

BROWN SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK

Brown School

**SINCE
1893**

2015 – 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome

Brown School Basics

Mission
History
Educational Philosophy
Who's Who at Brown School

Daily Operations

Contact Information
Hours of Operation
Transportation
 Bus
 Pick-up / drop off
School Closing, Delay or Early Closure

Brown School's Educational Programs

IGNITE Program
Social Emotional Learning
Standardized Tests
Technology
Music
Drama
Buddy Program
Field Trips
Advisory Program
Sports

Special Programs and Extracurricular Activities

Extended Day & Plus
After School Clubs & Enrichment
Vacation Camps
Summer Camp

School Policies and Protocols

Snack & Lunch
Parents & Visitors
Recess
Toys/Games/Electronics
Birthday Parties
Dress Code
Lost and Found
Textbooks
School Supplies
Class Placement
End of the Year Celebrations

Health and Safety

Health and Wellness Office
Immunization Policy
School Physical Policy
Illness and Emergencies
Allergies
Medication
HIV Syndrome
Child Abuse & Neglect
Safety Plan

Students: Expectations and Policies

Code of Conduct
Attendance
 Nursery Options
 Vacations
 Tardiness
Homework Policy
Parental Involvement
Upper Grades Academic Probation
Consequences for Behavioral Misconduct
 Action Plan
 Behavioral Misconduct Conference
 Intervention
 Suspension of Privilege to Attend School Events
 In School Suspension
 Full Suspension
 Expulsion
Substance Abuse Policy
Intervention and Counseling for Students
Tobacco Use and Abuse Policy
Firearms and Weapons Policy
Sexual Harassment Policy
Internet and Technology Policy

Parents: Communication & Protocols

NAIS Principles of Good Practice
 Parents Working with Schools
 Schools Working with Parents
Brown School Rapid Notify, News and Websites
Student Assessment Reports, Progress Reports
Conferencing
Secondary School Placement & Transcripts
Parent Involvement
 Parent Representative Committee (PALS)
 School Events/Talent Tap
 Class Parent
Development and the Annual Appeal

Board of Trustees

Administration

Admissions and Re-enrollment

Admissions Policy
Application Process
Placement
Enrollment
Re-enrollment Priority
Registration Calendar

Cost of Attendance and Billing

Cost of Attendance
Withdrawal Policy
Obligation to Pay the Cost of Attendance
Cost of Attendance Refund Insurance
Payment Options
Financial Assistance
Sibling Discount
Monthly Billing
Delinquency and Collections

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

We welcome you to Brown School. The faculty and staff look forward to working with you to provide the highest quality educational experience for your child. This Handbook provides you with policies, suggestions, and routines. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions.

*Patricia Vitale
Head of School*

BROWN SCHOOL BASICS

MISSION

Our mission is to inspire each student to love learning while striving for academic excellence. Brown School's teachers work to identify and develop the strengths of individual students, thereby stimulating discovery, imagination, and critical thinking. Small classes, a dedicated staff, and an innovative curriculum, combine to motivate children to reach their potential both academically and socially. Brown School's nurturing environment supports a diverse student community and encourages confident, articulate learners, who are disciplined, responsible and respectful of others.

HISTORY

It all began in 1893. Just a year after Thomas Edison and his General Electric Company began to forever shape the story of Schenectady, Helen "Nellie" Brown set out to shape the young minds of 12 young boys and girls, opening Brown School in the front parlor of her own home at 237 Liberty Street in the very heart of downtown Schenectady. In a 1938 interview in Brown School's own literary magazine/newspaper, *The Babblers*, Ms. Brown recalled students arriving "each morn in an old stage coach drawn by two tired out horses." From the very beginning, students received a solid foundation in fundamental subjects, as well as art, music and foreign language.

Much like Schenectady and G.E., Brown School grew rapidly at the turn of the century and by 1900, the school had outgrown Ms. Brown's home and moved to 4 Park Avenue. By 1904, the school again was filled to capacity and was looking to expand. In consideration of the large number of G.E. children enrolled in the school, the Schenectady Realty Company donated land to Brown School as part of its planned community now known as the G.E. Plot. Prominent Schenectady businessmen, including Willis T. Hanson, President of the former Union National Bank, Francis C. Pratt, Commercial Vice President of General Electric, and Edward Wilbur Rice, Jr., President of General Electric, underwrote the construction of a new schoolhouse and rented it to Ms. Brown. The cornerstone at 1184 Rugby Road was laid in 1904 and the school opened in the fall of 1905 with 75 students. The new location offered a playground and even an athletic field; this old quarry affectionately called, "The Dump," was flooded each winter and served as a skating pond for the school and other Plot residents.

For the next 30 years, and as the G.E. Plot continued to grow, Brown School thrived in "The Little Brown School House that stands 'neath the trees" (Brown Interview, 1938). In the 1920s, the Wizard of Schenectady, Charles Proteus Steinmetz, even had an impact, albeit an indirect one, on Brown School. Steinmetz's adopted grandchildren, Billy, Joe, and Midge Hayden, all attended the school, and "Daddy" Steinmetz often hosted elaborate birthday parties for them, much to the delight of their Brown School classmates. He entertained guests with exciting stories of dragons and goblins, which he illustrated with fireworks he summoned from various mixtures of sodium and hydrogen in pails of water. In 1927, the building next door to 1184 Rugby Road was purchased to accommodate another expansion and by 1928, Brown School could boast a full K through 12 program: a coeducational lower school and an all girls' high school formally known as Miss Brown's Seminary for Young Ladies. Student life was vibrant. Beyond solid academics, students enjoyed a wide array of extracurricular activities including drama, glee club, bicycling, horseback riding, and in the winter, skiing and ice-skating.

In subsequent years, Brown School continued to evolve. In 1938, with only seven students in the graduating class, the decision was made to close the upper school, and the second building was sold. Between 1940 and 1970, the school took on many forms, and finally, in the mid 1970s, the addition of an after school program helped Brown School begin to grow again. The school occupied many buildings throughout the Schenectady area, though some part of the school was continuously housed at the original Rugby Road address until 1996. That same year, the entire school was moved to our current home at 150 Corlaer Avenue in Schenectady's Woodlawn Neighborhood. Adding one grade per year, Brown School expanded to eighth grade in 1998 and graduated its first eighth-graders in 1999. The school hasn't looked back since and now serves students from all over the Capital District.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

More than a century after its founding, Brown School's objective is still the same. We continue to emphasize academic fundamentals, while also providing our students with outstanding instruction in vocal and instrumental music, art, physical education, computer technology, and foreign language. We place a strong emphasis on scholastic excellence in an atmosphere that encourages personal and social growth. We value the development and appreciation of individual talents and achievement, and we support those talents through a wide variety of offerings and learning experiences. Our children develop self-discipline and responsibility while learning to recognize how their actions affect nature and the community in which they live. Through programs like MindUP™ and Second Step, we encourage children to develop a sense of self-worth as well as sensitivity to the feelings and needs of others. The school community provides opportunities to emphasize respect for individual differences. Our tradition of small classes affords enormous flexibility in the classroom and enables us to provide a high degree of creative instruction. Students, teachers, and parents maintain a close relationship, and parent consultations occur throughout the year.

Brown School has an absolute charter by the New York State Board of Regents, is accredited by the New York State Association of Independent Schools, and is a member in good standing of the National Association of Independent Schools. School policy is determined by the Board of Trustees and implemented by the Head of School and the administration, teachers, and staff. The Brown School Board of Trustees has responsibility for the financial health of the school and for establishing school policy. All Board members are volunteers and are supporters, friends, or members of the Brown School community.

WHO'S WHO AT BROWN SCHOOL

Because we believe in a team approach to educating the entire child, we are including a synopsis of our administrative and leadership team so you can understand how we work together to help your child.

HEAD OF SCHOOL

Patricia Vitale

ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL

Pamela Hoeffner

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Mary Frawley

DIRECTOR OF IGNITE

Nina R Benway

DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Amanda Keil

DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS AND WELLNESS

Kim Cooper

AREA COORDINATORS

Pamela Hoeffner (N - Pre-K) Stephanie Haines (3 - 5)

Dawn Przekurat (K - 2) Teresa Burke (6 - 8)

DAILY OPERATIONS

CONTACT INFORMATION

You can contact the Main Office between 7:45 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. If we need to contact you, we rely solely on the contact information that you provided on your registration or reenrollment form. It is very important that this information be kept up to date. Any changes to your work, home, cell phone, emergency contact numbers or email address must be conveyed to the Main Office immediately.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school day begins at 8:05 a.m. and ends at 2:55 p.m. for students in nursery through grade eight, with supervised extensions from 7:15 a.m. to 8:05 a.m. and from 2:55 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus Transportation

Transportation arrangements for each school year are made with the child's home school district, beginning with kindergarten. Students are transported by fourteen different school districts, all within a fifteen-mile radius. Parents must submit a written request to their local district by April 1 of the preceding year. Forms are available online and through your school district. Districts arrange for independent school transportation separate from public school transportation. Any concerns should be discussed directly with the school district. Brown School, however, should be considered a partner in the safe transportation of your child.

