a serious concern, and the School strongly encourages parents to carpool to and from school whenever possible. Any changes in daily transportation must be communicated with a telephone call or in writing. **Remember, if you are using the live pickup line, the names and homerooms of all the children you are picking up should appear on a card in your windshield.**

Drop-off and Pickup Policy

Drop-off Policy—There is no parking or dropping off on Buckingham Place. This is a private, residential street that should never be used by parents except for handicap accessibility. At the Morse Building, the U-shaped driveway in front of St. Anne's House has been designated as a drop-off site for parents who do not wish to park and walk their children into school. A staff member will be at the Morse Building gate to help children exit from vehicles and enter the play area in front of the Morse Building during morning drop-off from 8-8:15 a.m. **Parents should stay in their cars while in the live drop-off lane. Please do not park in St. Anne's driveway.**

Parents may park their cars briefly in resident parking areas or on Brattle Street **in legal parking areas** and walk children into the School. (See “Parking.”) Please do not turn in our neighbor’s driveways. Courtesy is the key to smooth drop-off times!

Brick Building and New Wing – Students may be dropped off at the large front gate at the entrance to the Brick Building at 10 Buckingham Street, where there is a crossing guard to help. Please do not stop in the crosswalk.

Pickup Policy—Parents must inform the School in writing at the beginning of the year who will pick up their child; any changes (for play dates or a new carpool) must be communicated in writing so there is no confusion.

Morse Building—**Park legally** on Brattle Street (between 2:45 p.m. and 3:15 p.m.) or in resident parking and walk into the building or playground.

Brick Building and New Wing—A “live” pickup lane is available for parents and caregivers who wish to meet children without parking. This lane is in continual motion; drivers must not leave the vehicle. Before entering the live pick-up lane, please write the names and homerooms of all the children you are picking up on a card and place it in the windshield of your car. If you are unable to enter the lane without blocking traffic, drive around the block and try again, or park and walk. Alternatively, at dismissal time, you may park and walk into your child’s classroom to pick up your child (ren). Brick Building students may be picked up from their homerooms from 3:00 to 3:15 p.m. Please refrain from bringing dogs onto the campus at pick-up time. Sixth graders with written parental permission on file in the Brick Building Office may walk home. Under no circumstances should vehicles enter or exit from Buckingham Place during pick-up times.

Parking

Since the school is located in a “Permit Parking Only” area, everyone is subject to the City of Cambridge ticketing policies. BB&N is granted special consideration from these policies on Craigie, Buckingham, and Parker streets during drop-off and pick-up but only in otherwise legal spaces. Parents and care-givers may park in resident parking areas from 7:45 – 8:30 a.m. and 2:45 – 3:30 p.m., and from 1:45 – 2:30 pm for early dismissal on Wednesday typically without being ticketed.

Nearby legal parking is available on Brattle Street (near the intersection of Craigie and Sparks Streets) in front of the Armenian Church. Please note that Brattle Street is not one of the streets for parking consideration. No parking is allowed in the driveway at 15 Craigie Street (the Head of School’s driveway). Only cars with a handicap sticker may park on Buckingham Place. Otherwise, please do not use Buckingham Place, a private residential street. The towing schedule for street cleaning in the area near the Lower School is on the fourth Thursday and Friday of each month from April through December. Also see Drop-off section.

Student Health and Wellness

Food Allergies

As we continue to strive for a safe environment for our students with diagnosed food allergies, we ask that you do not send any nuts, peanuts, or foods containing nut products in lunches, snacks or birthday treats to school or the After School Program. Parents should notify the School of any allergies a student may have.

Please speak directly with the School Nurse. Before school begins, parents will be informed by letter of what guidelines must be followed to ensure the safety of all students.

Please also see Schoolwide health and wellness policies in the [All-School Policies & Information PDF](#) at www.bbns.org/handbook for further details regarding student health issues.

Student Support Services

Please see The All School Guiding Principles for Academic Support section of the [All-School Policies & Information PDF](#) at www.bbns.org/handbook.

Referrals for Evaluations

On occasion, concerns may arise regarding a student's academic, social, or emotional well-being. The process which the Lower School at BB&N uses to help respond to the needs of the student begins with the child's homeroom teacher.

Homeroom teachers meet with our consulting psychologist, Dr. Jacqueline Kieff, on a regular basis. At that time student concerns are addressed. Dr. Kieff will meet separately with the parents to discuss student concerns and plan together what possible interventions make sense. Often it is at the request of the parent that a closer look is made regarding the child's progress.

After consultation with the reading specialists, teachers, and parents, if an evaluation is needed, Dr. Kieff will recommend the names of three professional evaluators.

