



Thorson Parent Handbook, compiled by the Thorson PTO and Thorson Staff

(Almost) everything you need to know about Thorson School

1. What are the school's hours?

School Begins at 8:50am and is dismissed at 3:35pm. You can drop your children off at school beginning at 8:35 am when supervision begins on the playground. Please be sure students arrive at school by 8:45am.

Grade	School Hours	Lunch Recess	Lunch
EC	8:50-11:35 12:50-3:35	N/A	N/A
4K	8:50-11:35 12:50-3:35	N/A	N/A
K	8:50 – 3:35	11:10-11:30	11:30-11:50
1	8:50 – 3:35	11:10-11:30	11:30-11:50
2	8:50 – 3:35	11:35-11:55	11:55-12:15
3	8:50 – 3:35	11:35-11:55	11:55-12:15
4	8:50 – 3:35	12:00-12:20	12:20-12:40
5	8:50 – 3:35	12:00-12:20	12:20-12:40

2. Who do I call if my child will not be at school?

Whenever your child is absent, either for illness or vacation, please call the attendance line at 262-376-6766 and give your child's name, date of the absence, and reason for the absence. If your child will be having pre-determined absent (vacation, family event, funeral, etc.), for three or more days, please complete the Student Leave Request form (available on the website) ahead of time and submit it to either the office or your student's teacher.

3. If my child is absent, how does he or she get homework assignments?

When your child is home ill, you can call the teacher to request that the homework be prepared

for pick-up. The homework will be in the office for pickup. If your child is absent due to vacation, please contact your child's teacher for makeup work.

4. Can my child bring medicine to school?

If your child needs any type of medicine during the day (this includes cough drops), it must be checked in with the office. The office or health room will administer the medication according to your instructions as indicated on the Medication Authorization form available on the school web site. Please know that a physician's signature is required for any prescribed medication.

5. What happens if my child is late for school?

If a student is late, he or she should check in with the office. Children will be marked tardy if they are not in their classroom when the bell rings. Students are not marked late if their tardiness is due to the bus arriving late to school.

6. What if my child has an appointment during the day?

Although the school discourages appointments during school hours, sometimes it is necessary. Send a note to the teacher stating the type of appointment and the time the child will be picked up. The teacher will send the child to the office at the designated time or the office will call him/her to the office when you arrive. The parent should go to the office at the designated time and sign out the student. The child should check in with the office upon his/her return.

7. I think my child has special educational needs. Are services available and who do I contact to apply for these services?

If you have any concerns about your child's learning, emotional or social needs, please discuss these concerns with your child's teacher or Mrs. Little. A variety of special education services are available for students who meet the criteria for special education. Qualifying criteria are established by state and federal laws. Instructional support areas available include: cognitive disabilities, emotional disabilities, autism, learning disabilities, speech and language, visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing and other health impairments. Thorson School staff provides many other educational services to children with individual needs. Some of these services include; counseling, additional reading and math support, English as a second language, and health services.

8. I believe my child excels in a particular area. How do I keep him or her challenged?

Discuss your child's talents with his or her teacher.

9. What are Parent/Teacher Conferences?

Parent/Teacher conferences provide the parent/guardian and teacher an opportunity to discuss the student's progress. Conferences are held twice a year, once in the fall and again in the

spring. Each conference lasts about 15 minutes. During the conference, the teacher will provide an assessment of your child's development against certain benchmarks for that grade level. While you will have time to ask questions, if you have a question or issue that requires an in-depth discussion, you may want to schedule a separate or additional appointment. Parents will receive an email to sign up online for parent/teacher conferences.

10. What is Curriculum Night?

Curriculum Night is what we call our parent orientation and is an important evening set aside in September for the classroom teacher to inform parents of the skills that will be taught throughout the year. The teacher will help parents understand new strategies, terminology and allow the parents to ask the teacher questions from snacks to rules to homework. This evening is not for children and the PTO usually provides free childcare in the gym.

