

**WILLS VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**

2020-2021



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*****Due to the unique situation of the re-opening of school at the beginning of the 20-21 school year, and in an effort to follow re-opening guidelines, some temporary changes have been made to the handbook as noted with *******

Wills Valley Elementary School General Policies

GRADES PRE-K THROUGH SECOND

ACADEMICS

PROMOTIONS- Promotional standards vary from one grade to another

- Kindergarten students not mastering at least 60% of standards at the end of the school year in reading or math could be retained.
- First and second grade students having two (2) semester F's in reading or 2 semester F's in math at the end of the year may not be promoted to the next grade.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

- Mid-term reports are sent home every 4-½ weeks. These are sent to parents of all K-2 students. If there is a danger of failure, it will be noted. Grades are derived from test scores, daily work, and homework. Report cards are sent home every nine weeks.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

- Wills Valley Elementary School will provide individual student academic achievement results and interpretation of the results in a language that the parent(s) can understand. If a parent needs assistance to better understand test results, an interpreter will be available.

ACCIDENTS

INJURIES

- If your child is injured at school, we will make him/her comfortable and then call you immediately if the injury is of a serious nature. If you cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency numbers that you listed on your enrollment forms.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

MORNING ARRIVAL TIME FOR PRE-K

- The instructional day begins at 7:45 a.m. and dismisses at 2:30 p.m. Students must be in the building by 7:45 a.m. or they will be considered tardy. Pre-K students will be allowed to drop-off in the designated pre-k area from 7:30 a.m.-7:45a.m. **Pre-K students may not be dropped off until 7:30 a.m. at which time school personnel will come outside to the drop-off location.**

MORNING ARRIVAL TIME FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH 2ND GRADE

- The instructional day begins at 7:45 a.m. and dismisses at 2:50 p.m. Students must be in the building by 7:45 a.m. or they will be considered tardy. **The school doors will open at 7:20 a.m. Students may not be dropped off until 7:20 a.m. at which time school personnel will come outside to the drop-off location.**

MORNING DROP-OFF FOR CAR RIDERS

- **Our primary concern with regard to the traffic flow during drop-off is the safety of the children.** We ask that parents familiarize themselves with drop-off procedures. Parents who are dropping off students should drive up to the covered awning, and students should exit the vehicle onto the covered sidewalk. Please pull forward so that several cars can drop off at the same time. Staff members will be available each day to help students as they enter and exit the building. **Please do not drop-off students at other areas causing them to cross or be within the flow of traffic**

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL TIME FOR PRE-K

- Students will be dismissed at 2:30pm. Pre-K students are not allowed to ride a school bus and must be picked up by car.

AFTERNOON DISMISSAL TIME FOR KINDERGARTEN - 2ND GRADE

- Students who ride an early bus will be dismissed at 2:50pm. Students who are being picked up by car will be dismissed at 2:55pm. Students who ride a late bus will be dismissed as the late buses arrive which is from 3:10pm-3:20pm.

AFTERNOON PICK-UP FOR CAR RIDERS

- **Our primary concern with regard to the traffic flow during pick-up is the safety of the children. We ask that parents familiarize themselves with the pick-up procedures.**
 - Parents who are picking up students should drive up to the covered awning and pull forward as far as possible.
 - Please display the **PAW PASS** in the lower right area of the windshield.
 - Students will be called in the order cars arrive. Staff members will be supervising students as they are being picked up from school.
 - Parents **cannot** wait on school to dismiss inside the building. You must stay in your car until all children are in their assigned space. **Please do not wait outside the building because it blocks the entrance. You cannot get your child until they are in their assigned space and the teacher has seen your Paw Pass.**
 - Pre-K parents are asked not to walk up to pick up students. All pre-k parents should enter the pick-up line in vehicles and pick student up at the sidewalk. This is for the safety of pre-k students.
 - Parents **cannot** wait outside on the bus loop to pick up a child that is in line to ride the bus. This is for your child's safety. Bus drivers and supervising teachers do not have the authority to allow you to take your child off the bus or out of the bus line. Once a child has gotten in the bus line, they must ride the bus home.

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCES

- Regular attendance is necessary for optimum growth academically and for the development of responsible school attitudes and work ethics. Whenever a child must be absent, **a written note** explaining the absence is required. This note can be a parent note or a doctor's excuse and should be sent to your child's teacher within three days. If a note is not turned in within the three days, the child's absence will be considered unexcused. Only 3 days can be excused per grading period with a parent note. Unexcused absences will be handled in accordance with the Fort Payne City Schools Truancy Policy. This policy is located inside the Code of Conduct document located on the school system's website at www.fpcsk12.com.

TARDINESS AND CHECK-INS

- Research shows that children are more receptive to learning early in the morning while they are rested and fresh. Teachers begin teaching and reviewing first thing every morning. Every time your child is late you are sending a message to the child that school is not important enough to get there on time. Please make every effort to see that your child is at school every morning by 7:45 a.m.
- *Excessive tardiness will be judged according to the school code of conduct. Three (3) unexcused tardies will equal one (1) unexcused absence.* If your child is tardy, a parent must accompany the child to the office to check the student in late. In order for a tardy or check-in to be excused, the parent must provide written documentation in the form of a doctor's note or parent note. Only 3 occurrences (absences, check-ins, check-outs) per 9-week grading period can be excused by a parent note.

