



**Student and Family Handbook
2022-2023**

**Dina Williams, Principal
Jeanine Mbaeri, Assistant Principal
3200 State Road
Drexel Hill, PA 19026
(610) 284-7992 - Main Office
www.upperdarbysd.org/kindergarten**

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District Information

Upper Darby School District

Administrative Offices

Drexel Hill, PA 19026

610-789-7200

www.upperdarbysd.org

District Administration

- Dr. Daniel P. McGarry, Superintendent of Schools
- Dr. John I. Council, Assistant Superintendent of Personnel and Equity
- Edward Marshaleck, Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
- Dr. Greg Manfre, Director of Elementary Education
- Kelley Simone, Director of Secondary Education

School Information

Upper Darby Kindergarten Center

3200 State Road

Drexel Hill, PA 19026

<https://www.upperdarbysd.org/kindergarten>

School Leadership Team:

- Dina Williams, Principal
 - dwilliams@upperdarbysd.org
 - 610-284-7992 x5401
 - Cell: 610-389-3017
- Jeanine Mbaeri, Assistant Principal
 - jmbaeri@upperdarbysd.org
 - 610-284-7992 x5421
- Erica Vera, School Social Worker
 - evera@upperdarbysd.org
 - 610-284-7992 x5407
- Jill Shaw, Guidance Counselor
 - jshaw@upperdarbysd.org
 - 610-284-7994 x5423

Main Office hours – 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Secretaries: Mrs. Regina Pollock and Mrs. Angela Isetts

PHONE NUMBERS

Kindergarten Center Phone Number610-284-7992

Kindergarten Center Fax Number.....610-284-7928

Kindergarten Center Absence Line.....610-284-7992 ext. 1

YMCA (located in the Kindergarten Center)....610-284-9022 ext. 3

SCHOOL COLORS – Purple and Gold

SCHOOL MASCOT – Royals

Message from the Principal

Welcome to the Upper Darby Kindergarten Center. We are extremely excited to be on this educational journey alongside you and your child here in the Upper Darby School District. We at the Kindergarten Center are here to ensure that your experience with the Upper Darby School District highlights the awesome opportunities available to each and every child every day. We strive to meet the needs of each student and encourage them to achieve their fullest potential. We look forward to working with you and encourage open communication at all times. The best educational experience is one that fosters positive relationships with our students, families, and community.

"The Kindergarten Center...Imagine the Possibilities!"

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of the School Family Handbook is to provide important information concerning rules and general expectations, policies, and procedures for the safe and orderly operation of the school. This handbook is reviewed annually. It is the responsibility of each student and parents/guardians to become familiar with the Student Handbook.

UDSD Family Handbook

[UDSD Family Handbook](#)

Kindergarten Center Mission Statement

The Kindergarten Center's mission is to provide a nurturing, safe, and fun environment that will introduce children to the exciting world of learning. In fostering individuality, creativity, and imagination, students at the Kindergarten Center will develop life-long friends and a life-long love of learning. We are committed to establishing a strong foundation that opens the doors for continued academic success and endless possibilities.

School Hours

AM Session: 8:40am-11:30am

PM Session: 12:40pm-3:30pm

Tardiness

A student is considered late to school after **8:50AM/12:50PM**. Please refer to the Elementary Code of Character for consequences related to student lateness.

Early Dismissal Schedule

AM Session 8:40 AM – 10:10 AM

PM Session 11:10 AM – 12:40 PM

Late Start (Weather Delay) Schedule

AM Session 10:30 AM – 12:15 PM

PM Session 1:45 PM – 3:30 PM

District and School Comprehensive Goals

Upper Darby School District Administration presented the [District's 2021-2024 Comprehensive Plan](#) using the new Future Ready Portal during the June 15, 2021 Education and Pupil Services School Board Committee meeting. The presentation included a review of the process used to develop the plan, the determined strengths and challenges, the action plan for reaching the district's goals, and the professional development plan to be implemented. The plan was posted for public review and comments for 28 days, per Chapter 4 of the PA School Code. The plan was approved at the August board meeting last year.