11. Who monitors my child in the lunchroom? Will they help my child open containers?

There are supervisors on duty in the lunchroom who encourage children to eat their lunches and provide assistance when children need help opening thermoses, Gogurts and other hard to open containers.

12. Where do I send my child's lunch money?

All lunch money goes to the office. Feel free to send payments to school with your child to give to his or her teacher who will get it to the office. Please make checks payable to "Cedarburg School District" or submit cash in a sealed envelope with child's name and "lunch" printed on the outside.

13. Can I have lunch with my child?

Yes, just check in with the office before lunch. You may bring a younger child with you, but please be sure to keep the child next to you during the lunch period. If you wish to purchase a school lunch, it needs to be ordered prior to 9:00 a.m. by calling the school office.

14. Can my child come home or go out with me for lunch?

Your child may leave school grounds during the lunch period to have lunch with his/her parent. Please come to the office and sign your child out to do so. Also, the lunch period is short, so be sure to check the times to prevent your child from returning late and missing class time. Bringing your child back to school late from a lunch-time departure may result in a marked absence for a portion of the day.

15. Is milk available?

White and chocolate milk is available every day. Children are allowed to purchase one container

of milk per day. Milk purchases will be deducted from the family lunch account just as is done for hot lunch purchases.

16. Can my student bring a snack to school?

Yes. Students of all grade levels may bring a snack. The snack should be nutritious and able to be eaten with fingers.

17. Is there a "Nut Free" area in the cafeteria?

In grade levels where students' allergies require it, there is a designated Nut/Tree Nut free table in the cafeteria. Students whose allergies require this are seated at the nut free table and are able to invite friends to join them, granted their lunches are also nut free.

18. Are the classrooms nut free?

In classrooms where children have severe nut/tree nut allergies, we appreciate if other students in that class choose non-nut snacks. This is not required, but we are grateful when this is done as it reduces the chances of a student being exposed to the allergen.

19. Can I pack peanut butter or other nut product in my child's lunch? Snack?

As noted above, in classrooms where there are children with severe allergies, we appreciate it when others avoid nut snacks in the classroom. In the cafeteria, it is fine to include nut snacks or butters but not at the nut-free tables. We ask that students do not trade lunch items.

20. What is the electronic Thursday Folder?

In an effort to reduce the amount of paper used, Thorson has an electronic Thursday Folder that is updated and emailed to all families each Thursday. It contains timely and valuable information from the school and PTO.

21. What is the monthly Thorson Newsletter?

Thorson School publishes a newsletter each month with valuable information about school events and other school related information. Each grade level is asked to highlight the great activities taking place in an effort to share the wonderful things happening at Thorson.

22. What do I do if my child forgets his/her library book?

If you choose to deliver it to school, bring it to the office. Or, you can send it to school with them the next day. Most teachers will allow the student a few minutes to return it to the IMC (school library) and select a new one.

23. What do I do if my child forgets his/her lunch?

Bring the lunch to the office before 11:40am. It will be on the lunch cart so that they can pick it up. If you do not make it in time, your child may choose to eat hot lunch and the school will bill your account with the district.

24. What do I do if I need to get a message to my child?

Call the office with the message. If possible, please call before 2:00. This will allow the ladies in the office to deliver notes to the classrooms by hand at the end of the day which helps to minimize interruptions to the classrooms. With 400+ students, it sometimes takes a great deal of time to deliver messages, so please use discretion when deciding whether or not your child absolutely needs to hear what you have to tell them. If it is an emergency, let the office know and they will summon the child for you.

25. Who is Angela Little?

Angela Little is Thorson School's principal. She can be reached at 262-376-6701 or at alittle@cedarburg.k12.wi.us

26. Who is Lynn Winter?

Lynn Winter is the office aide. She assists the school administrative assistant with office responsibilities and helps monitor the lunchroom. She also handles the majority of the health room. Lynn can be reached at 262-376-6704 or lwinter@cedarburg.k12.wi.us.

