

CAMELOT ELEMENTARY

www.fcps.edu/CamelotES

2016-2017

Kindergarten Parents' Frequently Asked Questions



GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Attendance Line.....703-645-7011

(Please call this number to report an absence.)

Main Office.....703-645-7000

Clinic.....703-645-7010

Parent Liaison703-645-7015

(Note: Our Parent Liaison, Jessica Vergara, speaks English and Spanish. However, she works with ALL parents and can arrange for interpretation in most languages.)

SCHOOL HOURS

Regular Bell Schedule:

Starting Time.....9:05 am

Dismissal.....3:50 pm

Students may start arriving at school at 8:45am.

Students will wait in the cafeteria between 8:45am and 8:55am. Students report to class between 8:55 and 9:05am.

SCHOOL COLORS

Blue and white

SCHOOL MASCOT

(shown on cover)

Dragon

MASCOT'S NAME

Flame

SCHOOL SPIRIT WEAR

School spirit wear is sold by the PTA

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Camelot hosts the following special programs for FCPS students:

- Head Start Preschool Program
- Preschool Program for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- K-6 Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities
- Local Level IV Advanced Academic Program for qualified students

2016-2017 SCHOOL CALENDAR

2016

September 6, 2016	School Begins
October 7	Student Holiday
October 10	Columbus Day Holiday
November 4	First Grading Period Ends*+ Students Released 2 Hours Early
November 7 -8	Student Holidays
November 23	Students Released 2 Hours Early
November 24 – 25	Thanksgiving Break
December 19 –	
January 2, 2016	Winter Break

2017

January 16	MLK, Jr.'s Birthday Holiday
January 20	Student Holiday
February 3	Second Grading Period Ends*+ Students Released 2 Hours Early
February 6	Student Holiday
February 20	G. Washington's Bday Holiday
March 24	Student Holiday
April 7	Third Grading Period Ends*+ Students Released 2 Hours Early
April 10 - 14	Spring Break
April 17	Student Holiday
May 26	Students Released 2 Hours Early
May 29	Memorial Day Holiday
June 23	Last Day of School*+N Students Released 2 Hours Early

* Schools are open.

+ Report cards are provided to parents at the end of each grading period and at the end of the school year.

N Early release on the last official day of school.

Days Missed

Up to 13 days
missed or 78 hours
14th missed day
15th missed day

16th missed day

Makeup Days

No makeup required
No makeup required
April 17 will be considered a makeup day
No makeup required

Questions Frequently Asked by Kindergarten Parents

What are the school hours?

Our bell schedule is 9:05am-3:50pm. Students may arrive at school as early as 8:45am. Students will wait in the cafeteria from 8:45am-8:55am with a staff member on duty. At 8:55am, when the first bell rings, all students may report to class. Students should be in class at 9:05am when the second bell rings.

If a bus arrives late, students will not be marked tardy. Non-bus riders who arrive after 9:05am should report to the office with a parent and pick up a tardy slip before proceeding to class.

How are kindergarten classes formed?

Class assignments are made by the principal and assistant principals, in consultation with the staff from that grade level. Camelot staff strives to create balanced classrooms that will provide a positive atmosphere for the children and the teacher. Parents are welcome to fill out the survey form in the packet in order to provide a description of their child's personality, learning style, and any special needs they may have.

Can I request a specific teacher?

Requests for specific teachers will not be considered. Rather, survey information about the best learning environment will be considered.

How are twins, triplets and other multiples placed in classes?

Parents may request that twins, triplets and other multiples be placed in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. Parent requests will be honored.

When will I find out the name of my child's teacher?

At the end of August, a letter will be sent home with notice of the teacher assignment. The letter is sent out this late because the number of classes depends on enrollment at the end of summer.

Is child care available before and after school?

FCPS schools do not offer child care. However, FCPS partners with Fairfax County Government to offer SACC (School-Aged Child Care) programs in school buildings before and after school. Registration is handled directly through the SACC office, not the school. Camelot's SACC program opens at 7:00am and it closes at 6:15pm. SACC programs are popular and there is typically a waiting list. For more information about SACC, please see <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc/sacc.htm> or call the SACC registration office at 703-449-8989.