- LINKS to School Comprehensive Plan

District Master Calendar

[Upper Darby School District Calendar 2022-2023](#)
[Summary of Calendar Events 2022-2023](#)

School Calendar

[Kindergarten Center Calendar for the 2022-23 School Year](#)

Kindergarten Center Staff List 2022-23

[KCTR Staff List 2022-2023](#)

Kindergarten Center Home and School Association

President: TBA

Email: udkindergartencenter@gmail.com

Facebook: [UDKC Home & School Association](#)

Meetings - Family Events or 3rd Monday of the month - see School Calendar
[Kindergarten Center Home & School Association](#)

Types of Communication

The Upper Darby School District believes that strong communication and positive home-school connections are critical to the success of our students and our schools. The Kindergarten Center administration, teachers and staff know that good communication with parents is an important part of keeping families connected to school. We are committed to communicating with parents/guardians through a variety of tools. Please note the ways we stay connected with families and stay engaged!

- [UDSD Website](#) - The District website is used to communicate District and school news and information to parents and the school community. The District website also contains information related to each Department, the District's master calendar, Board policies, and District announcements.
- [UDSD Social Media](#) - The District uses a variety of social media tools to post information on emergency school closings, pictures of students and teachers working together, pictures from events and activities in schools across the District, and information about upcoming meetings and events.



- [Kindergarten Center webpage](#) - The school webpage contains our week-at-a-glance calendar, access to the principal's webpage, the school's monthly school newsletter and other important information.
- [Wednesday eFolder](#) - All families receive school information and updates on a weekly basis through the email address on record on the [Home Access Center](#) (HAC). Please keep your email address up-to-date to receive these important updates. See the [Home Access Center Guide](#) for more information.
- [Schoology](#) - Teachers can send a Schoology message to parents of members in their course(s) or group(s) about course updates and reminders.
- [Community Bulletin Board](#) - Please remember to check out our electronic Community Bulletin Board every week for community, Township, and County resources and events!
- [Principal ParentLinks](#) - From time to time, the Principal will send out communications to families about important school events or information. Please check your email regularly throughout the week for updates. Voice message

ParentLinks are reserved for emergency notifications only. Please keep your contact information up to date in HAC.

- [Mobile App](#) - [Install](#) the Upper Darby School District mobile app today! View the top stories for the district, check out calendar items, social media and to receive push notifications with the latest news and updates from the District.
- [Blackboard Reach](#) - Blackboard Reach lets teachers have a two-way conversation with parents. Conversations can be used to give feedback, information on upcoming assignments or required paperwork due dates, and class information and events. Blackboard Reach allows families to view messages that teachers post to the entire class and to also privately message teachers. Click [here](#) for instructions on using the messaging dashboard.
- [School Board Meetings & Committee Meetings](#) - These meetings empower parents to stay informed about policies and become familiar with the policy-making process.
 - [School Board Meeting Schedule](#)
 - [Meeting Agendas](#)

Yellow Communication Folders

Please be sure to check your yellow Teacher/Parent Communicator folder on a daily basis. Important information is provided. There are two pockets for information. One pocket is for papers that need to be “Returned to School” and the other should be “Kept at Home”.

Emergency Preparedness

The safety of our students, staff, and visitors is our top priority. Emergencies can happen at any time, and when they happen at school, we want to ensure that everyone is prepared to handle them safely and effectively.

- [Emergency Preparedness Safety Terms - Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- UDSD Comprehensive Disaster Response and Emergency Preparedness Plan

- [CrisisGo](#) - Parents and guardians will now be kept in the loop with school safety news. CrisisGo's app allows you to connect with safety message groups from our school district and school buildings. If an emergency occurs, you will be able to receive updates from the school. Principals sent out information on how to subscribe to the CrisisGo mobile app in their summer letters. Please reach out to the Principal if you would like a copy of this flyer.
- [Fire Drills](#) - Each school building is required to hold a fire drill at least once a month during the school year to instruct and familiarize staff and students with the use of fire escapes, fire extinguishers, and exits. Each fire drill includes the complete removal of students, staff, and visitors in an expeditious manner to a place of safety on the grounds outside.
- [Bus Evacuation Drills](#) - When the District uses its own buses or contracts for busing to transport district students, it must conduct at least two (2) bus evacuation drills. The drill is to instruct students and practice the location, use and operation of emergency exit doors, fire extinguishers, and proper evacuation of buses in the event of fire or accidents. Bus evacuation drills will be conducted on school grounds. The first bus drill will be conducted during the first week of the school term, and the second will be conducted during the month of March. The Supervisor of Transportation may conduct additional drills at other times of the year when necessary. The district will provide bus operators with proper training and instructions to enable them to carry out the necessary procedures for bus evacuations and may require drivers to attend classes and drills.
- [Emergency Drills](#) - Emergency drills can include drills involving severe weather storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, bomb threats, lockdowns and evacuations. The Director of Public Safety, in consultation with the Superintendent, will determine if and when an emergency drill is necessary.