Children may not ride a school bus from districts other than their own (school districts' policy). Kindergarten children must be met at the bus. Please discuss an emergency plan with your child in the event that he/she should arrive home in your absence.

Pick-Up and Drop-Off

First, some definitions:

- “Pick-up” – Family parks in school lot, enters school, and signs child out from café.
- “Curbside” – Family waits in queue outside of café entrance and child is brought to your car.
- “Late pick-up” – Family arrives after 3:10 and proceeds to office to pick child up from Extended Day Program.

Whether your child is “pick up,” “curbside” or staying after school for “late pick up,” his or her teacher should be advised of any persons, other than yourself, who may pick up your child. We do not release children to anyone without authorization and proper identification. If a child who is normally picked up remains at school after 2:55 p.m., he or she will be sent to the Extended Day Program and a charge at the drop-in rate will be reflected on your monthly statement. The Main Office must be notified if your child's usual dismissal procedure changes. We cannot accept a child's word for changes in routine.

With the exception of nursery and Pre-Kindergarten children, if you drop off your child in the morning, please enter through the cafeteria door located off the main parking lot between 7:45 and 8:05 a.m. We request that children and their parents not go to classrooms, cubbies or lockers in the morning. Proceed directly to the gym, where Brown School staff will supervise the children until their teachers arrive at 8:05 for Morning Meeting. Nursery and Pre-Kindergarten children arriving before 8:00 a.m. are to be taken to the Community Room. Students arriving before 7:45 a.m. and not enrolled in PLUS will be billed the daily drop-in fee.

Students who enter the school building after 8:05 a.m. must enter through the back door (Marriott Street side of campus) and obtain a late pass in the Main Office. Children will then proceed to their classrooms.

SCHOOL CLOSING, DELAY OR EARLY CLOSURE

In the event of a snow emergency, the Head of School—or in his or her absence, the Assistant Head—determines if classes are to be canceled or delayed at Brown School. Once a decision is made, the Head of School is responsible for beginning closing procedures, and informing radio and television stations in a timely fashion.

Vital information about the status of Brown School on any given day may be e-mailed, or found on the Brown School web site, or through the Rapid Notify system.

Brown School's decision is made at the discretion of the Head of School, who carefully weighs many factors. The decision to close *does not* depend on the closure of any one or two school districts. The PLUS program will generally be open, unless weather conditions make it hazardous for our staff to drive to the campus. The status of PLUS will always be posted on the school website along with other news regarding the closing.

If necessary, Brown School may issue a delay. If a delay order is issued, students should report to school by the indicated time (usually by 10:00 a.m.). Again, PLUS may remain open, but parents should monitor their e-mail/the news for information. If PLUS is cancelled due to weather, parents are not permitted to drop off their children until 10:00 a.m.

Please check with your home school district for altered bus schedules. Your district bus may run late or not run at all, but that does not necessarily influence if and when Brown School is open. If your school district is closed, their buses will not transport children to Brown. Your school district, however, may decide to pick children up early and send their bus prior to our usual dismissal time. We will notify parents if this should occur. We will not put a child on an early bus without notifying a parent or guardian. If your child misses his or her early bus, you are responsible for picking up your child from school.

BROWN SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Brown School's educational program is characterized by consistency and coherency across grade levels. Our curriculum provides age-appropriate learning experiences that promote intellectual flexibility, enhance problem-solving abilities, increase a child's capacity to manage information effectively in a rapidly changing world, and develop the facility to work successfully and collaboratively with other people. Our shared values, reflected in all we do and teach at Brown School, allow our students to learn how best to manage their responsibilities and respond to challenges by focusing on these principles:

- The dignity of all persons is to be respected;
- Tolerance is a virtue and discrimination is abhorrent;
- Peaceful resolution of conflicts is expected, and violence condemned;
- Working to the best of our abilities is prized;
- Empathy, thoughtfulness, and respect help us understand ourselves, and others.

Stating these values constitutes a commitment to realizing them within the school community. Mindfulness, open-mindedness, respect, collegiality, and the spirit of intellectual engagement together serve as the foundation of the Brown School educational experience.

Children in nursery through fifth grade learn in self-contained classes according to grade level. In the early childhood classrooms, nursery, Pre-Kindergarten and kindergarten, children are actively engaged in a combination of play and teacher-directed constructivist activities. In the first through fifth grades, children participate in a variety of hands-on projects and activities that invite curiosity and challenges for all levels of learners. All classes engage in thematic teaching with focus and attention on social studies, science, math, reading, writing, the fine arts, and music.

Children in grades six through eight are encouraged to develop greater responsibility for their learning while still being provided a nurturing environment in which to succeed. We encourage young people to:

- Construct meaning and discover significance in what they study;
- Acquire and master a broad range of cognitive, social, emotional, and practical academic skills that are embedded and practiced in the classes they take;
- Learn through a variety of pedagogical approaches and individualized instruction;
- Collaborate with peers, teachers, and mentors in challenging undertakings to ensure that learning is a social as well as an intellectual activity;
- Practice the purposeful use of computer technology and digital communications in learning;
- Reflect on the learning process at increasingly higher levels of complexity.

IGNITE PROGRAM

IGNITE, standing for Individualized Goals Nurtured in a Team Environment, seeks to complement and extend the Brown School Mission Statement by providing evidence-based, diversified instruction to students at the Brown School. Students shall benefit from classroom modifications and learning goals to further improve their academic, social-emotional, creative, and wellness strengths while confidently exploring opportunities for development in a nurturing team-based environment.

The IGNITE team, consisting of the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, IGNITE Director, teaching staff, and interns, realizes this mission in the following ways:

Support:

- Because the Brown School curriculum is designed to challenge students and expand critical thinking skills, all students will at one point in time require appropriate, ongoing, grade-level assistance from a teacher. Brown School teachers are trained by the IGNITE staff and receive ongoing, student-specific consultation regarding the delivery of best-practice accommodations and students supports. For most students, this support from the classroom teacher will be sufficient.

- A small number of students will require more support than can be provided in the general classroom. These students will be nominated for support by the parent-teacher team and will be evaluated by the IGNITE team to determine the appropriate manifestation of support. Support is customized on a case-by-case basis and focuses on improving students' ability to receive, send, process, and comprehend concepts or verbal, nonverbal, and graphic symbol systems within the following domains: speech (including articulation, fluency, and voice), language (including phonology, morphosyntax/grammar, semantics/vocabulary, and pragmatics/social language), executive functioning (including organization, time management, and planning), and aural rehabilitation/hearing.

Enrichment:

- Additionally, because the Brown School curriculum is designed to challenge students and expand critical thinking skills, all students enjoy many best-practices in gifted education as part of the typical classroom. Brown School teachers are trained by the IGNITE staff and receive ongoing, student-specific consultation regarding the delivery of best-practice enrichment opportunities. Opportunities for enrichment available to age-eligible Brown School students include: daily challenge, enrichment clubs, a mindfulness curriculum, goal setting opportunities, portfolio evaluations, reduced standardized testing, collaborative environments, foreign language instruction, a STEM curriculum, emphasis on art and music, Upper School acceleration in math and science, individualized pacing in literacy, and student mentorship programs. For most students, the enrichment inherent in the Brown School classroom will be sufficient.

- A small number of students who demonstrate high performance capacity or exceptional potential will require programs or services beyond those normally provided by the typical Brown School classroom in order to realize their full potential. These students will be nominated for enrichment by the parent-teacher team and will be evaluated by the IGNITE team to determine the appropriate manifestation of enrichment. Such enrichment will be student-specific and focus on the student's area of talent.

- Combined Support and Enrichment:

Some students benefit from both formalized support and enrichment. In some schools, these students might be called "twice exceptional", but here at Brown School these individuals are simply called "students". Appropriateness of support and enrichment is made on a case-by-case basis by the educational team, which includes the input of the parents. Some students will qualify for support in one domain and enrichment in another, which is just one way that Brown School focuses on educating the entire child.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Schools are most successful in realizing their educational mission when they integrate efforts to promote children's academic, social, and emotional learning. To foster children's social and emotional development is critical for a child's health and safety. Although social and emotional learning plays an important role in influencing these nonacademic outcomes, SEL is also critical in improving children's academic performance and desire for lifelong learning. SEL is the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors. These key characteristics need to be developed for children to be successful not only in school but in life. In this way, Brown School supplements what children learn at home and outside of school with regard to social and emotional intelligences.