Various child care providers (such as the JCC, Kindercare, karate clubs, and Carousel Child Development Center) offer morning and afternoon transportation to school. Registration for

these programs is handled by the individual providers. The school cannot make recommendations to parents about child care providers.

How do I find out about the school bus schedule and bus stops?

Bus transportation will be provided if a family lives a mile or more from school, or when there is not a safe walking route. The bus schedule and bus stops (which are both determined by the FCPS transportation office) will be mailed to families at the end of August with the teacher assignment letter.

Please note: Kindergarteners must be met at the bus stop in the afternoon for pick-up. A designated person, middle school age or older, MUST ask for the student by name before the bus driver will allow the kindergartener to exit the bus. If a designated person is not at the stop to meet the child, the bus driver will keep the child on the bus, complete the route, and return the child to the school office. The office will then try to contact the parent or the other people on the emergency contact list to pick up the child.

In the event that a bus rider does not get off the bus in the afternoon, please call the school. Camelot staff will communicate with the transportation office to locate the rider.

My child will be walking or riding to school in a car. How does this work?

If a student walks to school, parents are responsible for selecting the walking route and for reviewing the rules of safety. Students who walk to school will be guided across the school driveways at Guinevere Drive by staff. Parents are welcome to walk with students as far as the school lobby. It is requested that parents not walk students all the way to the classroom. Exceptions are made during the first week of school, but students are encouraged to walk to classrooms on their own within the first few days!

At the end of the day, walkers should meet parents in the front hall/lobby.

If a parent drives the student to school, they should use the "kiss and ride" drop-off location near door three. (Drive straight into the parking lot rather than turning right into the bus lane.) Staff and patrols help students exit vehicles. Students should exit the cars from the passenger side only.

After 9:05am, students cannot be let out at the Kiss and Ride door. After 9:05am, parents should park and bring students through the front doors.

Please note that due to the number of special program buses, Camelot does not have an afternoon Kiss and Ride. If a parent needs to pick up a child at the end of the day, parking is available on adjacent streets.

Do I need to worry that my kindergartener could get lost in the shuffle?

No need to worry! At Open House, kindergarten teachers will put a piece of yellow duct tape on the strap of the kindergarteners' backpacks. This "signal" is used across FCPS to help staff identify kindergarteners. (Staff will also note the bus number or mode of transportation on the yellow tape.) Bus drivers look for the yellow tape, and have the

youngest riders sit in the front in the morning and afternoon. Camelot staff greet the buses for the first few days to ensure that students know the route to the classrooms. Patrols are also available to walk students directly to class.

In the afternoons, patrols gather kindergarteners by bus number and escort them to the buses. Kindergarten teachers and IAs hand off walkers to parents. SACC staff pick up kindergarteners from their classrooms.

Who do I notify if my child will be absent or late?

If a child will be absent, the parent should call the attendance line (703-645-7011) and leave a message indicating the child's first and last name, grade, teacher, and reason for absence. Parents may also register an absence by going to the school website: www.fcps.edu/CamelotES. Parents may also notify the teacher and office if they know that a child will be absent on a specified date(s).

If the school is not notified about a child's absence by approximately 10am, an email and phone call to the parent will be generated by the attendance system.

If a student is tardy, the parent should bring the student to the school office to check the student in using the computerized check-in/check-out system. Office staff are happy to help parents use the computer.

What do I do if my child needs to leave early?

If a child needs to leave early, the parent should send a note to the teacher. When the parent comes to pick up the child, the child will be called to the office. Parents will sign children out using the check-out system.

Which bathrooms do kindergartners use at Camelot?

Each kindergarten classroom has its own bathroom. In addition, there are sets of bathrooms in the gym, just outside the music room, and in the clinic.