27. Who is Lindsay O'Morrow?

Lindsay O'Morrow is the school's administrative assistant and maintains all of the student records. She is also a huge help if you have any questions. Lindsay can be reached at 262-376-6705 or lomorrow@cedarburg.k12.wi.us

28. Who is Mr. Jeff?

Mr. Jeff is the Head Custodian. He is very helpful and keeps our building looking great. He also is happy to help set up chairs and tables for special events with prior notice.

29. What security measures are in place?

Every visitor to the school (including parents) is required to sign in at the office each time they enter the school. No visitors will be permitted inside the school unless they are expected by a teacher or staff member. The Cedarburg School District is always monitoring and evaluating

security and taking necessary measures to ensure that our students are in the safest possible learning environment.

30. I am volunteering at school. Is there a protocol I must follow?

All volunteers must have first completed a Cedarburg School District Volunteer Application which allows the district to perform background checks and is kept on file in the district office. This form can be found on the school website or in the office and must be completed at the start of each school year if you plan on volunteering. Cell phones and pagers should be turned off. Confidentiality is critical in all volunteer activities.

31. I am volunteering in the school; may I bring my younger child?

It depends. If you are volunteering in the classroom (reading helper, party helper, art helper, gym helper, or the IMC, for example) younger children should not tag along as they may interrupt the classroom setting. However, if you are helping with Read Across America, Kindergarten bulb planting, 5th grade legacy planting, or similar at-school events, feel free to bring your child. Please keep your younger child with you at all times to minimize the chances that he or she gets into the traffic of passing students.

32. Where should I park when I am dropping off or picking up my child?

For drop off and pick up on the front side of the school, parking is available on Keup, although you cannot park directly in front of the school as this space is reserved for the buses. In the morning, there is one lane for the carpool and parents can simply drive through this lane to “drop” their child off without parking their car. More detailed parking lot policies can be found on the school web-site.

33. May I send my child home with another parent?

Yes. If it is a regular occurrence, please be sure to indicate so on your child's Going Home Plan. If your child will be picked up by another adult, not as part of his or her regular Going Home Plan, including a grandparent or a classmate's parent, write a note to the teacher with the date and change in plans. Children will not be allowed to go home with anyone other than those noted on the Going Home Plan without a note.

34. May I send my child home with a friend on a different school bus?

Yes. Write a note to the teacher. If possible please indicate the bus number on which your child will be riding home.

35. How do I know if school is closed due to weather conditions?

The school district website is the quickest way to find out if school has been cancelled. If there has been a storm during the evening hours, Cedarburg school closings will be announced over local radio stations (1130AM, 902AM, 620AM, 106.1FM, 99.1FM, 96.5FM). The local TV stations also publish school closings on TV and on their websites. In the event of an emergency during the school day, parents/guardians will be notified via an automatic phone call system.

36. If it is raining or snowing will my child go outside for recess?

Students usually do not go out in the rain, although sometimes outdoor recess is permitted in a light drizzle or mist. Children do go outside in snow and cold. Indoor recess due to cold temperatures only occurs when the wind chill hits -10 degrees or below. Therefore, it is important to have the appropriate outerwear for your child. This includes a heavy winter coat, snow pants, snow boots (preferably slip-on, not laced), hat and gloves or mittens (easier to put for young children). You may even want to have a raincoat and rain boots. Children are allowed to play in the snow only if they are wearing boots and snow pants.

37. During extremely hot weather, can my child wear shorts and/or flip flops to help stay cool?

Shorts are fine as long as they are at an appropriate length. Children should not wear flip flops to school because they are not safe. Thorson is air conditioned so the school is always comfortable.

38. Who monitors my child on the playground?

Thorson teachers and other staff members are on the playground during recesses to supervise and monitor the children. When possible, Mrs. Little is on the playground during lunch recess as well.

39. Where is the cafeteria and gymnasium?

The cafeteria also serves as our gym and is located just inside the main entrance of the school to the left, on the north end of the school.

40. What is the IMC and where is it?

The IMC stands for Instructional Media Center and is our school's library. It is located in the center of the school between the computer lab and the presentation room. As soon as you enter the school, turn right and you can't miss it.