Mindfulness Education at Brown School is dedicated to enhancing the lives of children by teaching them how to understand the ways their minds work and how their thoughts and feelings affect their behavior and attitudes. The *MindUp*™ program, piloted at Brown School and implemented with the help of the Hawn Foundation, incorporates the tools of attention training (also called mindfulness). It has been shown that children who have participated in such programs make significant, positive changes in social and emotional understanding, positive social behaviors, classroom participation, psychological adjustment, academic efficacy, and teacher-rated school performance.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Brown School employs a variety of assessments in order to provide the best diagnostic information about our students. While a heavy reliance on standardized tests to measure student achievement does not align with our academic culture, we believe that certain standardized forms of assessment, such as the CTP 4 (produced by the Educational Records Bureau or ERB), are useful, valid, and reliable as instruments for providing feedback and confirmation to educators about a child's cognitive capabilities and academic strengths and weaknesses. Brown School's curriculum and pedagogy are neither determined nor shaped by the results of standardized tests; however, we firmly believe that the quality of the innovative education delivered to our students will be evinced not only in the authentic forms of assessment that we use, but also on the basis of those standardized assessments we choose to employ. We recognize that standardized testing is an inevitable feature of the contemporary educational landscape, and providing our students with an opportunity to take such tests is useful to their academic advancement. Although Brown School does not teach to the test, teachers do help prepare students to do well on the CTP 4 by discussing test-taking strategies with them. Finally, Brown School does administer certain NY State Regents' examinations, particularly Earth Science and Integrated Algebra, to its eighth-grade students. The Regents' tests must be given according to a mandated schedule, which means that Brown School students take the examinations after graduation in mid June.

TECHNOLOGY

Our teachers integrate technology into the curriculum for the purpose of enhancing learning opportunities. Our students are thus positioned to build a body of knowledge that is not confined within the walls of the classroom, but transcends the limitations of geographic location and the length of the school day. New media systems and web-based technologies allow students to explore a problem or question from different perspectives. Students may actively investigate topics and themes along a path that is more consistent with their learning style. By integrating new media into the core domains, teachers can tailor instruction to individual needs, intellectual and creative passions, and interests. In this way, students exercise more control over their learning, which better prepares them to succeed in school and meet various challenges they will encounter throughout life.

MUSIC

Beginning in nursery, students engage in music instruction. General music classes are required of all students in grades N-8. Children sing as a choral group in grades 1 and 2 as well as in grades 3-5. In fourth grade, students have the opportunity to study a band instrument and may join the Brown School band in fifth grade. Band members are expected to learn a repertoire of pieces and to practice scale and sight-reading. Membership in the band requires a commitment to frequent practicing at home. Students in grades 5-8 are given the opportunity, as part of the general music curriculum, to learn the fundamentals and theory of guitar. They may also join the Guitar Ensemble. Brown School students and community members also have access to the Galleria Art and Music Café. Concerts are held throughout the year for band, guitar, and choral groups. Brown School is a member of the New York State School Music Association, and students are encouraged to prepare solo or ensemble pieces to be played at our area festivals.

DRAMA

All students have the opportunity to participate in dramatic productions throughout the year. The lower grades perform skits and musical selections that are linked to the school's curriculum and culminate in the Lower School Musical. The upper grades participate in a full-scale musical theater production each year.

BUDDY PROGRAM

Older students are partnered each year with students in the younger grades, creating wonderful opportunities for learning and mentorship and establishing cross-grade friendships that often last for years.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are designed to involve students in real-life experiences that augment the learning taking place in the classroom. In the lower grades, such excursions might include visits to local orchards, outdoor educational centers, museums, zoos, and government buildings. In addition to these experiences, students in the upper grades participate in overnight trips. Transportation for trips varies based on distance, duration and number of students. Generally, students are transported by bus or train, but in any case, Brown School will take all reasonable precautions to insure the safety of the vehicle and the driver and to prevent accident or injury. Parent drivers must sign an insurance/safe driver release form and submit the required documentation before being permitted to transport children other than their own on field trips. Parents interested in participating in class field trips should notify their child's teacher. Permission slips must be signed by a parent before a child is permitted to attend a field trip or outside event.

THE ADVISORY PROGRAM (grades 6-8)

One of the primary goals of the Advisor-student relationship is to provide a child with both a person and a structure to help ensure maximum success at Brown School and to help resolve school concerns and issues that may arise. With a thorough knowledge of his or her student's strengths, weaknesses, needs, and personal growth, a Brown School Advisor is the adult advocate in the school, a person who can champion the child's cause in student-to-teacher, student-to-administrator, and student-to-student interactions. Advisors also coordinate all assessment activities for his or her advisees, including the Portfolio Conference.

The Advisory session is a time to discuss any pressing issues, or explore a rich variety of topics and interests in order to develop the student's identity, discover and demonstrate her or his own competencies, and plan for the future. A few of the specific areas of exploration include peer relationships, human sexuality, personal health and wellness, conflict resolution, and mindfulness education. Students are presented with opportunities for expressing themselves openly, respectfully, and honestly. Students will also have the opportunity to practice developing executive functioning skills, such as organization, time management, planning, and goal-directed perseverance.

SPORTS (upper grades)

The upper grades athletic program is designed to assist each individual student to better understand physical fitness and to integrate it as a lifestyle activity. This is accomplished by encouraging self-discipline, good sportsmanship, an understanding of rules and regulations, and respect for others both on and off the field. Throughout the year, students participate in a number of team sports, as well as year-round conditioning and strength training. Through team sports, such as volleyball and soccer, students learn drills, strategies and skill training to improve their game. Games with other schools and organizations are scheduled after school. An annual Sport Night is held.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Brown School offers a variety of programs outside of our regular school hours, which reflect our mission and philosophy and include age-appropriate extracurricular activities such as ski club, student council, Science Bowl, Olympics of the Visual Arts, and others. School-to-home mailings will provide information about the offerings during a given part of the school year. These are offered at an additional fee and a separate registration is required.

EXTENDED DAY & PLUS

To meet the needs of working parents, Brown School offers its Extended Day Program for grades K – 8 and its PLUS Program for nursery and Pre-K. These programs operate from 7:00 to 8:05 a.m. and 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. During the extended day period, our well-qualified staff provides age-appropriate activities including arts and crafts, stories, games, group activities, outdoor play, and homework time. Those participating in the afternoon program are provided with a snack. Students enroll in the program for an entire school year. Children may also participate on a daily drop-in basis. For more information about enrollment in and the cost of this program, please access our web site under “Programs,” or contact the Director of Special Programs.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Brown School offers students the opportunity to participate in after-school clubs throughout the year. Generally, clubs are held from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. and meet once each week for a period of about six weeks. Information regarding club options is available from the Director of Special Programs before the start of each session. Enrollment in all clubs is limited and is filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT

In order to provide enrichment opportunities for our students and other students in the area, Brown School provides many after school enrichment opportunities. In past years, this program has offered classes in musical instruments (piano, guitar, brass, woodwind, violin, drums), dance (ballet, jazz, hip-hop), Tae Kwon Do, fencing, drama, acrobatics, art, computer graphics design, and yoga. Enrichment classes meet on a weekly basis beginning the first full week of school and end in early June. Enrichment program brochures are mailed to all registered students in late summer. All classes are filled on a first-come, first-served basis with priority given to returning students in the musical instruction programs.

VACATION CAMPS

Brown School offers an Intersession Program to students in nursery-fifth grade during our Holiday, winter and spring breaks. This program is operated in a manner similar to our Extended Day Program. However, parents must register their children for the program prior to vacation breaks. Registration forms are available in the office approximately two weeks prior to vacation breaks.

SUMMER CAMP

Open to students in nursery through eighth grade, as well as the general public, our Summer Camp runs for ten weeks, offering a wide variety of activities that run in block intervals throughout the day. These activities include arts and crafts, sports, music, summer splash, Legos, bike riding and foreign language. Specialty camps are also often provided. Lunch and two snacks are included. Camp hours are 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., with before- and after-care available for an additional fee. Enrollment may be on a daily, weekly, or entire summer basis.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

SNACK & LUNCH

Mid-morning snack time offers a brief recess to all of our students. Students in kindergarten through eighth grades bring their own healthy morning snacks. Nursery, and Pre-K children have a simple snack provided by the school. Brown School is a "nut aware" school and we highly encourage all families to avoid snacks with nuts as many children have severe nut allergies and may suffer serious consequences if exposed to them.

Students have lunch for 30 minutes each day in the cafeteria. The lunch program features healthy, kid-friendly foods, including sandwiches, pizza, soup and salad, and hot entrée options every day. The Brown School kitchen is completely nut free.

