

Birkes Elementary School

Quick Reference Guide for Parents

8500 Queenston Blvd
Houston, Texas 77095

Phone: (281) 345-3300 • Fax: (281) 345-3305

A

Address/Phone Changes: Changes in address should be communicated to the registrar immediately with proper documentation. Changes in phone number or email can be done by logging into your child's parent portal at my.cfisd.net.

Attendance: Your child's success is directly related to excellent attendance. Our overall school attendance rate is an indicator on our state accountability rating and affects Birkes's overall success. Students arriving after 8:45 a.m. are tardy. Attendance is marked daily at 10:07 a.m. Students who are absent should submit a written excuse (parent note or doctor's excuse) upon returning to school. Excessive tardies/absences will be referred to the district's truancy officer. If a student is arriving late (after 8:45), a parent must accompany the student into the building and sign them in.

B

Birthdays: Student birthdays are recognized on our daily announcements. Parents and guardians can purchase a Birthday Marquee Message for \$20 starting Monday, September 16th, which includes a two-day display. You can make the purchase through your child's School Cash account. For any questions, please email guadalupe.gallardo@cfisd.net. Party invitations will only be dispersed if parents send enough invitations for the entire class. Teachers will not "seek out" students in other classrooms in order to deliver invitations. Parents will have to find other ways to communicate with those students not in their child's homeroom. See our PTO website for an alternate option. Due to the "Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV)" policy, parents may not bring cakes, cupcakes, cookies, etc. for any child other than their own. Balloons or flowers should not be sent/brought to school. If a parent wishes to order cookies or ice cream from the cafeteria the following guidelines must be adhered to: the order should be made **at least 2 weeks** prior to the child's birthday. Contact the cafeteria manager, Carrieann Bohem, carrieann.bohem@cfisd.net, to place the order; the order must be paid in full when requested; the order must include everyone in the child's classroom; if the child's account has a negative balance, the balance must be paid in full before the order will be processed. Birthday cookies/ice cream will be served during the regular student lunch time in the cafeteria only.

Breakfast: Students in grades PK/ECSE – 5 may proceed through the "Grab and Go" breakfast lines beginning at 8:25 a.m. Grades K - 5 go to class to eat breakfast and PK/ECSE will eat in the cafeteria.

C

Cafeteria Services: All students will need a lunch account. When your child's account becomes low, you will be notified by the Food Services automated system of the need to replenish the account. Forms for free and reduced meals are located on the district website and should be completed electronically. Reapplication must occur each year. To sign up or manage lunch accounts go to <https://www.schoolcafe.com>. Our Food Service Cafeteria Manager is Carrieann Bohem (carrieann.bohem@cfisd.net) should you have any questions.

Cell Phones/Smart Watch Devices: Students should not carry cell phones or use smartwatches during the school day. Any personal electronic devices are the responsibility of the student. Campus and District personnel will not assume responsibility for damaged, lost or stolen items. If cell phones or other smartwatches are visible/being used, they will be confiscated and remain in the front office until the parent is able to come in to claim the phone and/or watch and pay a \$15 administrative fee.

Chromebooks: All students are issued a Chromebook while at Birkes. This device comes with a protective case and charger. It is the student's responsibility to use this Chromebook appropriately and as instructed by their teacher. If the student loses the Chromebook or charger, parents will need to pay to replace these items. If a Chromebook is intentionally damaged, parents will need to pay to repair the damage. To report an issue, damage, or a lost Chromebook or charger, students must login into LTE Central and create a ticket. Parents will receive a notification in School Cash if a payment is required to replace a lost or damaged item. When a student withdraws from Birkes, the Chromebook and protective case must be returned with the charger.

Clinic: Should your child become ill at school, we ask that you pick him/her up promptly once notified. Students with a significant temperature or communicable disease will not be allowed to remain at school. Before returning, the child must be free of symptoms/fever for 24 hours. The nurse will not call each time a child is referred to the clinic. She will use her professional judgment and notify parents when necessary.

Club Rewind: Early morning and after school childcare is available at Birkes through Club Rewind. Please see the district web page for further information regarding the Club Rewind program. [Club Rewind Link Here](#)

Communication: Establishing clear, open communication between school and home is a school goal. This requires the child to serve as the necessary link between school and home. Information you will receive via your child in the Monday take home folders includes: newsletters, conduct cards, progress reports and report cards. Please check your child's backpack daily. Other communication may come electronically through e-mail from your child's teacher, Remind, or the School Messenger communication system.

