

2nd Grade



Parent Handbook 2019 - 2020

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the wonderful world of second grade! We are looking forward to a fun, rewarding and successful year with your child! In order to help you and your child transition smoothly into second grade, we have put together this handbook that will give you a brief overview of classroom policies and curriculum. Please keep this booklet handy throughout the year and feel free to add information as it comes to you.

If you ever have any questions or concerns, **you can contact your 2nd grade teacher using the table below.** If you prefer to call, a convenient time to reach your second grade teacher is during our planning period, 9:15-10:15 am or before/ after school. We are looking forward to working with you and having a successful school year!

Sincerely,

2nd grade teachers

Teacher	Phone Number	E-mail Address
Kirsten Behrens	(314) 415 - 4506	kbehrens@parkwayschools.net
Brigitte Barnhart	(314) 415 - 4507	bbarnhart@parkwayschools.net
Andrea O'Neill	(314) 415 - 4508	aoNeill@parkwayschools.net
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Our Community

My Classroom Philosophy: An Overview

We want to provide a nurturing, loving environment for each of your students to grow up and learn in. In order to help each of your children become successful students, we work hard to build a trusting community with clear-cut expectations and boundaries. The students help build this foundation because we are a team.

Community Building, Class Expectations and Our Mission Statement

In second grade classrooms, we believe it is important that students and their teacher work together as a team towards the same goal: learning. Therefore, instead of throwing the curriculum at the students and telling the children all of the expectations in the first day, second grade learners and their teacher take their time during the first week to participate in fun activities that allow us to learn classroom routines and procedures, learn about one another and learn in great detail the McKelvey/ classroom expectations. Below, you will find our "Dragon's Code" listed as well as the pledge we say every morning pledging to abide by our McKelvey/classroom expectations.

Our McKelvey/ classroom expectations: Students are caring, respectful, responsible, and self-motivated.

The Dragon's Code Pledge: We the students of McKelvey Elementary School are learners leading the way. We promise to care for all and be respectful to each other. We take responsibility for our actions and are self-motivated at all times. We are the dragons!

Assignment Policies

Assignment Philosophy: An Overview

We believe homework is an important extension of the classroom. Not only does it allow students to build strong study habits but, it helps students review material they have already learned. Finally, it gives parents a glimpse of what is going on inside the classroom.

In second grade, we are asking students to become more responsible. The homework and planner pages are ways that students can practice their responsibility.

Homework

The purpose for homework in second grade is to first of all help students get into the habit of doing schoolwork (nearly) each night. We believe that building good study habits early on will benefit students as they grow older and their workload increases. The second purpose for giving students homework is to help them practice and reinforce the skills they have learned in school. It is this consistent practice that will help them grow as a learner.

Students will receive one worksheet of homework per night. The worksheet will *not* be a new skill but rather something students have learned in class and are being asked to practice and review at home. Homework each night should take about 20 minutes for your child to complete. Please note that students should also indicate what they have for homework each night on the front of their planner.

Monday: Reading for 20 minutes and Spelling worksheet

Tuesday: Math worksheet

Wednesday: Reading for 20 minutes and Word Work (grammar) worksheet

Thursday: Math worksheet

****There will be no homework on Friday nights or weekends. Homework will begin Monday, August 26th.****

Please note that the worksheets of homework will always be due the following day after the assignment is given. Each trimester, students receive two free “Oops!” passes. We recognize that at times students may forget to do their assignments, they may not have had time to complete the assignment due to activities outside of school, or perhaps accidentally left their homework at home. Therefore, these slips can be used during these emergency situations. Please note that the “Oops” pass gives the student a free pass for the day (they will not sit out recess) but **the assignment must be turned in the next day.** (Students may not use an “Oops” pass two days in a row on the same assignment.)

Finally, we have listed important miscellaneous homework policies below.

- If a student forgets their homework at home, we will not accept homework as “on time” if a parent or guardian brings it up to school for them. We want students to learn to be responsible for their own belongings.
- If at any time your student is struggling with homework, please write a note on it so your student's teacher is aware. Their teacher will be happy to continue to practice the skills with your student at school. We want every child to be successful!

Our Planner

It is our belief that the daily planner will help your child develop good organizational skills and make them more responsible for their daily tasks such as remembering library books, wearing their tennis shoes to school for PE, etc.

Every Monday, as part of their morning routine, students will fill in the appropriate dates, events, and homework on their assignment paper for the week. After the morning announcements, each 2nd grade teacher will

look at every student's planner and double check that they have accurately noted their assignments. At the end of each day, your student's teacher will add any messages or reminders that need to be communicated.