PARENTS & VISITORS

To ensure the safety and well being of all our students, people conducting business at the school must sign in at the Main Office at all times. Furthermore, any parent, guardian, or caretaker entering the building after 8:35 a.m. must sign in at the Main Office and get a visitor's badge. Parents and visitors should enter the school by way of the primary entrance and proceed directly to the Main Office. Parents picking up students prior to the end of the school day must sign them out at the Main Office.

Other than scheduled events within classrooms, such as "visiting days," we request that parents and guardians speak with a child's teacher before visiting a classroom or visiting for lunch. Visits by adults are welcome, but at the discretion of the teacher. Parents dropping in for lunch will incur a \$5.00 charge.

Parents or guardians who wish to confer with a teacher must arrange a mutually agreeable time to meet, and should not attempt to talk with a teacher first thing in the morning when students are settling in. Parents or guardians who need to deliver something to their child during the school day are asked to leave items with the administrative staff in the Main Office. Our staff will make sure that it is delivered in a timely fashion.

RECESS

Children have supervised recess. They go outdoors every day unless there is rain or the temperature is below 20 degrees. Children should be dressed appropriately for outdoor play during the winter months. Boots are essential. Brown School encourages play and recreation, and if a child is well enough to be in school, he or she should participate in all activities, including outdoor play. A doctor's note is required for a child to be excused from recess, Wellness/Physical Education, or any other scheduled activity.

TOYS, GAMES & ELECTRONICS

Nursery and Pre-K students may bring soft toys for rest time. Children in kindergarten through eighth grade may not bring toys from home except on special occasions and at a teachers' discretion. If you have a suggestion for a toy, game, or book that would be desirable for the school to purchase, please talk with your child's teacher.

Although students may bring cell phones with them to school, they may not be used without a teacher's permission and must be turned off throughout the day. Cell phones may be used only in case of emergency. If a child is caught using a cell phone during the day, or if their phone disrupts class, they will be asked to deliver it to the Main Office. A parent or guardian will be notified and pick-up of the phone will be arranged.

Other electronic devices such as MP3 players, iPods, electronic games, laser pens, etc. must be left at home. This rule also applies on field trips unless permission is given by the Head/Assistant Head of School in advance of the activity. If a student is found in possession of an electronic device, they will be asked to deliver it to the Main Office. A parent or guardian will be notified and pick-up of the device will be arranged.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Children are welcome to bring a class treat to celebrate a birthday. We suggest individual portions of healthy snacks, such as fruit. Sugary snacks are rarely served in our cafeteria and are discouraged in the classroom as well. Parents should check with the classroom teacher or Advisor prior to bringing in party treats to arrange an appropriate date and time. Parents of allergy sensitive students should provide healthy and safe snacks as a substitute for class treats. Birthday or holiday entertainment (clowns, magicians, balloons, etc.) is not permitted during the school day. Party invitations may not be distributed at school unless all children in a class or grade receive an invitation.

DRESS CODE

Student appearance at Brown School must be appropriate for a serious and nurturing academic environment spanning the ages of 3 years to 15 years. Clothing should be suitable to weather conditions (e.g. temperature, precipitation). All clothing, hair styles, and accessories must preserve student safety and wellbeing, and must not depict or imply illegal activities, offensive symbols, inappropriate language, drug references, alcohol references, or sexual references.

Sneakers are ideal for most students. Open-backed sandals (including flip-flops), soft-soled shoes (crocs), boots, and shoes with heels are not appropriate footwear during the academic day. Shoes and socks should fit comfortably and protect a child's feet to prevent accidents. Students must have sneakers to participate in Physical Education/Wellness, or sport-approved footwear to participate in athletics.

During the academic day, all hemlines must extend to within six inches of the knee, and all clothing must be clean and in good repair (not torn, frayed, cut-off, or see-through). Students may not wear strapless tops or tops with straps fewer than two inches wide; apparel that reveals undergarments, midriff, buttocks, or chest; or hats while indoors.

Students who violate the school's dress code will be required to modify their appearance immediately.

LOST AND FOUND

All students' belongings should be clearly marked with the child's name. All "found" articles are placed in a "lost and found box" located across from the Community Room. Articles left on buses may be retrieved from the driver or at your home school district's transportation office. Items that are left for more than thirty days will be donated to charity.

TEXTBOOKS

School districts are required to provide textbooks to independent school students from their districts. Each district sets its own policies in this regard. Some require that parents pick up and return all textbooks to their district. Others request that Brown School retain all textbooks each year and request only those that are additionally needed. Students are responsible for caring for and returning the textbooks they received from their school district.

Brown School will make all textbook requests on a student's behalf for those students who have registered for the following school year by early June. After that time, parents must request textbooks directly from their districts or from BOCES. Additional textbook information is available through the Main Office or school librarian. More details and dates for pickup and delivery can be obtained by calling the student's district business office.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

We understand that for many families, part of the preparation for the beginning of school each fall is the selection and buying of school supplies. In the lower grades, Brown School provides most materials and supplies for children. During the summer, a list of supplies needed for the upcoming year is sent to parents. Children should ideally bring their supplies to the Back-to-School BBQ held the day before school begins. Knowing that all, or nearly all, supplies are already in the locker greatly decreases the stress of the first day and allows for a smoother transition to the new school year. Older students are given more responsibility for providing most of the materials that they will use throughout the year, such as binders, notebooks, and pens.

CLASS PLACEMENT

Careful consideration is given to creating well-balanced and cohesive classes and sections at every grade level. The process begins in June, when teachers of students from the previous year meet with the Head of School and other teachers to group children for the following year. It is important to create a blend of gender, energy level, cognitive ability, social mix, and personality for each classroom. This is a complex process that teachers and administrators approach very mindfully and with a great deal of care. The class list is then reviewed and sometimes altered over the summer as enrollment changes. Younger students are notified by August of their teacher assignment for the upcoming school year. Students in sixth through eighth grades are notified of their Advisory placement over the summer.

Requests from parents are considered, and these requests become one of many pieces of information used when we consider class or section placement. If parents or guardians want to submit a request, they are encouraged to write a letter describing what kind of learner their child is and what type of learning environment best suits their child. This letter needs to be submitted to the Head of School by the end of May. Younger siblings will not always have the same teacher as an older sibling, as each child's needs are different and the mix of children at that grade level may vary.

END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS & GRADUATION

Brown School celebrates the end of the year for its students at three specific times: First, the “Nursery and Pre-K Celebration” is held in the school gym in the morning of their last day of school. Next, is “Moving Up Night” for kindergarten through eighth grade. This is traditionally held outside of Brown School, normally at Proctors Theater. Finally, the Eighth Grade Graduation is held on the day following the last day of classes. All parents and families are welcome to attend all events. Please refer to the online calendar accessible through the Brown School web site at www.brownschool.org for more information.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEALTH AND WELLNESS OFFICE

Our Health and Wellness Office is staffed with a Registered Nurse every day during regular school hours. Please notify this office of any changes in your daytime phone numbers or emergency contacts phone numbers. If there are any questions regarding your child's health or any health office policies, please call the Health and Wellness Office during school hours at ext. 340. **Please notify the nurse when your child will be absent or late.**

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Immunization guidelines are specific for each grade. Our policy follows the New York State Immunization Guidelines and must be strictly adhered to. **All immunizations must be current before the first day of school.** A child cannot attend school until these records are completed.

SCHOOL PHYSICAL POLICY

A physical exam done within the past 12 months is required for all new entrants and for those entering nursery, Pre-K, kindergarten, second, fourth, and seventh grade. If a child has a specific medical care plan involving an allergy or other health condition, parents must submit the care plan to the nurse and discuss this information with the nurse and teacher prior to the beginning of the school year. In addition, an Upper School student who plans to join a sport must have a current physical stating that the child is able to participate without limitations.

ILLNESS AND EMERGENCIES

If your child becomes ill or has any type of emergency during the school day, you or the person designated as your emergency contact will be notified. Please do not send your child to school if he/she, has (or had within the past 24 hours)

- 1) a fever
- 2) been vomiting or had diarrhea during the night or in the morning
- 3) any type of undiagnosed rash
- 4) acute cold symptoms.

If a child goes home from school with any of the above symptoms, he/she must be kept home from school for at least 24 hours, symptom-free. Communicable diseases are to be reported to the school office as soon as they are diagnosed. If a child is absent or is dismissed early due to illness, he or she may not participate in any after school activities or events later that day or evening.