Conduct: Student conduct is communicated through the conduct card, phone calls, conferences, office referrals, progress reports, and report cards. Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct, all school rules, and directives given by school personnel. At all times, students are expected to interact with respect for themselves, their peers, and adults in the building. The Code of Conduct can be found at [Student Code of Conduct/Student Handbook](#).

Conferences: If you need to discuss a classroom issue, contact your child's teacher through email or phone call to schedule a conference. If you have already met with the teacher and you need to meet with your grade level AP, call or email to request a conference. Refrain from coming to the front office to request to speak to a teacher or administrator unless it is an emergency.

D

Dress Code: Please refer to the [Student Code of Conduct/Student Handbook](#), for more detailed information about student dress. Students in violation of the dress code will be sent to the office to call the parent for a change of clothes. Closed toed shoes should be worn on PE days.

E

End of Year Placement: Promotion: State law mandates the following minimum performance standards for promotion from one grade to the next. In kindergarten and grade 1, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an end-of-year grade of satisfactory in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Students in grades 2-5 must earn a composite grade of at least 70 in reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Placement: Students who fail to meet state promotion standards, but who are judged by a campus review committee to have achievement deficits that could be remedied at the next grade level without invoking retention may be "placed" into the next grade level. Retention: Any student who fails to meet promotion standards set by the state or district will be screened for possible retention.

F

Foods of Minimal Nutritional Value (FMNV): The Texas Department of Agriculture has created nutrition guidelines (Texas Public School Nutrition Policy) by which all schools must abide by. According to the policy, an elementary campus may not provide access to food or beverage to students anywhere on campus during the school day, unless it is provided through the school breakfast/lunch program or can be correlated with the curriculum. Under these new guidelines, parents, teachers, and others are prohibited from serving any food or beverage to students, including cupcakes, cookies, etc. during the school day.

G

Grading: In an effort to communicate progress to parents, work samples are collected and graded to show a student's mastery of a specific skill. However, all assignments that come home are not necessarily graded. In addition, some assignments that come home with grades may not be recorded in the teacher's grade book.

In grades K-1, teachers assess student work samples and record their achievement. At this end of the nine week grading period, each student's work is applied to a rubric which determines a nine-week grade. In grades 2- 5, graded work is recorded by the teacher and averaged each nine weeks to determine your child's average. Numeric grades may be converted as follows: A = 90 – 100, B = 80 – 89, C = 75 – 79, C- = 70 – 74, F = 0 – 69.

Progress reports are sent home the 5th week of each nine week grading period. Report cards are sent home at the end of each nine weeks. Progress reports, report cards, and up to date grades and averages can be accessed through the Home Access Center (HAC) by parents.

H

Honor Roll: Students in grades 2– 5 are eligible for honor roll each nine week grading period. To earn honor roll, students must receive all A's or a combination of more A's than B's on the report card. In addition, students must maintain all S's in conduct and work habits.

Horizons/GT: The Horizons/GT program is for students who are identified as gifted/talented through the standardized testing criteria defined by the district. Occasionally, it becomes necessary to “cluster” students who are not identified as gifted/talented into the Horizons classroom. School administrators may consider the following information when “clustering” students: end-of-year averages in language arts/math, standardized testing scores (if applicable), and/or any other academic information deemed necessary. Students “clustered” are not guaranteed a place in the program each year. If space is needed during the school year (due to the identification of gifted/talented students) those students “clustered” may be placed into another classroom. Parents should not assume that if their child is “clustered,” he/she will be nominated by the teacher for Horizons testing. Parents and teachers can nominate a child for GT testing between October 1- November 30. Nominations can be placed through the parent portal located in my.cfisd.net.

I

Immunizations: Texas law requires certain immunizations before a student may attend school. These immunizations are listed in the *Cypress-Fairbanks I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct/Student Handbook*. Please direct all questions regarding immunizations to the school nurse.

Interpreter: If you are a parent or legal guardian who is deaf or hard of hearing or speaks another language and requires an interpreter to assist you in actively participating in a parent/teacher conference, meeting, or program, please contact the campus administrator at your child's school to make a request for an interpreter. Please make your request at least three (3) school days in advance so that an interpreter can be secured for you. The campus will follow the district process to submit your request for the needed interpreter.