There is also a note for messages on the back of the planner page. **If you need to send a note, this is a great way of making sure your child's teacher receives it!**

Take Home Folder

Your child will take home a folder daily that contains their homework assignment. If any important notes need to be sent home prior to Friday, it will come home in this folder. **We encourage parents to check their student's folder each night.**

Spelling

In the first few weeks of school, we will be giving your child a spelling pre-test to test their proficiency in spelling age appropriate words. After this assessment, each 2nd grade teacher will have a better idea of where your child is as a speller and how to best help them. Spelling words will be sent home in the monthly newsletter to practice each week and there will be spelling practice each Monday night for homework. Tests will be given once a month on Fridays. Our first list of spelling words will be sent home in the newsletter in September to be studied. The first test will be on **Friday, September 27th.**

Monthly Newsletter

During the first week of every month (starting in September) we will send home a newsletter. In this newsletter, second grade teachers will give you a brief overview of the academic topics we will cover in the upcoming weeks. We will also give reminders and list upcoming events. You will find this in your child's Take-Home folder every month.

Assessments

Now that your student is in second grade, they will be taking assessments more frequently than in previous grade levels.

In Writing, students will not have a traditional test. The writing piece that each student publishes at the end of each unit will serve as one assessment. The writing piece will be graded with a genre/grade level specific rubric. Once your child's teacher has graded each piece, discussed the evaluation with each student, and goal set with each student, they will send the rubric and published piece home for you to enjoy. We ask that each published piece be sent back to school for safe-keeping. (Your student's writing will go home at the end of the year.)

Several times a year, students will write an "on demand" piece. (Usually, twice a trimester.) At the end of the unit, second grade teachers will remind students the important skills they learned and then give students 1-2 writing periods to write a new piece that displays the genre specific skills. Teachers are looking to see if students can create a piece **independently** to assess what they learned in the unit and can do on their own. Students will be graded with the same rubric as the published piece. Much like the published piece, once your child's teacher has graded each piece, discussed the evaluation with each student, and goal set with each student, they will send the rubric and "on demand" piece home for you to review.

In Spelling, students will have a monthly spelling test. The five spelling words for each week can be found on the monthly newsletter.

In Reading, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science, there will be end of unit assessments. This means that at the end of each unit, students will take a test made by the district that tests the specific skills learned in the unit. The test will be composed of both selected response and

constructed response questions. After the tests have been completed, graded, and we have discussed and goal-set with each student, we will send home the test for you to **view, sign and return**.

In Reading and Mathematics, students will also take “benchmark” assessments periodically throughout the year. This means that every few months, we will check in with students to see how they are retaining information from previous grade levels and previous second grade units.

For Reading, the test will be taken completely on the computer. For Math, students will take the majority of the assessment on the computer though there will be a small paper and pencil portion.

After the tests have been completed, graded, and each teacher has discussed and reviewed it with each student, we will send home directions so you can view their test on the computer from home.

Study Guides

We will send home “parent” study guides for Social Studies and Science **three days** prior to the test. The study guide will list general concepts and skills that the assessment will cover. We strongly encourage students to study before a test.

For Math or Reading assessments, second grade teachers will create practice assessments that will focus on the specific skills taught during the unit. Students will complete the practice at school and go over it as well. Second grade teachers will then send home these practice papers for you to look over. We strongly encourage you to review them with your student in order to best prepare them for their upcoming assessments.

We always encourage *ongoing* studying throughout each unit. The following are recommendations for studying for Math and Reading:

Math

- Save the worksheets sent home weekly from each Math unit. When a test is approaching, use these types of questions as a guide to study. (You can also have students complete any unfinished problems as practice!)
- Practice basic math facts 1-10

Reading

- After your child reads, ask them questions about their book. Require your child to use evidence from the text to support their answers.

Grading

Throughout Parkway elementary schools, student assignments and assessments will **not** be evaluated using an A,B,C,N grade system. Instead, student work and tests will be evaluated and the grade will be considered “on track” or “not yet on track” to meet the end of the year goal.

At the close of the first and second trimester, students will receive a progress report. This is an update on your student's progress towards their end of year goal. The progress report can be viewed online; if you do not have access to a computer, McKelvey's office will have computers for you to use.

At the end of the third trimester, the close of the school year, students will receive a report card. This will be your student's final evaluation and it will state if they have “met” or “not met” their end of year goal.

Snack

With such a late lunch, it should be no surprise that your student will need a little extra energy to make it through the day. We encourage your

child to bring a **nutritious** snack that can be eaten in the morning. We will not allow students to eat anything considered “dessert” such as chocolate, cookies, candy bar, cake, cupcakes, candy, etc. We do not want students to have a sugar crash during their afternoon learning!

Water Bottles

Students may bring in water bottles to have at school. The water bottle must have a cap and may only contain water. (No juice, please!)

