



Riverside School for Makers & Artists (RSMA)

PARENT HANDBOOK (2022-23)

RSMA

Mission Statement

The Riverside School for Makers and Artists (RSMA) is a Pre-Kindergarten through 8th Grade school that as a center of the community continues a long history of welcoming all of the neighborhood's children. As a community of committed educators, families, and students we are redefining the public school experience. Today and tomorrow, RSMA educates children to be makers and artists who help, connect, grow, play, and try.

Adult Anti-racist Commitments

As adults in the RSMA community, *we are anti-racist:*

- *We do not* **remain quiet when we hear hateful language**
- *We do not* **ignore color**
- *We do not* **ignore our biases**
- *We do not* **discourage children from using their voices**
- *We do not* **criminalize children's behavior**
- *We do not* **subscribe to a deficit mindset**
- *We do not* **hold onto students' past mistakes**

ATTENDANCE

Regular school attendance is critical to your child's academic success. The curriculum is sequential and cumulative, so missing even one day can negatively impact your child's learning and progress. Attendance is recorded on the child's cumulative record card. Low attendance has a direct impact on grades and may impact acceptance into middle school and high school. Parents can support the work of the school by stressing good attendance and punctuality. Regular attendance also aids teacher evaluation allowing for early detection if your child needs special help in any areas. A note is required when a child returns to school after an absence. Communicable diseases, chicken pox, conjunctivitis (pink eye), head lice and ringworm, and bedbug bites, must be reported to the school office.

PUNCTUALITY

Parents must assist their children in developing the habit of arriving at school on time. Our school day starts at 8:30 AM. Students who arrive after 8:30 AM must sign in at the main lobby before going to class. Punctuality is key and lateness can negatively impact your child's success. Both middle schools and high schools may take punctuality into consideration for acceptance. Please send your child to school on time EVERY DAY!

DAILY SCHEDULE

Arrival

The school building opens at 8:10 AM. Breakfast is available for all children in the school cafeteria from 8:10 AM - 8:30 AM. All other children should arrive before the start of school with enough time to be ready to begin the day promptly.

Pre-Kindergarten students must be dropped off directly in their classrooms where they will be served breakfast, should they desire.

Kindergarten students will enter through the library via the library entrance on 61st Street. A staff member will be in the Library to receive them as early as 8:10 AM. Kindergarten students will be served breakfast in the classroom starting at 8:20 AM.

Dismissal

- Pre-K students will be dismissed from their classrooms at 2:40 PM.
- Kindergarten students will be dismissed from the Library at 2:50 PM.
- Students in Grades 1 - 5 will be dismissed outside the Library at 61st Street at 2:50 PM.
- Students in Grade 6-8 will be dismissed on Freedom Place near 60th Street.

Please note: Students are dismissed in the manner above rain or shine.

All students in Grades PreK - 5 must be signed out by an adult 18 years or older, and the person signing them out must be listed on the blue card. No child can be signed out by anyone who is not listed on the blue card.

We understand that there are occasions when you may need to sign your child out early. However, sign-out after 2:30 PM is disruptive to the regular classroom dismissal process and has the potential to create a safety situation. If you wish to sign your child out early, you must check in at the security desk and have the main office sign your child out before 2:30 PM. The main office will close for early sign-out at 2:30 PM. Please plan accordingly.

Children who are to be escorted home must be picked up promptly. Only adults, 18 years or older, and only the ones listed on the blue card will be allowed to pick up the child. Please notify your child's teacher in writing (through Remind or email) if a different person is picking up your child on a particular day. Arrangements need to be made before the school day or call the school to notify us. Please be on time to pick up your children. The School Safety Agents do not supervise students. There is no official supervision of children left after pick-up time.

PARENT COORDINATOR

Damaris Carrion is the school's Parent Coordinator. The parent coordinator works to engage and involve parents within the school community, along with the school administration, the staff, the PTA, and community groups. You may visit your Parent Coordinator with any questions or concerns. She can be reached by calling the school's main number 347-478-5228. You can also email her at DCarrion@schools.nyc.gov

PHOTO RELEASES

We love capturing great moments in our school community with pictures and videos! To include your child in these images, we must have a signed photo release. Please send the photo release form back as soon as possible.

LOST AND FOUND

Any articles found will be placed in the Lost and Found Rack located in the lobby. Please label all of your child's clothing and items. The school is not responsible for items lost.