ALLERGIES

It is important that the Health and Wellness Office is made aware of all allergies or medical conditions. In cases of severe nut allergies, every effort will be made to ensure that the child's classroom is nut free, and all parents will need to abide by those rules.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

The Bureau of Health Services of the State Education Department provides specific instructions regarding the administration of medicine to students while in school. First and foremost, *PARENTS MUST DELIVER MEDICATION TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE. CHILDREN MAY NOT BRING MEDICATION TO SCHOOL OR HANDLE IT UPON THEIR ARRIVAL.* The requirements for in-school distribution of medication are as follows:

- A written order signed by a physician and the parent/guardian must be received in order to administer any prescription or over-the-counter medication in school. This order should include the child's name and diagnosis, the medication name, dose, time, frequency to be given, and duration of administration along with the phone number of the physician.
- All prescription medication must be received in its original, pharmacy labeled container including the student's name, the name of the medication, dose, frequency and route of administration. All non-prescription medication must be in its original container.
- Medication must be transported to the school only by the parent or guardian. If a medication is to be given at home and school, the parent should have the pharmacist split the medication into two containers to prevent the need for medication to be transported back and forth daily. A student may not carry medication during the school day unless his physician, the parent, and the school nurse have determined that she/he is capable and self-directed; the proper form must also be submitted to the health office as well.
- If a child is on prescribed medication at home for an extended time, we request that the parent notify the nurse and teacher in order to be aware of possible reactions and side effects.
- The medication policy remains in effect for all day and overnight field trips. In addition, parents should discuss any medications their child is taking with the teacher and school nurse at least one week prior to the trip.

HIV SYNDROME

Brown School is aware of the importance and immediacy of the public health crisis regarding HIV, which can lead to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Brown School will at all times act in accordance with federal, state, and local laws regarding this matter, and will consider each incidence concerning an HIV-infected person on a case-by-case basis. Brown School recognizes that students suffering from HIV should be dealt with in a fair and equitable manner.

NEW YORK STATE POLICY REGARDING CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

According to Section 413 of the New York State Social Services Law, occurrences of child abuse and/or neglect must be reported immediately. The duty to report concerns "suspicion" only; the burden of proof does not rest with the person reporting. Medical confidentiality does not apply in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. No person may be sued for reporting a suspected case of child abuse, even if the suspicion proves to be unfounded.

Conversely, failure to report constitutes a misdemeanor and renders the non-reporting person liable for resulting legal damages. Whenever there is a case of suspected child abuse or maltreatment, a telephone call must be made immediately to the New York Central Registry. A formal written report must follow this telephone call to the Child Protective Service Office within 48 hours. The Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and School Nurse will be informed by a teacher or staff member about any such suspicions. All reports will be made to the Central Registry only with prior knowledge of the Head of School, Assistant Head, and the school nurse.

SAFETY PLAN

The school has a comprehensive safety plan that goes into effect in the case of emergency. Evacuation and lock down procedures are practiced throughout the school year. The school works with local authorities in the event of a local emergency. The safety plan is reviewed every year. All teachers and staff review the safety plan in opening meetings and are expected to understand their assignments in the event of emergencies.

STUDENTS: EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

Brown School is committed to creating and maintaining a culture of civility among students and adults. This entails, first and foremost, respect for oneself, for other people, and for our surroundings. Our culture of civility is manifested specifically in our Code of Conduct. Although we firmly believe that positive reinforcement is by far a more effective and appropriate means for ensuring our culture of civility, when students do exhibit discourtesy and disrespect, our response will be age-appropriate, fair, consistent, and firm.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

- Be kind to other people and sensitive to others' needs.
- Be considerate of others and their own property.
- Be respectful of school rules.
- Be helpful.
- Be punctual.
- Be a caretaker of the school environment.
- Be a seeker of peaceful solutions to conflict.
- Be responsible for your actions and attitudes.
- Be truthful to yourself and in your dealings with others.
- Be honest with yourself and others.
- Be the best person you can be all the time.

Any behavior that in the opinion of the faculty or administration could be harmful to students or the school community as a whole is unacceptable. Although it is impossible to spell out every issue that might arise in our day-to-day life, the following guidelines will help to determine what is not acceptable at Brown School:

- **Invading privacy**, including the work space and personal property of another student, or the desk, files or personal property of any teacher, staff member, or administrator. You may not be in the computer or science labs, the kitchen, the basement, or any of the school offices without the express permission of a teacher or administrator.
- **Abusing, endangering, intimidating, or teasing** another student by word or deed. This includes sexual harassment or any sexual contact, reference, joke, or innuendo, as well as comments about appearance, clothing, or looks.
- **Disrupting class** with rude or outlandish behavior.
- **Arriving late to class, cutting classes or leaving school** during the day without permission.
- **Participating in vandalism**, destruction of school or personal property, or graffiti.
- **Tampering with the fire alarm** or any other mechanical system in the building.
- **Possessing or using any dangerous object**. Examples include: guns, knives, martial arts weapons, fireworks, explosive or highly flammable material, and any controlled substances (drugs, tobacco, alcohol, etc.)
- **Any violation of our Code of Conduct**
- **Any violation of our Internet and Computer Resources Policy**.

Students are also expected to engage in appropriate interactions with other students outside of school, including on social media, due to the fact that such behaviors cause disruption in the school setting and violate the school code of conduct.

All of the above behaviors would seriously disrupt the spirit of the Brown School community. Any of these activities would necessitate meeting with the student's homeroom teacher or advisor, the Head of School, Assistant Head of School or Area Coordinator, and/or parents. These activities could lead to probation, suspension, or dismissal from Brown School.

ATTENDANCE

Active student participation is an integral part of a Brown School education. Students are expected to attend all classes unless excused for a health reason, doctor's visit, or as authorized by the Head of School. Parents are asked to call the Health Office at ext. 340 before 8:00 a.m. to report an absence or late arrival. When absent, students are responsible for keeping up with schoolwork and submitting all required assignments.

Nursery Options

Families of children in nursery choose either to attend three days, four days, or five days a week. If the three-day option is selected, it is recommended that students attend M/W/F. A family may not choose to change the selection of days from week to week, as teachers plan activities carefully based on specific attendance. Families should also note that the nursery curriculum includes Special Area classes (Art, Musical Movement, and Library) each week. Three-day children will not be able to participate in all of those classes. Teachers work very hard to plan field trips and special class events on days when all children attend. If this is not possible, parents should know that all children are included for those events. Advance notice will be given to parents for special events, so arrangements can be made, if necessary, for the three-day children.

Vacations

Vacations are important for children and families, and Brown School includes three extended vacation periods and a number of long weekends during the school year. Parents should schedule vacations during these breaks. Given that so much of the learning takes place in school and in the classrooms, vacations taken while school is in session or prolonged absences other than in case of illness can put a child at a disadvantage. If you intend for your child to be absent from school, you must inform the Head of School in writing or by e-mail prior to a scheduled absence. Requests for work to be done while a child is out must be made through your child's Teacher(s) or Advisor(s) at least one week prior to an extended absence. If parents decide to vacation while school is in session, work missed during that vacation period is the responsibility of the child and parent.

Tardiness

Our school day begins at 8:05 a.m. Please help foster responsible habits in your child by ensuring that he or she arrives on time. Students brought to school after 8:05 a.m. must sign in at the office in the company of a parent or other adult and must receive a late pass at the office in order to enter the classroom.

The number of late arrivals will be calculated and recorded on your child's Student Assessment Reports. For children in fifth through eighth grades, an excessive number of late arrivals (3 in any one marking period) will result in a service-based, after school detention. For children with a pattern of lateness, a meeting will be held between the Head of School and the child's family.

HOMEWORK

Homework is a contract between the teacher and the student. At Brown School, it is the child's responsibility to do the homework and return it to school, while it is the parent's job to facilitate the process of homework. Parents can help by asking their child if he/she has homework, establishing a separate workspace at home (away from phone, computer and television), and reminding their child to put completed homework in his/her backpack to return to school. It is important that children do their own work, as teachers view homework as a guideline for assessing students' work, as well as their own teaching. Homework that is usually completed by a parent does not give the teacher a clear picture of that student's understanding of the material. Children need to develop responsibility for their own work.

In a mindful effort to promote more restful, enjoyable vacations, homework, beyond independent reading, will generally NOT be assigned at Brown School over extended vacations and holidays.

Lower Grades (N-4)

Homework at Brown School is designed to be meaningful, appropriate, and relevant to class work. Assignments may range from single, one-night assignments to homework that needs to be planned over a period of time. Developing time management skills is one intended goal of homework. Homework should not be a struggle at home, nor should it require an inordinate amount of time. If your child is finding homework to be a struggle or it is causing a great deal of stress, it is important to contact your child's teacher. Developing good homework habits and strategies is important as children progress through their school years. Back to School Night provides parents with information regarding homework for each class and grade level.

Upper Grades (5-8)

Homework is intended to reinforce what students are learning in class and to provide opportunities for self-directed study. Students need time outside of school to expand and reflect upon the groundwork laid during the school day. Homework is assigned in order to establish patterns of responsibility, develop successful study habits, allow students freedom for individual creativity, help students to learn to work independently, and allow students to discover and explore topics and issues based on individual interests and needs. Finally, homework shows that learning takes place all the time and everywhere.