Upper Darby Parent Resources

[UDSD Parent Resources](#)

[Early Literacy Tutorial Parent Videos](#) - A collection of video tutorials from Upper Darby School District teachers and administrators to help students with various concepts and topics surrounding early literacy.

[Math Tutorial Parent Videos](#) - A collection of video tutorials from Upper Darby School District teachers and administrators to help students with various math concepts and topics.

[Student Emotional/Social Support Resources](#) - A collection of video resources from Upper Darby School District counselors, social workers, and administrators to help students with social-emotional learning.

[Tech Support](#) - A collection of step-by-step solutions to various technology issues, or questions, you may have about technology resources and tools.

Attendance

[Attendance](#)

The school laws of Pennsylvania states that excused absences are: illness of the child, death in the immediate family, and exceptionally urgent reasons that directly affect the child. Parents are expected to call the absence line on the day children are absent from school, whether it is for part of the day or the whole day. **Also, a child absent from school must present upon his or her return, a Kindergarten Center Absence Note or email to, kctr-attendance@upperdarbysd.org, stating the reason for the absence.** It is the policy of the Upper Darby School District to excuse pupils from school if their religious affiliation requires them to observe a holiday. Legal excusal will be granted on written request from the parent or guardian of the pupil involved.

Whenever a child is absent from school for a day or part of the day, the parent/guardian is required to call the attendance line at 610-284-7992 ext. 1 prior to the beginning of the school day (no later than 9:00 AM or 1:00PM).

When children return to school following an absence, **their parent(s) must sign their written excuse** or send an email to kctr-attendance@upperdarbysd.org , if the absence does not exceed four days. After a five-day absence due to illness, a doctor's signature is requested. Children who do not bring a valid Kindergarten Center Absence Note within three days will be marked unlawfully absent. Three unlawful, not necessarily consecutive, absences will be reported to the Department of Attendance Services and will be marked truant. Following the third unlawful absence, a family meeting will be scheduled to create a School Attendance Improvement Plan.

Arrival Procedures

The doors to the Kindergarten Center open at **8:30AM** for the AM session and **12:30PM** for the PM session. Upon arrival, children are expected to enter the building using the back doors of the Multi-Purpose Room. They will be greeted by staff members and lined up with their classmates. The homeroom teacher will escort his/her class to the classroom. Classroom instruction starts promptly at **8:50AM** and **12:50PM**. All students should arrive at school using district transportation. In the event that you must drive your child to school, please park on the street. You must walk your child to the back doors of the Multi-Purpose Room. Parents may not park on school grounds.

Dismissal Procedures

Bus students will be dismissed through the backdoors of the Multi-Purpose Room. A Kindergarten Center staff member will escort the children to their assigned bus. Students attending the YMCA Program will be organized by the YMCA personnel and escorted to the Day Care area.

Parents picking up their children **should park on the street of Shadeland or Harper Avenue** and meet their child at the doors located in the front of the school at either 11:20 AM or 3:20 PM. Parents must send prior arrangements in the form of a note to the classroom teacher indicating when the child will not ride the school bus. For safety reasons, the school will request identification from the adult at the time of pick-up. If anyone other than the parent picks up the child, he/she **must be listed** on the Kindergarten Authorization Release form **and must have photo identification**.

****Parents may not park on school grounds during arrival and dismissal times. There is a serious safety issue and we ask that you follow the stated procedures****

Transportation/Bussing

School bus stops will be at locations established by the administration in accordance with Board Policy and the Public School Code of 1949, as amended. Transportation will be provided only to and from the established bus stop for the residence of qualified students and will not be provided to babysitters, day care providers, relatives, etc. Bus transportation to and from school is a privilege. Children who receive bus transportation to and from school are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and orderly manner at all times. They must stay in their seat and follow the directions given by the bus driver. Violations of bus rules may result in suspension or denial of bus privileges for a specified period of time.