L

Late Work: At Birkes Elementary, it is expected that students will complete and turn in all assignments on time. Teachers will determine when a student has had an adequate amount of time to complete an assignment. Student work will then be graded/assessed “as is.” In addition, teachers may note “Needs Improvement (N)” in the “Completes Classwork/Work Habits” section of the report card. All questions regarding late work should be directed to the classroom teacher.

Library Books: All students visit the library at Birkes. Students check out library books to be returned on the next visit to the library. If a library book is damaged or lost, the library book must be paid for to replace it. Parents are able to opt their child out of checking out a library book in the parent portal of the Home Access Center (HAC).

Lost and Found: Lost and Found is located in the cafeteria. If an item is lost, students/parents are urged to check the lost and found. In December and May all unclaimed items will be disposed of or donated to a charitable organization. Please label all student items with first and last name.

Lunch: It is best for students to purchase lunch at the cafeteria or bring lunch from home with them in the morning. While parents may not bring food for other children, they may provide food or beverages for their **own** child's consumption if eating lunch with their child. NOTE: In order to teach and review cafeteria procedures and routines, lunch visitors will not be allowed the first 3 weeks of school. In order for an adult, other than the student's legal guardian or emergency contacts, to have lunch with the student; a parent note must be emailed to [Birkes@cfisd.net](mailto:birkes@cfisd.net) with the name of the visitors who have permission to eat lunch with the child. ID's will be scanned upon visitor check in. We do not accept lunch deliveries for students. We will not deliver lunch kits or restaurant purchased food to students as this requires a staff member to deliver and interrupts instruction. If a parent wishes to deliver lunch to their child, the parent will need to sign in the front office at the student's assigned lunch time and meet the student in the cafeteria to deliver the lunch.

M

Make-up work Procedures: Students have the opportunity to make-up work for all absences. Students will be allowed the same number of days to make up their work as the number of days that they were absent. Students who fail to make up all the work missed by the established deadline may receive partial credit for the work completed and turned in. In instances when a student is absent for an extended period of time (i.e., four or more days) parents may make arrangements to obtain missed work. Parents should give the campus at least 24-hours notice to gather assignments. Make up work will not be given out prior to the student absence.

Money: The best way to make purchases is through our online options, [Schoolcash Online](#) and [Birkes PTO Membership](#)

Medication: If it is necessary that medication be administered to your child at school, the medication must be delivered to the school by the parent/guardian in the original container. In addition, parents must transport the medication home. Students are not permitted to transport or be in possession of any medication (over-the-counter or prescription), this includes cough drops. Student cafeteria lunch accounts also have an online option [School Cafe](#). If you must send money to school for any reason, we ask that you send it in a sealed envelope that has been clearly marked with your child's name and the purpose for which the money was sent. The school is not responsible for misplaced money.

P

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO)/ Volunteers: The school has an established Parent-Teacher Organization/Volunteer program. One of the most important functions that this group performs is the organization of its Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS) program. Parent volunteers are used in a variety of ways to enhance the education of students. We encourage parents to join PTO to support your child's education. To join the Birkes PTO, please visit [Birkes PTO Membership Toolkit](#).

Parents Out of Town: If both parents are planning to be out of town, and the child will be staying with a friend or relative, please supply the school with pertinent information in writing. It is advisable that the caretaker's information be placed on the emergency card. The information will help school personnel with transportation arrangements as well as any medical problems that may arise while parents are away. It is also advisable to give written permission to the caretakers to seek medical care. Please Note: The student will not be able to ride a different bus to a caretaker. Students will only be able to ride to their home address.

Physical Education: State law requires that children have access to a minimum number of physical education minutes each week. Under some circumstances, a child may be required to not participate in physical education activities due to certain health issues. In this case, the parent may write a note to be given to the nurse. If the amount of time requested exceeds three P.E. classes, a doctor's excuse from physical activity will be required. Students not participating in P.E. will complete classwork assigned by the P.E. teachers. A student whose condition prevents them from participating in P.E. may not participate in recess, field play, or any other "outside" activities until a release is obtained.