Parkway Food Policy and Birthday Treats

In our classroom, celebrating each child's special day is important to our community! Therefore, we will always celebrate each student's birthday. If your student has a summer birthday, the student may pick another day in the year for us to celebrate them such as their half birthday.

Due to the new district wide food policy, food items are **NOT** allowed to be brought in to celebrate birthdays in order to protect the health and safety of our students with life threatening food allergies and to contribute to the health and academic successes of all students.

We understand that celebrating birthdays outside of school is a fun and exciting time. **Students are welcome to pass out invitations at school, ONLY if there is one for the entire class.** If students are not inviting the entire class, invitations will need to be sent through the mail or delivered in a different manner. Please keep in mind that teachers are not allowed to give out student addresses and phone numbers. Please purchase a buzz book for this purpose.

In the 2019 - 2020 school year, all schools will promote these best practice guidelines:

- Classrooms should be food-free whenever possible (students can continue to bring a daily snack for their own consumption).

- Food may not be brought from home for sharing class-wide.
- Birthday and holiday celebrations will not include food.
- Food will not be used as a reward or motivator.
- A permission letter will be sent home to parents and/or guardians if a situation arises where your child will be given food.

Book orders

Approximately once a month, your second grade teacher will send home book orders from Scholastic Book Club. No one is required to order books, but we recommend the clubs and find the prices better than book stores. If you wish to order, you can order them online (your teacher will provide directions) or send a paper copy of your order to school. If you send an order to school, please send a check made out to Scholastic Book Club. No cash will be accepted. The books usually arrive one-two weeks after the order is put in.

Changes in Going Home

If your student is being dismissed in another way than their usual fashion, please send your child's teacher a note, e-mail or call detailing how your student is being dismissed from school. This information is extremely important because students often forget how they should get home, or students mix up dates accidentally.

If they have a recurring activity after school such as Chess Club, please send a note stating the days of the week they will stay and your second grade teacher will assume they are staying unless they are notified otherwise.

Finally, if it is late in the day (after 2:30 pm) and you have to change how your child is going home, call the front office, NOT the classroom phone. If you have contacted the teacher earlier in the day, and have not received a response by 2:30 pm, please contact the front office as well as

your student's teacher has likely not had a chance to see the message.

The office will make sure we know how your child is getting home and we are guaranteed to get the message.

Library

Our library lesson and checkout time will be part of Specials time this year. **This means that Library will likely occur on a different day each week. Please make sure to read your student's planner carefully each week to see which day they will be attending Library. We also recommend each student keep their Library books inside their backpack at all times.** Students will be allowed to checkout two books and they should return them each week in order to receive new books.

Students will also have the option to bring home two books from their second grade teacher's classroom library each week that will be "just right" for them. We do require a contract to be signed by both student and parent or guardian prior to students checking out books from a classroom teacher's library. This contract simply states that the student and parent or guardian are responsible for replacing any damaged or missing books and/or book bag.

Accessing Your Second Grade Teacher's Website

You can view your second grade teacher's website for more information and by following the steps below:

*Visit <http://parkwayschools.net>

*Select 'McKelvey' in the drop down box in the upper right hand corner

*Click on Staff Directory

*Click on your student's teacher's name (it is listed alphabetically)

*Click on her website

- Find contact information, our schedule, link to the parent curriculum guide, newsletters, and links you might find helpful or interesting.

Second Grade Curriculum: A Brief Overview

Grades: Grades will be assessed through observing the children at work in conferences as well as assessments and assignments. **Character grades will take into account your child's behavior which will be documented in your student's Daily Planner each week.**

English-Language Arts (Reading and Writing): Second Grade

English-Language Arts Curriculum is centered on units of study in which students are actively engaged in the process of reading, writing, speaking, listening, informational literacy and vocabulary.

Mathematics: The mathematics curriculum your child will be using this year is called Envisions. This series provides students with hands-on learning experiences while providing them with opportunities to talk about their mathematical strategies and ideas.

Spelling and Phonics: Each week your student will have 5 spelling words that they will be accountable for learning how to spell. In this subject, students will not just memorize how to spell a word, but they will improve their knowledge of letter sounds as well as patterns in words that can help them read and spell unfamiliar words.

Social Studies: Our **new** social studies curriculum focuses on providing students with hands-on investigations as well as authentic learning experiences. Students will learn about Power in Communities (decisions, rights and responsibilities of citizens), History and Heritage (examine and explore contributions of individuals and groups of people in Missouri and

the world) and Economics (how economic decisions impact a community).

Science: Our science curriculum this year is called Project Lead the Way (PLTW). This curriculum will provide hands-on investigations for students, creative problem solving, and incorporate technology as well. The units students will learn about include Properties of Matter (three states of matter), Form and Function (pollination, seed dispersal and germination), Our Changing Earth (Earth's changes due to erosion and weathering).