Culture & tone You don't want anarchy... or a police state. What's the noise level? Can hear a pin A productive hum. drop. What do you hear? Shouting and Grown-ups and kids yelling. speak in respectful voices. Are parents involved? Parents & Parents shut out. staff work as

Gym, recess & play

Work/play balance?



All work - no play or recess.

Are students physically active?



No gym, dance or movement in class, watching movies at lunch. Outdoors every day, jumping, dancing and skipping.

play, guided by teachers.

a team.

Lunch & after-school

How students spend their time outside the

What's the lunchroom like?

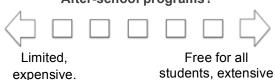


After-school programs?

smelly.

clean.

opportunities.

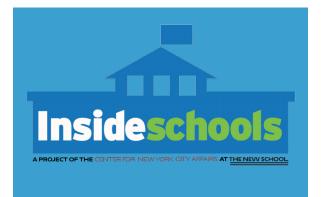


Notes

Did this school match our Insideschools profile? We want to know what you think – so add your comments on our site.



contact@insideschools.org (212) 229 5471



SCHOOL NAME:



What to look for on an elementary school tour

A checklist for parents by the Insideschools staff.

First impressions

Trust your instincts. First impressions count.

Security guard and office staff

Unfriendly.	Friendly.	
Building		
Dark, dirty,	Bright, clean, orderly.	
messy.	ordeny.	
Student work on display		
Bare walls, cookie cutter-work, store- cought decorations.	Artwork, essays, science & social studies projects, math problems.	
Leadership		
A principal can make or break a school.		
Does the principal have a clear vision? No. Not sure? Yes!		
No.	Not sure? Yes!	

Academics

Great schools explore all subjects.

	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,		
Reading			
Book excerpts or really simple books, even in 5 th grade.	Kids enjoy picture books, science books, historical novels and complex chapter books.		
Writing			
Short essays with copied facts.	Lots of high- quality essays on a range of topics.		
Math			
Nothing but worksheets or little evidence of math.	Legos, blocks, dice, play money, different ways to solve problems.		
Social studies			
No evidence of history or geography.	Maps, globes, timelines, thematic studies on bridges or subways.		
Science			
No evidence of	Plants, animals,		

science.

cooking supplies, eggs

hatching, experiments

in every class.

Teaching

A great teacher will make you envy your child.

Are students	engaged?	
\langle		
Kids distracted, bored, aimless.	Kids so focused they don't notice visitors in the room.	
Who does the talking?		
Teachers do all the talking.	Teachers encourage kids to talk.	
Do teachers challenge top students?		
One-size-fits-all lessons.	Teachers encourage children to read harder books, write longer essays, do more complex math.	
Do teachers support struggling kids?		
\langle		
One-size-fits-all lessons.	Teachers work with individual children or small groups.	
Do teachers plan together?		
Random units without a big-picture plan.	Projects in art/technology reflect lessons in history/math.	