When the evaluation is completed, Dr. Kieff will meet with the parents to go over the recommendations and results. A copy of the evaluation will be kept in her locked files. A summary of the recommendations will be placed in the student files which current and subsequent teachers are able to use.

We encourage the parents to arrange for the evaluator to come to school to meet with the child's teachers in order to go over the recommendations and answer any questions concerning the child. Either Ms. Selzer or Ms. Geary, Lower School Directors, will also attend this meeting.

In some cases, after review of the test results, the reading specialist and homeroom teacher will suggest a tutor for the student. They can provide a list of qualified tutors to work with students for various needs. The reading specialist and the homeroom teacher will communicate and collaborate with the tutor to help meet the child's individual learning style.

We encourage a team approach in working with our students. The Lower School Directors, parents, homeroom teacher, psychologist, and reading specialists are all part of that team. Once a student moves on from the Lower School, the evaluation is given to the Middle School at the end of sixth grade.

Academic Review

In some rare cases, a student may not be able to achieve academic success in the Lower School, even with additional support. At fourth grade, we look closely at each student and may recommend that a family begin to look for another middle school setting, which is a better fit for the child's academic needs. This decision is made by the Academic Review Committee (ARC), which is comprised of all the fourth grade teachers, the

Lower School Psychologist, the All School Coordinator of Psychological & Learning Support Services, and the Lower School Director. After this decision is made, the LS Director and/or School Psychologist will meet with the family to begin to plan for this transition at the end of the sixth grade.

Psychologist

Jacqueline Kieff is the Lower School Consulting Psychologist. Her job is to consult with teachers, parents, and the Lower School Director on issues related to the well-being of children and families at the Lower School. Once a month, Dr. Kieff hosts a morning coffee for parents. This is an opportunity for parents to discuss issues around parenting, social and emotional development in children, and other school-related topics. These coffees are open to all parents and are listed on the calendar on the School website.

Standardized Testing

A student's teacher is the best judge of a child's progress; standardized tests back up teacher assessment. Standardized tests are used at BB&N to help the School gain a perspective on our students as individuals and as a group. These tests give us an indication of the ability level of individual students, and thereby help us form reasonable expectations for their success in academic courses. Tests also show how our students as a group compare with other students throughout the country, particularly students in other independent schools. Test scores are always seen in a context of such factors as maturity, test-taking ability, and readiness. They are never the only means by which we judge a student's academic potential or aptitude. BB&N's testing schedule at the Lower School is as follows:

Beginners-Grade 1:	Developmental screening as needed.
Grades 2-4:	Diagnostic screening for reading development, which includes Gates MacGinitie Reading Assessment.
Grades 5, 6:	Educational Records Bureau's (ERBs) Comprehensive Testing Program — shows a student's progress compared to same-aged peers. Parents may meet with the classroom teacher to discuss results.

Based on testing administered within five years, students with a documented disability and recommendation for accommodations are eligible for extended time on standardized tests. Other reasonable accommodations indicated by such testing may also be granted. Dr. Jacqueline Kieff, school psychologist, will be in touch, prior to testing, with fifth and sixth grade families who meet these requirements.

Special Events

Potluck Dinners

All grades in the Lower School have potluck dinners held on Back to School nights. These are social events for parents only, designed to renew old friendships and welcome new parents to the School.

Family Science Saturday

Family Science Saturday is a program for all Lower School students and their parents. Four Saturdays a year, Lower School Science teacher, Caitlin Drechsler, designs fun and engaging science activities for parents and students to work on together. Some activities are on the Lower School campus, some are trips to various sites in the Boston area. **It is required that all students are accompanied by a parent or guardian.**

Halloween/Soul Cake Tradition

The Fifth Grade performs the tradition of Soul Cake by singing, playing instruments, and dancing. Parents are welcome; this performance occurs prior to Halloween.

One School One World

This is a special All School Event at the Nicholas Athletic Center where families celebrate our many cultures through performances, song, games, food and displays. This event is held on a Saturday in November.

Mitten Tree

The Mitten Tree tradition began over 40 years ago. A week before winter vacation, students bring in pairs of mittens or gloves to hang on a tree in the Morse Building. The mittens are then donated to an organization in Cambridge that supports families in need.

Skating

Family Skates are held on Friday nights from 8:30 – 10:00 p.m. and Saturday mornings from 10:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. from December through mid-February. To book the Upper School rink for an event, contact the Athletics Office (617-800-2141).

Winter Concerts

These are celebrations of winter through music. Please check the website for dates and times of concerts. Parents are welcome to this event held in December. Concert attire:

Boys – plain collared shirts with tie and dark slacks. No sneakers or jeans.