MEDICAL

If a child has any type of allergy the nurse and classroom teacher must have a letter from a parent and a physician. We must be notified of any medical problems in writing and copied to the classroom teacher, principal, and nurse. If a student becomes ill or is involved in an accident during the school day, the school nurse, in conjunction with school administrators will determine if the child should be sent home and will contact the parent or the guardian. Failure to reach the parent or the guardian will result in a call to an alternate person listed on the **Emergency Contact Card**.

IMMUNIZATION

The New York State Department of Education and the Board of Health require that documentation be secured proving that all students who come to school are fully immunized. We are required to exclude students if they are not immunized and do not have documentation from a physician indicating that they have received all required immunization.

MEDICATION

All current medical information should be on file with the school nurse. Please be sure that the nurse is aware of any medical condition your child may have including allergies. Please be aware that students may take the medication(s) in school if and only if there is an updated [504 form](#) on file.

Medication will be kept in a safe place and administered, at times directed by the prescribing physician, by the school nurse. The school nurse will monitor the careful administration of medication. Detailed records, as they pertain to the administration of oral medication, will be maintained at the school.

Please be sure to keep the school nurse updated on any changes in your child's medication or dosage. If you have any questions or need to call the school about the change in your child's medication, please contact the school nurse.

EMERGENCY / STORM SCHOOL CLOSING

A Citywide policy on emergency school closing/storm closings has been established by the Chancellor's Office - New York Department of Education.

Please note the following:

- By 6:00 am the decision will be announced on the 311 Information Line
- Department of Education website - <http://www.schools.nyc.gov>
- Radio stations - WINS(1010 AM), WCBS (880 AM), WBLS (107.5 FM), WNYE (91.5 FM)
- Television stations - Channel 2, Channel 4, Channel 5, Channel 7, Channel 25, and Channel 1 on the cable.
- When there is a delayed school opening morning pre-kindergarten programs will be canceled.

- It is expected that when there is a delayed school opening children will remain in school until regular dismissal time. However, if a city-wide emergency or storm condition worsens, the Chancellor may have to announce early dismissal. The Chancellor will notify bus services of the early dismissal schedule. You should have plans in place with a relative, friend, or neighbor in case of early dismissal to care for your child.

EMERGENCY BLUE CARD INFORMATION

Emergency contact information must be kept up to date. In the event of a medical or national emergency or school closing, we must be able to reach you or a family member. Please be sure to notify the school of any changes in address, phone number, or emergency contact. List as many people as possible. Anyone who picks up your child **MUST HAVE A PHOTO ID** and be listed on **BLUE CARD**. If your phone number changes at any time during the year we must be notified in writing. If your address changes you must provide proof of your new residence. Children will be released **ONLY** to persons listed on the blue card. If there is anyone that your child **CAN NOT** be released to, the school must be notified of this in writing and accompanied by a copy of the court documents.

SCHOOL TRIPS

At the beginning of the school year, parents are requested to sign a general permission slip allowing students to take neighborhood walks. A separate signed permission slip is required for each class field trip that requires transportation. It is the responsibility of the student to bring home and return this signed note. A child will not be permitted to go on a trip without a permission slip. Children are not allowed to call their parents for permission on the day of the trip. All permissions **MUST** be in writing from the parent.

TOYS & OTHER PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Except for items to share during the appropriate period of the class day, children are discouraged from bringing personal items to school. RSMA is not responsible for toys or electronic games.

Due to safety reasons, strollers are not allowed in the school building. You are welcome to park your stroller by the bike racks.

TRANSPORTATION/BUS STUDENTS

Students who ride the school bus will be dismissed at 2:50 PM. An adult will escort all children in Grades K-5 to their bus line. Please make sure that you have written down your child's bus company and bus route number. Busing issues should be directed to the Office of Pupil Transportation at [718-392-8855](tel:718-392-8855).

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM

- YMCA serves students in Grades K - 5 and will run from 2:50 PM – 5:45 PM each day. Hudson Guild, which serves students in grades Prek and 6-8, will run from 2:50 PM – 5:45 PM each day. Please contact our Parent Coordinator, Damaris Carrion, for more information and enrollment.
- Hudson Guild serves students in grades 6-8. The program runs from 2:50 PM - 5:45 PM. Please see Parent Coordinator, Damaris Carrion, for more information

You may also apply to either program at

<https://discoverdycd.dycdconnect.nyc/program-public>

DISCIPLINE CODE

Our school must have a safe and respectful environment for everyone. The NYCDOE Code of Discipline is used to ensure that students behave responsibly towards themselves, their peers, and school personnel. It helps students foster respect for school property and the property of others.