Unless there are special circumstances, it is expected that kindergarten children have independent bathroom skills including unbuttoning/buttoning, unzipping/zippering, wiping, and washing hands. Summer is a good time to solidify independent bathroom skills if needed.

Kindergarten teachers will request that a second set of clothes be kept in the classroom in the event of a bathroom accident. The Camelot clinic also has spare clothing available.

What is the Open House? When is it held?

The purpose of the Open House is to allow children to see their new classroom, meet their teacher, learn who else is in their class, and pick up a supply list, if they have not done so already. Open House helps to relieve the stress of the first day of school for both students and parents, and it helps to ensure that students are ready to begin learning right away!

The Open House will most likely be held on Thursday, September 1. Camelot will be open from 3:00-4:00pm and teachers will be in their classrooms to meet their new students. A notification about Open House will be sent in the summer.

Please note that while teachers are excited to meet everyone at Open House, this event is not a time for parents to have in-depth conversations with the teachers. If you wish to speak at length with the teacher, kindly schedule an appointment for a future time. Also, teachers will not be providing details about the academic plan for the year. Teachers will provide that information at Back to School Night.

What is Back to School Night? When is it?

Back to School Night will be held on Thursday, September 15, 2016. It is held after school has started and everyone has had time to settle in. The evening event starts at 6:30pm with all parents gathering for a brief introduction by the Principal, Assistant Principal's and PTA. Afterwards, parents go to their child's classroom to meet the teacher and learn about what the children will be learning and doing during the year. It is also an opportunity to learn about the teacher's approach and expectations, how homework will be handled, and about the grading structure. Parents are also invited to ask general questions.

Back to School Night is also an opportunity to sign up for November teacher conferences and field trips, to learn about volunteering in the school, and to learn about any special projects that the students will work on during the year.

Back to School Night is only for parents or guardians. Parents are strongly encouraged to make their own babysitting arrangements.

What supplies will my child need?

A supply list is provided at the Kindergarten Orientation, on the school website www.fcps.edu/CamelotES (in late spring) and in the main office.

Kindergarten teachers request that students bring a backpack large enough to carry library books, school papers, a lunch box (if applicable) and a jacket.

Please note: Kindergarten supplies (pencils, glue, crayons, etc.) are collected by the teacher so that they can be used by the whole classroom community as needed. Therefore, please stick to the brands on the list and don't spend time picking out special designs and styles.

Some teachers ask Kindergartners to bring a small blanket/towel or small pillow to rest on during their afternoon quiet time. More details will be provided by each classroom teacher.

What will my child's daily schedule look like?

Typically, kindergartners' days will go as follows:

In the morning when students arrive, they will go to the cafeteria to wait for the first bell (8:55am). When the first bell rings, the kindergartners walk to the classroom. They will put away coats and backpacks and watch the morning school news on the classroom TV.

Most of the morning will be built around Language Arts activities (reading, writing, and oral language, etc.) Activities will be in large and small groups. Children will also work individually.

Depending on the schedule, the class may take a short snack break. Classroom teachers will provide information about how snack works in their individual classrooms.

Students will then eat lunch, have recess, and a short rest period. At the beginning of the year, some children may doze or nap during the rest period, while others may just relax or do a quiet, independent activity. As the year progresses, many children need a shorter rest period or quiet time activity.

In the afternoon, students engage in math, social studies and science activities.

At some point in the day (depending on the whole school schedule), kindergarteners will have "specials", which consist of art, music, library, physical education and technology (but not all on the same day!).

Teachers will provide a detailed schedule of the day at Back to School Night.

May I get the names & phone numbers of the other children in my child's class for play dates/parties?

The PTA will produce a Student Directory in late fall. Room parents can also ask parents in the class to voluntarily provide email addresses and phone numbers and disseminate these to the class.

How does my child get breakfast and lunch if he/she doesn't pack a lunch?

Breakfast and lunch can be purchased in the cafeteria every day. (Note: All families will be sent an application for free or reduced priced meals in August. If your family qualifies, please mail the forms back to FCPS as soon as possible. FCPS will notify a family if they have been found eligible for this fee waiver program.) Students may also bring lunch from home. Milk and water are available for purchase. Students may also use the water fountains in the cafeteria when they choose to do so.