Considering the importance of practice, students should expect to spend time each weekday evening engaged in homework. While the amount and frequency of homework may vary, it should balance the need for practicing skills with family life. Help and advice should be sought from the child's teacher should difficulty with homework arise.

Both students and parents may consult the Upper School Website for daily updates, news and homework assignments. This page will link students to Teacher Websites as well.

There are very few legitimate excuses for turning in an assignment late, or not submitting it at all. If a student arrives to class without the assignment he or she will be given a missed assignment slip that must be signed by a parent or guardian and brought back to school the following day with the assignment. This is to ensure that proper communication between school and home is occurring. If it is not brought back, the student will meet with the Assistant Head of School and the parent or guardian will be notified. If the student establishes a pattern of missed work (missing three assignments in a marking period, for example) the Assistant Head/Head of School will contact the parent or guardian and the student will be required to serve afterschool detention on a designated day.

If a student severely neglects his or her homework obligations, a meeting will be held with the parent or guardian, the Advisor/and or teacher, and the Head of School to discuss strategies to assist the student in getting back on track.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WITH HOMEWORK

We believe the following tips may help students gain the most benefit from their academic enrichment/homework assignments. Students should:

- Communicate with the teacher if there is a problem;
- Begin work at a reasonable hour, and not postpone work until late in the evening as it may add to everyone's frustration level;
- Set a consistent time (set a time limit and/or deadline) and establish a consistent place for enrichment/ homework to be done;
- Have ready access to reference works, such as a dictionary and a computer if possible.

A parent or guardian should help supervise homework when a child needs direction, but no one should do the work for the child.

Since academic enrichment and homework is usually assigned in class, a student should ask the teacher in class if she or he has questions or concerns when it is assigned. After the regular school day has ended, the first step is to contact a classmate. If a child is still confused, he or she should be encouraged to e-mail his/her teacher, or to speak to the teacher as soon as possible on the next school day.

ACADEMIC PROBATION (grades 5-8)

Teachers work with students' Advisors to ensure that they are meeting minimum academic expectations throughout the year. (Meeting minimum expectations entails maintaining a "C" average in each class and submitting all required assignments and projects.) A student will be placed on Academic Probation if she or he fails to meet minimum requirements and a meeting will be convened with the student, the Advisor, parent or guardian, Director of IGNITE, Assistant Head of School and the Head of School. Strategies will be developed to help the student raise his or her level of performance and benchmarks will be set. At the discretion of the Head of School, a student on Academic Probation may be required to stay after school to receive further instruction and may be barred from attending school sponsored events until he or she has returned to an acceptable level of performance.

CONSEQUENCES FOR BEHAVIORAL MISCONDUCT

Brown School holds all of its students to high standards of behavior in and out of the classroom while on school property or at a school-sponsored event. The consequences for infractions of Brown School's Code of Conduct, policies and regulations, and disruptions of our culture of civility and mindfulness vary according to the severity of a student's actions, her or his pattern of misconduct, and the circumstances surrounding the student's actions. Our consequences are always age-appropriate and constructive.

Action Plans

When a student's behavior disrupts the learning environment or disturbs other members of the school community, he or she will be required to complete an Action Plan. This means he or she will meet with the Assistant Head of School and/or Head of School and fill out a form describing the behavior and mapping out both strategies for improvement and consequences for the action. This plan is adaptable for the very young and for the older students; strategies and consequences will be age appropriate. For older students the consequence may include serving a service-based detention after school. Any time a student is asked to complete an Action Plan, the parent or guardian is notified.

Behavioral Misconduct Conference (BMC)

If a student establishes a pattern of behavioral misconduct, parents or guardians are required to meet with the Assistant Head of School, the appropriate educator (Teacher or Advisor) and, when appropriate, the Head of School to map out strategies for improvement and establish consequences for the behavior.

Intervention

In extreme cases (*e.g.*, when children's safety is threatened or the classroom learning environment is continually disrupted), a parent or guardian may be asked to pick up her or his child for the remainder of the school day and a Behavioral Misconduct Conference must be convened (to include the Head of School) before the student is allowed to return to classes.

Suspension of the Privilege to Participate in School Events

A student's participation in team sports and after school activities and performances may be suspended for a length of time. To participate in extra- or co-curricular activities, a student must be in good standing in all of his or her classes and be a cooperative, respectful member of the Brown School community. The decision whether to restrict a student's participation will be made by the Head of School only after consultation with the student's teacher/Advisor and parent or guardian at a BMC or at a Academic Probation Meeting.

In-School Suspension

Serious behavioral incidents that are chronic or constitute major infractions of school rules or policies, such as theft, vandalism, bullying peers, disrespectful behavior, physical violence, sexual harassment, cutting class, or behavior that undermines the educational environment of Brown School, may result in an in-school suspension. In-school suspension lasts for one or two full days. A student may not participate in extra- or co-curricular activities while on in-school suspension. During this time a student will not attend classes or fraternize with classmates; appropriate academic work will be made available as well as special assignments deemed appropriate by the student's Advisor and Head of School. The student will be under the supervision of administrative staff. A student will serve an in-school suspension only after a parent/guardian conference with the Head of School, Area Coordinator, and Advisor. If a student has been given three (3) in-school suspensions in a single academic year, at the discretion of the Head of School and in consultation with the Assistant Head of School and the Area Coordinator Leadership Committee, a student may be given a full suspension.

Full Suspension

Full suspension means an out-of-school suspension for at least three days, but not more than five days. A student will be suspended for the most serious infractions of school rules and policies. For example, if a student willfully endangers the safety of others, repeatedly behaves in a violent or aggressive manner, habitually exhibits uncooperative or insubordinate conduct, is found in possession of or has used a weapon or other dangerous instrument, or is suspected of using, possessing, or transferring alcoholic beverages, tobacco, illegal drugs or paraphernalia, the Head of School will suspend a student.

Suspended students may not attend classes or activities or enter school property while under suspension. Suspended students may not attend any off-campus activities held by Brown School. A student may be suspended only after a parent/guardian conference with the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, and the student's Advisor or teacher.

When the period of suspension is over, a parent or guardian must accompany the student to school on his or her first day back, and meet with the Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Area Coordinator, and the Advisor or teacher. A student is responsible for completing all assigned work while on suspension and submitting it to his or her Advisor or teacher at this meeting.

Expulsion from Brown School

Students whose behavior is such that they continue to endanger the safety, health, or welfare of themselves or others, or whose behavior restricts their own availability to the Brown School education, shall be referred to the Head of School, who in consultation with the Assistant Head of School, the Area Coordinator Leadership Committee, and the student's teachers, may expel the student from Brown School for the remainder of the academic year. The Head of School will meet with the student and his or her parents/guardians and the Assistant Head of School to inform the parents/guardians of the action taken by the school. The Brown School Board of Trustees will be informed of a student's expulsion.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The goal of our policy is to ensure the welfare and wellbeing of individual students and the Brown School community in general. The procedures to be followed for alcohol and drug abuse embody a multi-leveled approach with positive emphases. They encompass a program of prevention through referral for counseling with parental involvement if abuse is apparent. If a law is broken on school property or at school-sponsored events, the Head of School is obligated to report the incident to law enforcement authorities.

Any student found to be using, possessing, selling, or giving away alcohol, tobacco, or drugs on school property or at school-sponsored functions and field trips shall be suspended. At the discretion of the Head of School and in consultation with the Assistant Head and Area Coordinators, a student may be provisionally readmitted or expelled after a specified period of time has elapsed. If a student is expelled, the family is still responsible for tuition payments for the remainder of the year.

INTERVENTION AND COUNSELING OF STUDENTS

Any case of suspected alcohol or drug abuse outside Brown School is to be reported confidentially to the Head of School. In cases of suspension, the Head of School will obtain confidential information from other staff members as to the student's classroom behavior and general health. If they judge the student to have symptoms commonly associated with alcohol and drug abuse, the Head of School will be advised and the parents will be informed of the observed symptoms. Accordingly, the student will be encouraged to schedule an examination with a physician and/or alcohol and drug counselor.

In the case of self-admission of alcohol and/or drug abuse to any member of the faculty or staff, the assumption is that the student is seeking help, and the primary aim of Brown School will be to aid that student. The Head of School will be notified first, and the Assistant Head and Area Coordinator will also be informed. A recommendation will be made to the child's parents or guardians that a referral to an alcohol and drug treatment facility would be appropriate if the situation warrants such a recommendation. If requested, Brown School will provide a list of appropriate facilities that will provide assistance to the child.

In cases of incapacitation, time is of the essence. If a student appears to be in serious condition—either physically or mentally, whether from alcohol, drugs, or an illness, an ambulance will be summoned immediately and the student will be taken to the nearest hospital. The Head of School will notify the child's parents or guardian immediately of the action taken.