- The NYC DOE Code of Discipline describes a broad range of acts of unacceptable behavior. The Code of Discipline ranks the acts according to severity and sets forth permissible intervention strategies and sanctions. The NYC DOE Code of Discipline is based on the premise that rules must be enforced fairly, firmly, and consistently. It recognized that as students progress in school as they advance in age, they must assume greater responsibility for their actions. You can access the NYC DOE Code of Discipline online.

CELL PHONE/DEVICES POLICY

1. Phones and electronic devices should not be seen or heard throughout the school day without permission by a staff member.
2. RSMA staff have the right to confiscate any device being used inappropriately.
3. RSMA and the DOE are not responsible for lost or damaged electronic devices. You bring these items to school at your own risk.
4. All electronic devices should be turned off and placed in their Yondr pouch before students enter the building.

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

The **PS 191 Riverside School for Makers and Artists PTA Inc.** strives to be a very active participant in helping support our teachers with the education of our children. It is through our efforts in fundraising and community building that we look to strengthen and enrich the academic and artistic experience of everyone at RSMA. We invite you to come and share your time, talents, energies and caring for our kids and our community. Please let us know how and when you can volunteer an hour or two on our next project.

Tips on getting involved and having a great year!

- Attend school events, both social and academic.
- Contribute financially to PTA fundraisers, no matter how small.
- Read everything in your child's backpack.
- Read all school emails.
- Attend both Parent/teacher conferences.
- Volunteer your time as a chaperone for field trips.
- Attend Meet the Teacher Night (Curriculum Night).
- Attend the RSMA Café monthly sessions.
- Check your REMIND messages.

ROOM PARENTS

A Room Parent serves as the primary interface between the parent body and the Classroom Teachers; and every Room Parent should be cognizant of their responsibility toward the other parents, the teachers, and the school. This role can be shared among several parents from a class, and responsibilities can be divided up (take turns attending meetings, one can be in charge of email, another can try to touch base regularly with the teacher, another be in charge of organizing classroom events, etc). Room Parent responsibilities include:

1. Supporting your grade-level team of teachers. This may include volunteering for or finding volunteers for field trips, and planning and arranging class social events.
2. Supporting PTA and school events, sponsored by the PTA, by volunteering or finding volunteers from your class and/or getting the word out to the parents in your class.
3. Distributing monthly PTA Meeting Announcements.
4. Serving as a critical link in communicating feedback and information between parents and teachers. As a representative for your class, parents may approach you about concerns and ideas they would like to share with the school. Teachers may solicit your feedback regarding grade-level events and changes. They may also ask you to disseminate information regarding your class.
5. At least one room parent from each class should try to attend all PTA meetings to ensure that there is good regular communication between the parent body and the administration.
6. Establishing a classroom phone/email chain and activities.
7. Attend monthly Room Parent Meetings with the Parent Coordinator.

VISITING THE CLASSROOM

Your classroom teacher will provide opportunities throughout the year for you to visit your child's classroom to see their work in progress. Parents are not permitted to volunteer in their child's classrooms throughout the school day. There are many other ways a parent may help the school: Room Parent, PTA, SLT, special events, trips, etc.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday in the class, please reach out to your child's teacher to organize this special occasion.

MEETING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

If you would like to meet with your child's teacher or any other staff member, please send them a message via REMIND to set up an appointment. You may also reach out to your Parent Coordinator, Damaris Carrion for assistance.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

School Leadership Teams (SLTs) are school-based organizations composed of an equal number of parents and staff. They meet at least once a month, and determine the structure for school-based planning and shared decision-making.

The core responsibility of each SLT is to develop the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) that is aligned with the school-based budget. SLTs are strongly encouraged to solicit input from various school community constituencies to ensure that all voices are heard regarding the needs of students. Functioning collaboratively, SLTs also help to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's educational programs and their impact on student achievement. SLTs receive support and guidance as needed from their District Leadership Teams. We encourage parents to attend SLT meetings, which will be posted on our school calendar. We hope you can attend.

RSMA CAFE

Our RSMA Café allows parents to inquire and learn about all the wonderful events that are happening in our school.

MOVING UP CEREMONIES/GRADUATIONS

At The Riverside School for Makers and Artists, we celebrate our children's achievements.

- Pre-K and Kindergarten celebrate their Moving-Up ceremonies without any Caps or Gowns
- 5th Grade Graduation have Caps and Gowns
- 8th Grade Graduation have Caps and Gowns

List of Abbreviations

RSMA	Riverside School for Makers and Artists
SLT	School Leadership Team
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
CEP	Comprehensive Education Plan
DOE	Department of Education

RSMA