Girls – Plain light shirt or blouse with sleeves, dark skirt or slacks. No sneakers, flip-flop sandals, jeans, spaghetti straps or heels over two inches.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Luncheon

This is an all-School program held at the Upper School in January with presentations by students from each campus. All families are welcome.

Black History Month Event

This is a black history celebration, which includes dinner and entertainment and is held in February.

Family Event (TBA)

This is an activity for all Lower School families, which is usually held in March or April.

Maypole Celebration

The Lower School welcomes spring through singing and dancing. The fifth grade dances a traditional Maypole Dance, along with other festive international dancing by other grades.

BB&N Circus

A favorite family event when the Lower School becomes a fairground with rides, crafts, games, food and fun! This financial aid fundraising event occurs in May.

Spring Concerts

These are celebrations of Spring music featuring our choruses and orchestra. Parents are welcome. Please check the website for dates and times of concerts. Concert attire:

Boys – plain collared shirts with tie and dark slacks. No sneakers or jeans.

Girls – Plain light shirt or blouse with sleeves, dark skirt or slacks. No sneakers, flip-flop sandals, jeans, spaghetti straps or heels over two inches.

Family Picnic

LS families are invited to the LS campus for an end-of-year picnic. Dinner is provided. Families should bring a blanket. Everyone is invited!

End-of-Year Closings

Each building has an end-of-year closing ceremony. Please check the calendar and parent newsletters for the times of these events. Each closing ceremony (B-K-1, Grades 2-4, and Grades 5-6) is held in the Lower School Gymnasium.

All families are invited to attend. Each event has presentations of singing, poetry, and often a slide show. Since the closing ceremony for Grades 5 and 6 is a graduation ceremony for Sixth Grade students, their attire should be:

Boys – Blue blazer, plain collared shirts with tie and khaki slacks. No sneakers or jeans.

Girls – Semi-formal dress (not shorter than two inches above the knee) or slacks. No sneakers, flip-flop sandals, jeans, spaghetti straps, strapless tops or heels over two inches.

Clubs/Activities

Affinity Lunch

As part of the School's commitment to diversity, the Lower School offers an opportunity for Lower School students of color in Grades 2-6 to gather once a week for lunch. The lunches are voluntary; each family of color decides whether their child will participate. Members of the BB&N faculty and staff of color host the lunches. For more information, contact Rebecca Geary, LS Director (Grades 3-6).

Community Council

This group is comprised of fifth and sixth graders. The Council has two functions: to provide student opinion on an open range of issues and to support a community service project with funds raised at a used book sale called Book Bonanza.

Lower School Community Gardens

The Lower School community participates to manage, grow and harvest our raised bed gardens.

One World

Participating sixth graders support community service learning projects throughout the year.

Orchestra

Grades 4, 5, and 6 students who play an orchestral instrument are encouraged to join the Lower School Orchestra. Third graders may join by invitation; speak directly with Debbie Slade (617-800-2481).

The Orchestra practices on Thursdays at 7:30 a.m. and performs at LS concerts, assemblies, and the Grade 5 & 6 Closing Ceremony.

Parents' Association/Parent Groups

Purpose

The purpose of the Parents' Association is to help maintain a strong, cooperative, and friendly relationship between faculty, staff, and parents, and to support the School's mission. The Association provides opportunities for all parents to be involved in the life of the School. All parents or guardians of BB&N students are members and are encouraged to participate in any and all functions and meetings. The Nominating Committee of the Parents' Association selects officers annually. Parent representatives for each grade are recruited by the Campus VP and Assistant VP from among those who express a desire to serve. Meetings are held regularly at each of the three School campuses to consider matters of general interest. These meetings are open to all parents who wish to attend. PA activities include hospitality events, hosting guest speakers, welcoming receptions for new families, assistance in the admission efforts, parent potlucks, family evenings, and other special events.

Class Reps

Class Reps, parent representatives from each class, are vital links in communication between parents and the School. Reps are asked to:

- Promote friendly, productive, and understanding relations between parents and classroom teachers, acting as a conduit between parents and the specific assistance teachers are seeking;
- Attend all LS Parents' Association meetings;
- Take an active role in PA functions; and
- Expand the participation level of parents for educational, social, and fund-raising committees and events, matching parents' interests with BB&N's need for volunteers.

Cultural Enrichment Committee

This Committee researches and selects a few outside organizations or individuals to put on assemblies for the LS. Committee members meet a few times a year and attend West Suburban Cultural Arts Council meetings, where they learn about different performers and are able to review evaluations of the performers. If you are interested in helping out or have any questions, please call Lower School parents Yola Colbert or Erika Vina.