TOBACCO USE AND ABUSE POLICY

It is the purpose of Brown School to create and maintain an environment that will serve to promote good health among employees, students, and visitors. Brown School recognizes smoking and second-hand smoke as serious health hazards.

Smoking anywhere is prohibited on the Brown School campus, in school vehicles, or at school events. A student found using tobacco would incur, upon due process as set forth in this Family Handbook, a 3-day in-house suspension for the first offense, a 5-day suspension for a second offense, and expulsion for the third offense.

FIREARMS AND WEAPONS POLICY

The possession of firearms or other weapons on school property, at school-sponsored events, extracurricular activities, or on field trips is absolutely prohibited and will result in the immediate suspension and, after the Head of School determines the legitimacy of the situation, immediate expulsion. It is the responsibility of any Brown School employee to assist in the enforcement of this policy. Any student, while on school property or under Brown School's jurisdiction, found in possession of a firearm or what is construed as a weapon by the Head of School, will be subject to the following procedure:

- The Head of School will immediately contact the student's parent or guardian. The Head of School will refer the case to the proper law enforcement authority, which will immediately be summoned to Brown School.
- If found in violation of Brown School's weapons and firearms policy, the student will receive an out-of-school suspension for an indefinite period.
- The circumstances and the student's condition will be reevaluated by the Head of School in consultation with the Assistant Head and Area Coordinators, and, when appropriate the child's teachers, and a final determination on the child's status will be made. If a child is found in violation of Brown School's weapons and firearms policy, the Head of School will expel the student.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Title VII of the United States' Civil Rights Act of 1964, the New York State Human Rights Law, and the Brown School's legal position prohibit sexual harassment. Any student who feels that he or she is being sexually harassed by peers or adults should immediately bring the incident to the attention of a teacher or administrator.

INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE POLICY

Brown School is committed to providing a rich technology experience to our students. Students are encouraged to use technology equipment (computers, scanners, digital cameras, etc.) in their class projects and to make use of the Internet as a valuable resource tool. We have every expectation that our students will enjoy learning how to use these new technologies and will always behave accordingly. However, if a student misuses this opportunity, he or she will lose privileges and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

PARENTS: COMMUNICATION & PROTOCOLS

Open and honest communication between Brown School and parents is a cornerstone of our school's philosophy and mission. Parents are encouraged to attend all orientation meetings and other events to meet administrators, teachers, and Board of Trustees members. Many of these meetings are held at the beginning of the school year and are meant to foster a partnership that is crucial to your child's success.

Parents are encouraged to meet separately with teachers and the Head of School to discuss any aspect of your child's experience or growth throughout the school year. Teachers are expected to contact parents regarding student progress, with both concerns and praise. In many cases, teachers will send notes home or write comments in assignment pads or agendas to keep parents up to date with progress reports. To address any issues in the most efficient manner, we ask you to follow these guidelines. First, you are encouraged to speak directly with the classroom teacher or another member of your child's grade-level teaching team. For sixth through eighth graders, next in line is the Advisor, who serves as your child's advocate at school. If an issue is still in need of resolution, parents are requested to speak to the Area Coordinator, the Assistant Head of School and then the Head of School. When sending an e-mail/contacting a teacher or administrator, you should expect to receive a response within 24 hours. If you attempt to contact a teacher/administrator on a weekend, please allow for a response on the next business day.

NAIS PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Brown School endorses the National Association of Independent Schools Principles of Good Practice, which defines high standards and ethical behavior in key areas of school operations. The following principles of good practice describe the respective roles and responsibilities of both partners.

Parents Working With Schools

Parents recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be reached. Furthermore, we expect that:

- in selecting an independent school, parents seek an optimal match for the needs of their children in concert with the philosophy and programs of the school;
- parents are familiar with and support the school's policies and procedures;
- parents provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits;
- parents involve themselves in the life of the school;
- parents seek and value the school's perspective on the student;
- when concerns arise, parents seek information directly from the school, consulting with those best able to address the concerns;
- parents share with the school any religious, cultural, medical, or personal information that the school may need to serve the student best.

Schools Working With Parents

Brown School recognizes that effective partnerships are characterized by clearly defined responsibilities, a shared commitment to collaboration, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of goals and objectives. The school clearly and fully presents its philosophy, program, and practices to parents during the admission process and encourages dialogue that clarifies parental expectations and aspirations for the student. Furthermore,

- the school seeks and values parents' perspective of the student;
- teachers and administrators are accessible to parents and model candid and open dialogue;
- the school keeps parents well informed through systematic reports, conferences, publications, and informal conversations;
- the school defines clearly how it involves parents when considering major decisions that affect the school community;
- the school offers and supports a variety of parent education opportunities;
- the school suggests effective ways for parents to support the educational process;
- the school actively seeks the knowledge it needs to work effectively with a diverse parent body.

BROWN SCHOOL RAPID NOTIFY, NEWS AND WEBSITES

In addition to the Rapid Notify system to alert families to immediate changes in operating status, Brown School publishes an E-Letter two times per month containing current announcements, information, and a report on activities. In addition, families are encouraged to visit the Brown School Website, www.brownschool.org, for news updates. For the upper grades, there is an Upper School Website. In an effort to be as “green” as possible, we prefer to convey our news in an electronic format, thus it is imperative that families provide the school with accurate email addresses and phone numbers.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT REPORTS, PROGRESS REPORTS & CONFERENCES

Student Assessment Reports:

Student Assessment Reports provide a thorough and comprehensive evaluative summary of each child's overall performance. The use of both grades and objectives identifies student strengths and areas of need related to both content knowledge (what students know) and skill level (what students demonstrate they can do). These objectives are meant to show that a student is growing with regard to grade-level skills.

Nursery and Pre-K students receive a Student Assessment Report in January and June. This report provides a description of a student's growth in the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical realms of development.

Grades K-8 receive Student Assessment Reports three times per year in December, March, and June.

Conferences:

Formal conferences are held twice each school year. The Fall Conference is intended as an information sharing session between teachers and parents. In the spring, students in grades 3-8 have Portfolio Conferences to allow students to showcase their progress and to allow parents a better understanding of their student's strengths and areas of need. Parents of children in nursery-second grade are invited to a formal conference that is similar in format to the one held in the fall.

SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACEMENT AND TRANSCRIPTS

Brown School works closely with parents of eighth graders to assist in the placement of students in secondary schools. Eighth grade parents are encouraged to meet with the Head of School and Assistant Head to consider options for independent and public high schools. Transcripts and confidential letters of recommendation are sent at the request of the receiving school and the parents. Please note that the Student Assessment Report is distinct from the transcript sent to prospective schools if that student is enrolled in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade.

Transcripts will not be released if there is a delinquent financial account with the school's business office.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Active and involved parents are vital to Brown School. Brown School's Parents Actively Lending Support (PALS) group provides many opportunities for parents to volunteer for school-wide events. The committee structure allows for parent participation at the decision-making level and adds to the dynamic of our school where parents, teachers, administrative staff, and the Board of Trustees work together to enrich the children's educational experiences. There are many ways a parent can be involved in the Brown School community, and all parents are encouraged to act as ambassadors, spreading the good word about our school.

Parent Representative Committee (PALS)

The Brown School Parent Representative Committee (PALS - Parents Actively Lending Support) supports Brown School's mission of inspiring each student to love learning and strive for academic excellence. The Committee serves as a vital link between the parent community and the school. It is responsible for organizing and supporting social and fund raising activities through parent volunteers on an as-needed basis in support of the school.

Contact the PALS Committee via email at pals@brownschool.org.

School Events/Talent Tap

Brown School hosts a number of school events where parents' attendance and/or assistance is valued and appreciated. Concerts, musicals, grade level teas, athletic events, upper grades' socials, Thanksgiving Feast, Staff Appreciation Dinner, and Back to School Barbecue are just a few of the events that need parent volunteers. Our Development efforts periodically need short-term assistance with mailings and fund-raising events. Please contact the PALS group if you have any questions or would like to be involved in a particular event or committee.

Class Parents

In nursery through eighth grade, each class/advisory has a class parent. (If there is only one section of a grade, then two parents may work together in that grade.) Class parents serve an important role in helping to communicate information to the families of their children's classmates. The class parent may also be asked to assist the classroom teacher in planning events such as holiday parties. Class Parents work with the teachers in organizing events, trips, and special class activities.

DEVELOPMENT AND THE ANNUAL APPEAL

Each fall the Development Committee launches Brown School's largest fund drive: The Annual Appeal. The Annual Appeal provides money for the school's current-year operating expenses. As with most independent schools, Brown School's cost of attendance covers only 85% of the full cost of educating a child. Families are expected to participate in the Annual Appeal.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Brown School is a not-for-profit corporation chartered by the State of New York and is governed by the Board of Trustees, a self-perpetuating group of volunteer parents, community members, and past Brown School constituents. The Board and its committees meet eight times each year.