Prohibited Articles: Some common items used at home may create disruptions if brought to school. Students should refrain from bringing toys and games to class. Items including, but not limited to electronic games/musical devices, walkie-talkies, cameras, radios, sunglasses, laser pens, trading cards, and other costly articles should not be brought to school. Inappropriate items will be collected by the teacher and held until they can be retrieved by the parent/guardian. Also, sharp, pointed objects that could be potentially dangerous are prohibited as well as glass jars and/or bottles. Students are not allowed to bring live animals to school. Finally, students are prohibited from the engagement of distributing, trading, or selling items at school.

Q

Questions: Because teachers are not always able to get to a phone during the day, it is very helpful when parents send notes regarding questions. Teachers make it a habit of asking for notes each day and are happy to respond to any parent questions. If you would like to talk personally to the teacher, we ask that you call the front office and leave a message or email the teacher. The teacher will return your call or respond to your email within 24 hours, on school days.

S

School Hours: 8:45 a.m. – 4:10 p.m.

School Supplies: Each student enrolling at the beginning of the year will be responsible for purchasing all of the supplies listed. Many items are "pooled" for use throughout the year. Students should not bring supplies other than those on the school supply list. Consumables may need to be replenished throughout the year.

School Telephone: The telephones in the school building are business phones and may be used by students only on an emergency basis. Parents should not call the school to talk to a child or leave messages for him/her. After-school plans should be made in the morning before your child leaves home. Assignments or items left at home do not constitute an emergency. Students will not be pulled from instruction.

Student Pick-up: ANYONE picking up a student MUST present a valid ID to school personnel upon arrival. Anyone other than a child's legal guardian picking up a student MUST provide a written note, signed by the legal guardian, and turn it in to school personnel.

T

Transportation:

Bus Rider: Each student will be placed on his/her assigned bus each day, unless written permission is received to allow another means of transportation. Temporary transfers from one bus to another will not be allowed. We enlist your support in working with your child concerning appropriate bus conduct. Students must realize that misbehavior on the bus can lead to unsafe conditions and will not be allowed. Students must exhibit respect and obedience to the bus driver and courtesy to fellow passengers during the bus ride. With the privilege of bus transportation goes the responsibility of each individual bus rider to exhibit safe behavior. This includes wearing their seatbelts at all times. Failure to observe the bus rules will result in parent notification through a bus report. Excessive bus reports may result in the denial of this transportation privilege. Information concerning student conduct on buses is detailed in the *Cypress Fairbanks I.S.D. Student Code of Conduct/Student Handbook*.

Car Rider: Parents that elect to provide transportation for their children are asked to use the appropriate drop-off/pick-up location which is at the back of the school. Students should NOT be dropped off prior to 8:25 a.m. When picking up your child, we ask that you wait patiently in your car until he/she is released.

Daycare: Daycare vans unload and load along the side of the school.

Transportation Changes: Parents must send a note or email the front desk at Birkes@cfisd.net regarding any transportation changes. A copy of the parent's driver's license MUST accompany the email. Phone changes will NOT be accepted. All transportation changes should be made prior to 3:30 PM so that we may have adequate time to get a message to the teacher and ensure your child goes home correctly. All students that are leaving early should be picked up by 3:30.

V

Visitors: Per Cy-Fair ISD policy and for security reasons, all visitors must use their driver's license to sign in. This will generate a name tag which must be worn at all times during your visit. Visits to individual classrooms during instructional time are permitted only with prior approval from school administration. Parents who wish to visit a classroom during instructional time should contact the child's assistant principal. The assistant principal will set up a date/time that will not be disruptive to any classroom activities. Classroom visits will be scheduled for a maximum of 20 minutes. Student visitors are not permitted during the instructional day. School personnel may ask any person not having legitimate business to leave the premises. Siblings that are enrolled in a CFISD school are not allowed on campus during school hours. Any visitor causing a disruption to the school environment may be asked to leave.

Lunch visitors: Lunch visitors are welcome to eat lunch with their child(ren) once a week only. Lunch visitors must be a guardian or an emergency contact. Guardians need to email the school at Birkes@cfisd.net if they wish to have a non-emergency contact eat lunch with their child(ren).

W

Water Bottles: Students are permitted to bring water bottles (filled only with water) to school, provided that they use them responsibly.

Withdrawal from School: In order to withdraw your child before the end of the year, you will need to notify your child's teacher and the school's registrar. A 24 hour notice is needed to complete checkout procedures, which includes clearing your child's library and textbook records.