Parents must arrive 10 minutes prior to the arrival of the school bus when dropping off and picking up a child from the bus stop. All persons picking up a child must be listed on the Kindergarten Authorization Release form and provide photo identification to the bus driver.

If no one is at the bus stop to pick up your child he/she will be bussed back to the Kindergarten Center and a phone call will be placed to you. You will need to arrange transportation home for your child. Repeated returns will result in a referral to our Social Worker. The Kindergarten Center office closes daily at 4:00 PM.

****Transportation issues can only be resolved by the Transportation Department. They can be reached at 610-352-7112****

Vacation

Family vacations during the school year are discouraged. In the event that plans cannot be altered or an emergency arises, please contact the principal prior to the event. They will be marked as unexcused absences. Having your child in school everyday is extremely important for learning.

Visitor/Safety Procedures

All visitors are required to check in at the front desk to receive a visitor sticker before proceeding to any classroom or activity. Visitors will be asked to produce a valid state ID to be scanned by our RAPTOR System. Raptor instantly screens out registered sex offenders while managing custody issues, visitors, students, faculty, and volunteers. No one is to go directly to a classroom for any reason. All visitors must use our school entrance and report directly to the office to sign in. Due to student safety and confidentiality, visitors are not permitted to remain in classrooms during instructional sessions for extended periods of time. Please refer to UDSD policy regarding school visits.

Volunteers

Parent volunteers are a huge resource for our school community. When students see parents volunteer in their school, classrooms, and on field trips, they recognize the importance of education in families and see in action how the community takes an interest in their learning. We welcome parent volunteers! Upper Darby School District Volunteers are required to submit the PA Criminal Background Check, the FBI Criminal Clearance, the PA Child Abuse History Clearance, and their school district Volunteer Application. All required forms can be found on the Forms and Clearance district webpage.

Breakfast and Lunch Procedures

Every student at the Kindergarten Center will receive a breakfast (AM Session) or Lunch (PM Session). Again, the district is approved for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). That means that we will no longer be processing any Free and Reduced Meal applications, and that ALL students in grades K-12 are automatically eligible to receive breakfast and lunch at NO CHARGE beginning the first day of school. Our AM session students will be receiving a Breakfast and our PM Session students will receive a Lunch. You will receive Breakfast and Lunch Menus at the beginning of each month. Students still have the option to bring their own breakfast/lunch but anyone that would like to receive breakfast/lunch at school can do so free of charge this year.

Medication

School personnel, including the nurse may, NOT dispense medication without a written note from a physician. Please have your doctor indicate on the note the name of the medication and the dosage. Also, the original container holding the medicine must be clearly labeled by a pharmacy with the child's name, drug, and dosage. Students are not permitted to bring medicines to school to take during the day, including prescription medications and over the counter medications. Please call the school nurse, Nurse Maguire, at 610-284-7992 X5403 or you can email her at jmaguire@upperdarbysd.org if you need more information.

Elementary Code of Student Character

[Policy 218 - Student Discipline](#)

[Elementary Code of Character](#)

Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)

Our award-winning work around [Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports \(PBIS\)](#) program involves reinforcing the 3 Bs every day and in everything we do. We want students to *Be Safe, Be Responsible and Be Respectful*. We work tirelessly to keep our school a safe and orderly place for all students. We are very proud of the success we are experiencing in implementing Positive Behavior Support (PBIS) in our school.

Our goal is to provide support to students in every setting in the school building, on school grounds, and while traveling to and from school. To that end, we strive to implement this comprehensive approach to building positive school culture with the goal of teaching students skills that will support their efforts to be safe, responsible, and respectful throughout the school day.

Having a coherent, school-wide plan is essential and has several benefits:

- It fosters a positive school climate.
- It focuses staff & student attention on appropriate behaviors and success in addition to students who are trying their best to meet our expectations rather than

on any undesired behaviors. In this way, the school staff establishes what is important in our school as opposed to allowing students who are struggling implementing our expectations to do so.

- It increases the chance that desired behaviors are repeated.
- It reduces the time spent correcting misbehaviors and redirecting students. Any teacher can tell you about the academic cost of disciplining students, as significant loss of instructional time impacts student achievement tremendously.