41. Where is the presentation room?

The presentation room is a tiered room with a small stage located in the center of the school

right next to the IMC.

42. Does my child have access to the internet?

Students in grades K-5 have access to computers and the internet. In general, students are using the internet under the supervision of staff members. Instructional use of the internet often includes sites the teachers have pre-screened and bookmarked. Parents will grant or deny internet access for their child during the on-line pre-registration process. Please see the district web-site for more information on the district's use of the internet and technology.

43. Are cell phones allowed in school?

Yes, cell phones are allowed in school, but they must be turned off and kept in the student's backpack until school is over. Cell phones may not be used during lunch or at any time during the school day.

44. Is there a Lost and Found?

Yes, it is located in the entryway to the playground at the back of the school (the northernmost exit on the east side of the school). If items are not claimed by the end of the school year, they are donated to charity.

45. Can I send birthday party invites to school?

No. To avoid students feeling excluded or feeling pressured to attend an out of school party, invites to a non-school event may not be handed out at school.

46. Can my child bring in a treat for his or her birthday or, for summertime birthdays, half-birthday?

Please talk to your child's teacher about bringing in any special treats.

47. Who are the "AMP" Teachers?

AMP stands for Art (Mrs. Petre), Music (Mrs. Plaster), and Physical Education (Ms. Kestell).

48. How can I sign-up to volunteer?

The PTO has an on-line volunteer sign-up for most events. Links to these sign-up forms are typically sent to parents through the Thursday Folder, PTO web-site, PTO Facebook Page, or sometimes directly to parents via email. Teachers will also ask for help from time to time through their Room Representative.

49. Who are Room Representatives or Room Parents?

Room representatives are parent volunteers who assist each classroom teacher throughout the year in party-planning, field trips, and other special classroom needs. Being a room parent is a great opportunity to get to know your child's teacher and classmates. Room parent positions are filled prior to the start of school each year. There are also room parents for the specials teachers (Art, Music, and Gym).

50. What is the PTO?

The PTO is a group of parent volunteers who make possible the many valuable PTO services and enrichment programs. It provides year-long support for Thorson's students and teachers. All parents and teachers are encouraged to join and participate.

51. Why should I join the PTO?

Becoming a PTO member is a simple, yet very important way of showing your support for your child's school. Your membership dues help fund important academic enrichment programs (such as field trips) and supports our teachers as well as family activities. Joining the PTO in no way binds you to any minimum volunteer hours or requires you to attend meetings. Feel free to join us at PTO meetings when you can. Your PTO membership entitles you to vote at PTO meetings, become a chair or co-chair of a PTO committee or event and receive a complimentary copy of the Thorson Buzz Book.

52. What is the Buzz Book?

The Buzz Book is a student and staff directory published by the PTO. It also includes a complete list of PTO Board Members and committee chairs. The Buzz Book is included with PTO membership and sent home with the oldest child of each member family in late September /early October.

53. What is Spirit Wear and how can I buy it?

Spirit Wear is clothing sold by the PTO (as a fundraiser) that has the Thorson name/logo on it. Order forms are available on the PTO web site and distributed twice a year.

54. What is Teacher Appreciation Week?

Teacher Appreciation Week is organized by the PTO to give thanks to the teachers and staff of Thorson. Events usually take place throughout the first or second week of May.

55. Does the school have a yearbook?

Yes, the yearbook is distributed during the last week of school. It is put together by the PTO.

Order forms are distributed early in the year and due in early October. The yearbook chairs have help from parent volunteers at each grade level who take pictures of the whole grade and then assemble them into a collage page. The pictures are taken at the volunteer's convenience, and the layout is assembled at the volunteer's home usually starting in February.

56. What is Junior Achievement?

Junior Achievement is a PTO sponsored enrichment program also supported by the school district. One or more parent volunteer(s) from each classroom leads his/her child's class in a lesson and discussion about a particular lesson. A binder is provided to aid the parent volunteer. No previous teaching experience or talent is necessary. This is a great opportunity to volunteer in your child's classroom.