The Board of Trustees assumes fiduciary responsibility for Brown School and sets school-wide policies with respect to its operations. The major responsibilities of the Board are to establish school policy, hire the Head of School, oversee the general operation of the school and its physical plant, and seek financial support for the school. Board members act only as a group and are not conduits of information to the Head of School.

ADMINISTRATION

The school administration is responsible for the daily operations, academic program, hiring of faculty and staff, communication with parents, recruitment and retention of students, and financial planning. The Administrative Team includes the Head of School, the Assistant Head of School, the Director of Admissions, the Director of Finance, the Coordinator of Special Programs and the Area Coordinators. The Head of School is responsible for all aspects of the school's operation and program through working with the Board of Trustees, the Administrative Team, and faculty and staff. Area Coordinators are first and foremost teachers, but also perform a number of administrative tasks to support the Head of School and the Assistant Head of School as they determine the day-to-day operations of the school. Area coordinators also facilitate communication both within the school and the Brown School community at large.

ADMISSIONS AND RE-ENROLLMENT

ADMISSIONS POLICY

Brown School does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, or national origin. All required observations and conferences must be completed before acting on an application. Brown School's Admissions Committee determines the acceptance or denial of each applicant.

Applications are accepted at any time and admission is granted on a rolling admission basis as enrollment allows. Priority is given to all returning students who have continued to meet performance standards and financial responsibilities. Siblings of returning students are also given priority provided their applications are received early and they have met admissions standards. In the case of a full class, all applicants meeting the standards for admission will be placed on a waiting list, which is processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

APPLICATION PROCESS

New students are admitted to Brown School after successfully completing the admissions process. For all new students, this process begins by completing and forwarding an Application for Admission and an Authorization for the Release of Records along with a \$50.00 application fee to the Director of Admissions. Where applicable, documentation such as prior school records, current teacher letters of recommendation, individual assessment tests, a meeting with the Director of Admissions, and classroom visits are required. Additional observations or conferences may be requested and must be completed prior to acting on an application. Brown School's Admissions Committee determines the acceptance of each applicant. It is expected that you inform us of any and all exceptional circumstances so we can best serve your family and adhere to the timeline for securing outside support for your student, should he/she require such support.

All applicants for kindergarten through eighth grade must schedule a classroom visit with the Director of Admissions. Prospective students spend all or a portion of the day in an age-appropriate classroom in order to experience a typical Brown School day. New students submitting an application after the last day of classes of the preceding school year will follow routine admissions procedures as stated and will visit with a grade-level teacher for an individual assessment. However, due to summer schedule constraints, students enrolling during the summer months will be placed on a probationary acceptance status for the first two weeks of the new school year.

PLACEMENT

Applicants for the nursery program must be three years of age by December 1st of the year of attendance. Applicants for the Pre-Kindergarten program must be four years of age by December 1st of the year attending. Nursery and Pre-K children must be toilet-trained (i.e., children have progressed beyond diapers or pull-ups). A child must be five years of age by December 1st to be admitted to kindergarten.

Brown School evaluates students for their developmental readiness for the nursery, Pre-K, and kindergarten programs, which may include current classroom observations. All decisions regarding placement are at the discretion of the Admissions Committee.

ENROLLMENT

When a student has met all admissions criteria, families will be mailed an Enrollment Contract to finalize financial arrangements and secure their child's enrollment. A non-refundable enrollment deposit must accompany all enrollment contracts to secure enrollment.

Once enrolled, a family has until April 30th, preceding the academic year of enrollment, to cancel an enrollment contract. Requests for cancellation must be in writing and must be received by the Head of School prior to April 30th. After April 30th, the Cost of Attendance will be charged for the full academic year.

RE-ENROLLMENT PRIORITY

Enrollment contracts are mailed to students' homes in late January. Sibling priority is given in December prior to the re-enrollment process. Priority enrollment of returning students until March 1st, after which time enrollment is open to all students meeting admissions criteria on a first-come, first-served basis. While all effort is made to accommodate current student re-enrollment, current students enrolling late cannot be promised a seat, since classes are subject to enrollment limits.

REGISTRATION CALENDAR

- **Early December** - Applications for siblings of current students are accepted for grades where openings are anticipated.
- **Late January** - Contracts for the upcoming academic year are mailed to all current students who have continued to meet performance standards.
- **February 28** - Deadline for TADS applications to be submitted for families seeking financial assistance awards. Financial assistance awards may not be available for families who file late, as funds may not be available.
- **Mid/Late March** - Financial Assistance award announcements are mailed.
- **April 30** - Deadline for receipt of notice of withdrawal by the school in order for a family to receive a release of obligation to pay the full Cost of Attendance for the following academic year.
- **May 1** – Enrollment late fee now applies for returning students.

COST OF ATTENDANCE AND BILLING

COST OF ATTENDANCE

The Cost of Attendance (tuition, activity fees, lunch, and overnight trips for Upper School students) is set each January by the Board of Trustees.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Consistent with the policy of most independent schools, Brown School does not prorate or refund Cost of Attendance due to absence or withdrawal. In extenuating circumstances, the Head of School may bring a matter to the Board of Trustees for a decision. We do, however, offer families the option to purchase Cost of Attendance Refund Insurance, in the event that, under certain conditions, a student is unable to complete the academic year.

OBLIGATION TO PAY THE COST OF ATTENDANCE

By signing an enrollment contract, a family acknowledges they are responsible for payment of the Cost of Attendance. Families have until April 30th prior to the academic year to cancel a student's enrollment. A letter must be sent to the Head of School prior to April 30th requesting cancellation. After April 30th, the Cost of Attendance is assessed for the full academic year in full for all registered students. A family who has a signed enrollment contract in place after April 30th is obligated to pay the full Cost of Attendance for that student regardless of whether or not the student attends the school during the academic year.

COST OF ATTENDANCE REFUND INSURANCE

This insurance provides the policyholder with funds to pay for Cost of Attendance in the event their child is withdrawn from enrollment. All families are given the opportunity to purchase tuition refund insurance through A.W.G. Dewar, Inc. (an insurance company recognized throughout the country for this type of coverage).

The amount of the insurance premium is based on a percentage of the amount being insured and is disclosed in the Financial Contract. If you elect to have coverage, you must indicate this on your Enrollment Contract. Additional information on tuition refund insurance may be obtained from the Business Office.

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Brown School currently offers three tuition payment options: (1) payment in full by August 31; (2) six payments due the 15th day of the month in August, September, October, November, December and January; and (3) ten payments due on the fifteenth day of the month beginning in August and ending in May. Payment options are elected on each student's enrollment contract.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

All students may be eligible for financial assistance awards up to 50% of their Cost of Attendance. To apply for assistance, parents must complete the TADS application on line via the TADS website (<http://www.tads.com/>). Annual Income Tax Returns (Federal form 1040) must also be provided to the school's Financial Aid Committee before an application is considered complete. Brown School has selected TADS to independently compile, evaluate and recommend financial assistance awards. Based upon the independent report provided by TADS, Brown School's Financial Assistance Committee will determine a family's eligibility and the amount of each grant. Initial grants are made in March preceding the academic year.

TADS applications are filed on line (<http://www.tads.com/>). Beginning January 1, anyone wishing to apply for financial assistance should complete an ONLINE application with TADS by mid February preceding the academic year in order to be considered for an award in the March cycle. Awards granted after March may be reduced or denied as the Financial Aid Fund is depleted. Families receiving a Financial Aid Award letter must accept the award within 10 days or forfeit the award.

SIBLING DISCOUNT

Families with more than one child attending Brown School receive a 10% discount on tuition for the younger sibling(s).

MONTHLY BILLING

Brown School mails monthly statements on the first day of each month. The total balance is payable by the fifteenth day of the month. In addition to Cost of Attendance, items included on the monthly billing may include charges for field trips, extended day, enrichment program, lost books, and clubs. Families also have the option of billing their account to pay for various Brown School fundraisers and events. All late payments must be accompanied by a \$35.00 late fee.

DELINQUENCY AND COLLECTIONS

Brown School elects to work closely with families who have fallen upon difficult times. However, the school does rely on the funds from the Cost of Attendance and programs to operate, and, therefore, cannot allow an account to remain delinquent for an indefinite period of time. In addition to other remedies for delinquencies, the school may elect to prohibit the student from attending classes, withhold transcripts, deny a diploma, deny participation in graduation, and advise any school that inquires of the non-payment. Students with delinquent accounts will not be eligible for re-enrollment until all outstanding amounts have been paid.

All account balances determined by the school to be non-collectible will be turned over to a collection agency or will become a matter of the court.