Students may purchase breakfast everyday (except when there is a two-hour weather delay). (Note: Students who are eligible for a reduced priced or free lunch are also eligible for a free breakfast.) Breakfast is served "grab and go style" and students take it with them to eat in their pod areas and classrooms. Students who do not obtain a school breakfast should eat breakfast at home.

Students eat lunch in the cafeteria. The kindergarten instructional assistants provide extra assistance to the cafeteria hostess (who monitors the cafeteria) since kindergarteners often need extra help picking up food from the food line, opening containers, condiment packets, milk cartons, etc.

The breakfast/lunch menu is sent home monthly. It can also be viewed on the FCPS website: www.fcps.edu. The menu shows the various daily food options.

While students may use to cash to pay for lunches, this is discouraged. Rather, parents can either send in a check, made payable to Camelot Food Services, to load money onto a student's food account. Parents can also visit myschoolbucks.com to load money onto the student's account. (Note: In order to access myschoolbucks.com, a parent must have access to the students FCPS ID number. This can be obtained by calling the school office once the student registration has been processed.)

Students access their lunch accounts by entering a pin number into a pin pad at the register. Cafeteria staff, teachers and instructional assistants help students do this until they are proficient.

In 2016-2017, lunch prices are \$3.00 per meal. (Meal prices are subject to change each school year.) Meals include milk, an entrée and two side dishes.

Students also can purchase just milk (1%, skim, and fat-free chocolate) for 60¢.

When a child's account has only enough for one lunch left, a reminder sticker will be given.

Please note that lunches brought from home should not include glass bottles or containers. Please so not send soda for lunch. There are no vending machines for students in the building.

What about food allergies?

Allergy information is provided to the school by parents on the Student Health Form. This information is then communicated to our cafeteria manager and to teachers by the Public Health Nurse who reviews the form. However, if a student has serious food-related allergies, parents are encouraged to share this information directly with the classroom teacher and cafeteria manager. Direct sharing helps all parties understand the necessary food restrictions and how an allergic reaction manifests itself.

The cafeteria is not nut free, but there is a table designed as "allergy awareness." While information about allergies is communicated to teachers by the Public Health Nurse, parents are also sent a survey form that asks whether a child needs to sit at the "allergy awareness" table and whether the allergy is severe enough that an "allergy alert" sign needs to be posted on the classroom door.

Teachers will share their snack procedures with parents. Depending on the lunch time, some classrooms make time for snack, while others do not. In some kindergarten classrooms, all students are given the same snack (that meets allergy requirements). In other kindergarten classrooms, individual snacks are brought from home.

At Camelot, food may not be sent in for birthday recognition. Instead, the classroom teacher will inform parents about how birthdays will/can be recognized. Generally speaking, birthdays are announced on the morning news show and birthday pencils/cards are handed out by the office staff.

In the event that food is to be served (such as during one of the class parties) parents will be informed in advance. Parents then have the option to send in an alternative food item for their child.

May I occasionally eat lunch with my child?

Certainly. Check with the office to determine what time your child's class arrives in the lunchroom. When you arrive at school, please remember to sign in at the front office before going to the lunchroom. If you wish to purchase lunch, you may do so, or you are welcome to bring in your own lunch. Please do not bring in fast food for yourself or your child.

How do I reach my child's teacher if I have questions or concerns?

The most efficient way to reach the teacher is to either send an email or to send a note in with your child. The teachers will do their best to respond promptly. However, their classroom duties will always take priority so they may not be able to return messages the same day that they are received.

Whom do I speak with if I have a concern about my child's teacher or about a general school issue?

Camelot's Principal and Assistant Principals are always willing to listen to parent concerns and take action where appropriate. It is recommended that you call the main office and make an appointment to speak with them. If you prefer, you can also send them an email.

Can my child bring in a favorite toy from home?