A. Include as appropriate:

- a. Classroom
- b. Transitions
- c. Cafeteria
- d. Playground
- e. Behavior on school campus during arrival to and departure from school

B. Trauma-Informed Schools

The District and Board recognizes the impact that trauma may have on the educational environment of the schools, individual student achievement, and the school community as a whole. We desire to address the effects of trauma in order to meet the academic, behavioral, and professional needs of students and staff. Click to learn more about the District's [Trauma-Informed Approach](#) to education throughout the district.

C. Restorative Practices

Restorative practices is an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities. The overarching goal of Restorative Practices is the improvement of school climate and culture by decreasing unsafe behavior and increasing prosocial interaction. Click to learn more about the District's [Restorative Practices](#) initiative.

Dress Code

[Policy 221 - Dress Code Guidelines](#)

Promotion/Retention Policy

[Policy 215 - Promotion/Retention](#)

Homework

[Policy 130 - Homework](#)

School Wellness Policy

[Policy 246 - School Wellness Policy](#)

[LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS IN-SCHOOL BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS](#)

How to Change Address, Email, and Phone Numbers

As per [Policy 200 Enrollment of Students](#), students are required to keep a current address on file with the school district at all times. If there is a change to the student's address within or outside of the school district after initial registration, the parent/guardian is required to contact [Central Registration](#) immediately to update the student's address.

Email addresses and phone numbers can be changed in the [Home Access Center](#) (HAC). See the [Home Access Center Guide](#) to learn how to make these updates.

Acceptable Use of Internet, Computer, and Network Resources

[Policy 815 - Acceptable Use of Internet, Computer and Network Resources](#)

Snow Days/Emergency School Closings

[Snow Days/Emergency School Closing](#)

Student Support Services

[Student Support Services](#)

- **Guidance Counselor:**

Upper Darby School District is committed to supporting all students in addressing their academic, behavioral, personal, social, and career development needs.

Click [here](#) to learn more about counseling services in schools. See the Staff Directory for contact information for our school's counselor(s).

- **Social Worker**

Upper Darby School District School Social Workers meet with students in grades K through 12 to offer academic and social support. They work with families providing resources and strengthening relationships with their children and with the school. School Social Workers also work with the school staff, including teachers, administrators, counselors, psychologists, and nurses to provide important resources, consultation, and information about the students, families and outside resources. They are the liaison between the school, the families, and the community. Click [here](#) to learn more about school counseling services in schools. See the Staff Directory for contact information for our school's social worker(s).

- **SAP**

In 1986 Upper Darby School District joined the statewide effort to identify and address barriers to student success, which included alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and mental health issues by establishing the Pa Commonwealth Student Assistance Program (SAP) in the secondary schools. The SAP Program also extends itself to the elementary level to help students and families. The District's SAP program follows the state guidelines and procedures of SAP.

The SAP is an integral part of the instructional program of Upper Darby School District. Through education and awareness programs targeting the dangers and risks associated with the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco we hope to eliminate a barrier to academic achievement and success. These programs contribute to

the universal school-wide supports needed to build resilient schools in our district. Click [here](#) to learn more about SAP and its resources.

- **Speak Up**

SpeakUp! is a nonprofit public charity dedicated to helping children develop supportive relationships with the adults in their lives. The organization enables children to talk openly, honestly, and without judgment about difficult topics and reach out for support within their homes and schools. Upper Darby School District has partnered with SpeakUp! to provide this service to our parents and students. Teachers, counselors, social workers, and other Upper Darby School District professionals are participating along with trained professionals from SpeakUp! to provide this chance for courageous conversations to take place between our students and the important adults in their lives.

SpeakUp! focuses on the fact that no matter what the problem is – stress, drugs, alcohol, depression, anxiety, suicide, relationships, social media or others – the solution always begins with realizing you are not alone and having the courage to speak up and ask for help. All children benefit from learning how to have courageous conversations with important adults in their lives.

The registration for the middle and high school SpeakUp! events will be shared regularly throughout the school year. To learn more about SpeakUp! and to view upcoming events, visit [here](#).

Bullying & Harassment Policies

[Bullying/Harassment Policies](#)