57. What is Destination Imagination?

Destination Imagination (DI) is an enrichment program open to students in grades 1-5 with interaction with the district and regional DI levels, and an exciting tournament in March. DI encourages teams of learners to have fun, take risks, focus, and frame challenges while incorporating STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), the arts, and service learning. Participants learn patience, flexibility, persistence, ethics, respect for others and their ideas, and the collaborative problem solving process. Teams may showcase their solutions at a tournament. Students try out for DI teams in September and participate in meetings several times a month through March.

58. What is Lego Club?

Lego club meets before school on the first and third Thursday of each month in the school gym. It is open to all students in all grades and gives children the opportunity to build, create and spend time with fellow students making masterpieces.

59. What are the Dads' Club and Watch D.O.G.S.?

Thorson Dads' club is a way for dads to get to know each other by getting together once a month at Maxwell's in Cedarburg. Every dad is welcome to attend to socialize and share ideas about how to make our school a better place. Joining is simply getting on the email list to receive updates, invitations, and other information. Participate as much or little as you want. Contact Orrin Gorelick wiproud1982@gmail.com to get on the list. WATCH D.O.G.S. is a one-of-a-kind, school-based father involvement program that works to support education and safety. Who are WatchDOGS? Fathers, grandfathers, step-fathers, uncles, and other father figures who volunteer to serve at least one day a year in a variety of school activities as assigned by the school principal or other administrator.

60. What do the IMC volunteers do?

The parents who volunteer in the IMC can choose the time that works best for their schedule or which may or may not be during their child's IMC time. IMC volunteers shelve books and help with other projects as needed by the IMC director. Occasionally, they may be asked to organize the books on the shelf.

61. I would like my child to participate in a school program, but my family cannot afford it. Is there anything I can do?

The PTO has a scholarship program so every child that wants to, can participate in every PTO sponsored event. Please contact PTO President who will keep the information confidential.

62. What are the PTO fundraisers?

The PTO's biggest fundraiser is the infamous Winter Carnival and Silent Auction which is held in February. As the biggest event of the school year, you don't want to miss it. It's fun for every age. Be sure to sign up to help, it takes hundreds of volunteers to make it a success. The more the PTO receives in fundraising, the less parents have to pay for special activities. Thorson also holds a Read-A-Thon.

63. What is "Box Tops for Education"?

Thorson participates in a redemption program called "Box Tops for Education" which is sponsored by General Mills, Pillsbury, Betty Crocker, Yoplait, Old El Paso, Ziploc and more. Just clip the "Box Tops for Education" logo from the portion of the package with the logo and send it to school with your child during one of the two Box Tops Contests held during the year. You can also send them to the school office throughout the year.

64. What is the Family Fall Picnic?

Family Fall Picnic is a family event held after school in early October. There are many games and activities for the kids, food for the whole family, as well as pumpkins and corn stalks for sale. Due to the size of this event, it requires many volunteers. If you want to get involved with this event, simply volunteer and the chairs will find a position that suits your schedule.

65. What is the Book Fair?

The Book Fair is a school-run fundraiser that allows students and families the opportunity to buy Scholastic books. The book fair is held in the fall and runs for approximately 8 days. Proceeds go to the IMC.

66. What is the best way to communicate with my child's teacher?

Talk with your child's teacher to find out their preferred method of communication. Teachers do have school emails and check them regularly. You can find your teacher's emails on the

school website, under Staff Directory.

67. Are holidays celebrated at Thorson?

Most classroom teachers do have parties (Halloween, winter holiday parties, & Valentine's Day) around the time of the holiday. If you have specific concerns, please contact your child's teacher or the principal.

68. Is before- or after- school childcare available?

Yes. The YMCA offers a Y-Care program from 7:00-8:35 a.m. and from 3:35-6:00 p.m. in the gym. Please contact the YMCA at 414-274-0759 for more information.

We are here to help! Please contact your PTO board, if you have any questions or comments. Thank you.