Toys are only allowed if a teacher has set up a sharing time. Favorite stuffed animals or other comfort items are only allowed with the permission of the teacher. Children are allowed to bring books from home, but they should have the child's name written on the inside to avoid confusion with books already in the classroom. Electronic devices should not be brought to school. Obviously, toy weapons are not to be brought to school, even for sharing.

Will my child have homework in Kindergarten?

Kindergarten students do not typically have nightly homework assignments. However, all students at Camelot are expected to read for a minimum of 20 minutes every night. In Kindergarten and the lower grades, parents are asked to read to their child, or work with them as they develop their early reading skills for at least 20 minutes every night.

How does the school/teacher communicate with parents about what is happening at Camelot?

Every Thursday, each child will bring home a big white envelope. This "Thursday envelope" contains examples of the child's work, as well as school information. We use a "paper opt-

in" system for most of our PTA and school fliers. This means that we post our fliers on the school website under the Thursday Take Home link. Every Thursday we send a KIT (Keep in Touch) with the link to the new fliers. We only send paper copies of fliers home to families who "opt-in" for paper. This has allowed us to save several thousand sheets of paper and copier toner. It is important that parents go through the information posted on our website or contained in the Thursday envelope promptly and thoroughly. Parents should also sign the front of the envelope each week to show the teacher that they have reviewed the information and immediately return the envelope to school the next day in your child's backpack. Parents can use this envelope when they need to send notes to the teacher, provide checks (example, for lunches or field trips), return permission and/or attendance slips, completed forms, etc.

Will my child receive a report card for Kindergarten?

Children receive progress reports three times during the school year. In Kindergarten, the teacher conference in November will be used to review each child's performance in the first quarter. After that, the quarterly progress report will be sent home in the Tuesday envelope. Teachers will be happy to discuss your child's progress at any time, but again, please make an appointment so they have the time to focus on your questions and are fully prepared.

What type of clothes should my child wear?

All students are expected to dress appropriately for the educational environment. Clothing with language or images that are vulgar, discriminatory, or obscene, or that promotes or depicts weapons, drugs, alcohol, violence, or gang symbols is not allowed. Clothing should fit, be neat and clean, and conform to standards of safety, good taste and decency.

Parents should also consider the temperature/weather and his/her activities on that day. Most days, children play outside at recess, even during with winter months, so a jacket or coat is always a good idea. On PE days, children should wear rubber-soled tennis or running shoes and relaxed clothing that allows them to move freely.

Children are not allowed to wear hats inside the school. Religious or medical head coverings are allowed.

My child needs medication every day/occasionally. Can I just send it in with a note for the teacher?

Students may not bring medication to school, including eye drops, or any over-the-counter medication, except under the strict supervision of an adult in and accordance with FCPS guidelines (Regulation 2102). Forms that explain the directions under which a student is able to take medication during the school day and that need to be completed by a physician and parent are available from the school clinic. The school's Public Health Nurse or School Health Aide can provide more information.

What happens if my child gets sick or hurt during the school day?

Camelot has a small clinic where children who are ill or hurt can receive attention and rest. The clinic is staffed by a trained aide (who also distributes medicine). If a child gets sick or hurt during the school day, the clinic aide will call the parent to discuss the situation and, if appropriate, ask the parent to come pick up the child. Children can rest on one of the clinic cots until parents arrive.

If the illness or injury is serious and requires the immediate attention of a medical professional, the clinic aide or other staff member will call 911 and the parent. An administrator will accompany the child to the hospital and wait there until a parent arrives.

How do I get involved? How do I volunteer in my child's class?

At the beginning of the year, the PTA will distribute information describing the types of volunteer activities available with PTA sponsored events, activities or services. All parents are encouraged to support at least one of these events or activities.

If parents wish to help in the classroom, they are encouraged to contact the teacher with a note or email to determine what, if any, assistance the teacher needs. Kindergarten teachers typically need a few weeks in the classroom with their students before they can assess their needs and determine how and when classroom volunteers can best be used. It is up to each teacher to determine how they will use parent volunteers.