

Fox Chase Elementary

First Grade – FAQ's

Your little one has already had their big “first day of school” last year so how hard can First Grade be, right? For some parents and children the transition to First Grade can be a bigger step than they expect; school is now a full day, lunch is eaten at school and new classes like art, gym and music have been added. The Fox Chase Home & School has put together these Frequently Asked Questions from comments and advice received from teachers and other parents to assist you and your child in this transition.

Arrival/Dismissal

School hours are from 8:40 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Morning supervision does not begin until 8:25 a.m. so please do not drop off your child before that time.

TIP: To make the transition easier, pick one method of arrival and stick with it for a while. If you think you're going to use the Parent Drop Off line when the weather gets bad, start using it before the weather is severe so your child can make an easy adjustment.

TIP: Walking to school is a great way to stay healthy and a chance to get your child some fresh air and exercise before the school day begins!



TIP: Choose one way for picking up your child as dismissals can be very confusing. You must send a note to school any time your pick up method will vary.

TIP: If you are a “walker”, pick a meeting place in advance so your child knows where to look for you. Dismissal procedures do **not** allow for siblings to wait outside classroom doors. Meeting places should be outside the building.

How does the whole lunch process work?

You and your child have a choice to make regarding lunch: will they bring a sack lunch or will they buy lunch from the school cafeteria?

Upon arrival at school, all lunches from home should be labeled with the students' name. Each teacher will have a set procedure for where lunches will be kept until they are carried down to the lunchroom at lunchtime. Students can either bring a drink from home or purchase milk in the cafeteria. If a student wants to purchase milk only, they should bring exact change, if possible.

If your child is going to buy lunch, they have three or four entrée items to choose from each day. For example, the entrees for the day might be pizza, sub sandwich, or chicken patty. Pizza would be the “A” lunch, sub sandwich the “B” and so on. The teacher then finds out which student wants which lunch and notifies the cafeteria. Each teacher has their own way for taking kids through this process of selecting an entrée. If you have any questions about how it works in your child’s classroom, please contact the teacher.

At lunchtime, the children who have brought their lunch from home will go directly to the lunch tables. The children buying lunch, they will go to the food line holding a lettered ticket that corresponds to their lunch entrée. The ticket is handed to the lunchroom staff and the child is given a lunch including milk.

TIP: If you think your child will want to buy lunch sometime during the school year, have her buy it once during the first few days of school. The Home & School provides volunteers during that time to help the children out.



How does my child pay for lunch?

There are two ways to pay: cash or the student pin system. Every parent receives a letter in the mail telling them their student’s pin number and how it works. Basically, it is a debit process by which you put money into your student’s account and they make lunch purchases against that account. It is also an on-line system so you can not only refill your student’s account, you can also monitor your child’s purchases and block certain snacks if you choose. Any student buying milk only using the pin system will need to stand in the hot lunch line to buy their milk so exact coins are faster. If you send cash, place the money in an envelope labeled with the child’s complete name and teacher’s name.



TIP: Don’t worry about your child remembering the 8 digit pin number right away. The cafeteria workers also have the children in their system by class and can look them up.

Is my child allowed a snack during the day?

Yes! Your child may bring a healthy snack to school. Your teacher will let you know if there are any restrictions due to allergies and guidelines specific to the classroom.

What are “Specials”?

Your child will be learning about other “special” topics during the day. They are: Art, Music, Physical Education, LRC (Library), and Computer Lab. You will receive a schedule from your child’s teacher that tells you the days and times for each Special.

Where are the Specials held?

Art and Music are in your child’s classroom. Physical Education is held in the gym. Library and Computer Lab are in the LRC.

Does my child need to bring anything for their Specials?

Everything your child needs for the school year, including Specials, is on the school supplies list. You may be able to leave a pair of gym shoes at school for your child to change into for P.E. – check with the classroom teacher.

TIP: Be sure to put your child’s name on all their school supplies, backpacks, lunchboxes, coats, snowsuits, gloves, hats, etc. so you can reclaim them if lost.



How often does my child have recess?

Your child will have one 20 minute recess period following lunch each day. Additional recesses may be scheduled by the classroom teacher at other times during the week. Be sure to dress your child appropriately for the weather as recess will always be outside, weather permitting. Recess will only be inside if it is raining/snowing or if the wind-chill is 10° F or below.

Will my child have homework?

Yes, but only a small amount, and the type of homework may vary with the teacher. Several days a week there will be a math worksheet or book sent home which reinforces the lessons worked on in the classroom or provides discovery experiences for the students and parents to complete together. First graders will also come home with “baggie books” to practice their reading skills. Spelling and sight words are sent home to be practiced for testing at the end of the week. Even though it is “only first grade”, the homework that is assigned is important for the children to complete and return.



TIP: The first few weeks of first grade can be a big transition for most kids. Don’t be surprised if your child comes home tired until they get used to being in school for a full day.

It's my child's birthday. Can I send a cake? Can I bring it to the classroom and help sing happy birthday?

While every child's birthday is special, if every family came in to celebrate every birthday not much learning would get done, so the school cannot allow you to come to the class and celebrate with your child. It is a district wide policy that no food items may be sent into the classroom for birthday celebrations.

Any tips to help my child succeed in First Grade?

- Talk positively about school. The way your child perceives your feelings about his/her school and teacher will have a direct effect on how he/she feels about them.
- Encourage your child to ask questions. An informed child is a confident child.
- Reserve a little time each day to talk about your child's day. Look over anything he/she has brought home from school. Discuss any schoolwork, and offer encouragement and praise.
- If your child expresses any concerns about something which you feel needs more explanation, please do not hesitate to call.

What's good on the web? www.oswego308.org

If you have access, sign up for "Parent Connect", the Oswego School's E-Mail Communication System. Just click on the "Communicate 308" link on the district's main page to register and receive information on Fox Chase Elementary and other events.

Another great resource on the Fox Chase website is the Teaching and Learning link for the elementary level. There are links to websites directly related to our curriculum and some include student activities!