CHECK-OUTS

- Parents are asked NOT to check their child out of school **unless there is a medical or family emergency.** **Three (3) unexcused student check-outs will equal one (1) unexcused absence.** In order for a check-out to be excused, the parent must provide written documentation in the form of a doctor's note or parent note. Student check-outs cannot be done after 2:30 p.m. Students are already lined up in designated areas for car, bus, extended day, late bus, etc. Once a child is in line to ride a bus, they must ride the bus, and cannot be removed from the bus. This is a safety and procedural issue.

MAKE-UP WORK

- Students are responsible for making up work missed because of excused absences. Parents may pick up assignments or have another child, designated by the parent, pick up the work. Requests for make-up work should be made in advance so as to give the teacher ample time to get it together and not to interrupt the classroom.

BREAKFAST/LUNCH/SNACK

BREAKFAST

- A nourishing breakfast is served each day in the lunchroom. We encourage each student to eat breakfast to ensure his or her best daily performance. Our breakfast program is not open to parents or visitors. Please have your child at school by 7:30 if you want them to eat breakfast. Breakfast is not served after 7:40am. Breakfast cost \$1.15.

*******Due to current social distancing guidelines in place, students will not eat breakfast in the lunchroom. Breakfast will be served each morning in the classroom at 7:40am.**

LUNCH

- A *Federally Subsidized Lunch Program* is provided for all children who want to participate. A nutritious well-balanced menu is planned weekly. Menus are posted in the school, on the school website and are sent home with students each month. All food is prepared, stored, and served according to Health Department guidelines.
- Meals for students cost \$2.00. This includes milk. Lunches may be paid for on a daily basis or in advance by the week, month or year. If paying weekly, parents are encouraged to pay on Monday. Each student has a lunch account identified by an individual lunch number. This allows for each student's account to be tracked carefully. Please do not combine lunch money with other payments.
- All money sent to school should be sent in an envelope labeled with the student's name, teacher's name, and how the money is to be used.
- **Food prepared from restaurants is NOT permitted in the lunchroom. Cokes and soft drinks are also not permitted.** Parents and guardians are invited to eat lunch with their children. Please allow your child at least **four** weeks (not before September 3rd) to adjust to school before you decide to join him/her for lunch. Adult lunches are \$3.60. You may pay as you go through the line.

******* Due to current social distancing guidelines, parents are NOT permitted to eat lunch with their child.**

SNACK

- Snack time at school varies according to the grade level and the time the class eats lunch. Students can bring a nutritious snack from home or they may purchase snack at school. Candy will be discouraged and cokes/soft drinks are not permitted. Do not send drinks or snacks in glass containers, as this could be hazardous.

BUS TRANSPORTATION/REGULATIONS

- Students are to conduct themselves on the bus as they are expected to in the classroom. Hats cannot be worn on the school bus. Further information concerning bus regulations can be found in the student code of conduct. *****Masks must be worn while on the bus.**

DELIVERIES

- Wills Valley will ***not*** accept special occasion gift or balloon deliveries for students from flower shops, stores, parents, etc.

DISCIPLINE

- Students enrolled in the Fort Payne City School System are subject to the Code of Student Conduct during the time they are being transported to or from school or a school-sponsored activity, during the time they are attending school and during the time they are on the school premises.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE

- Grade level teachers set specific classroom behavior rules. The rules and the consequences of violating them are discussed initially with the students. The individual teacher takes disciplinary action. The principal handles reoccurring violations that threaten the welfare and safety of others. Behavior that causes a disruption in the classroom and in the child's own education will be reported to the parents. Disciplinary actions are recorded and kept on file with the teacher and the principal. All students are disciplined according to the Fort Payne City Schools Student Code of Conduct. No student is exempt from corporal punishment as a response to a violation of the code of conduct unless otherwise stated in an IEP.

DISCIPLINE BY ADMINISTRATORS

- Alabama Statutes delegate specific authority and responsibility to school officials concerning the control and discipline of students. A school principal or her designee has the authority, by law, to administer corporal punishment to students. School principals also have the authority to suspend students from school and/or from riding a school bus, and to recommend for expulsion those students who seriously disrupt the school environment.

DRESS CODE

All students will be expected to be clean and neat in appearance. Students should not wear anything that would attract undue attention, disrupt the learning process or be hazardous to the health and safety of students and/or teachers. The teachers and principal have the authority to determine whether or not a student's attire is disruptive. Any of the following will be a violation of the dress code:

- Garments which expose midriff
- Garments advertising drugs, alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or any other suggestive, vulgar or profane words
- Short shorts
- Caps and hats (unless there is a medical reason or special class activity). Hats cannot be worn on school buses. They must be in backpack while riding a bus.
- Shoes with wheels (HEELY'S or any other brand)

Comfortable shoes should be worn at all times for safety, health, and appearance purposes. Shoes with non-marking soles would be a great help in keeping the floors clean and attractive.

EARLY DISMISSAL/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

- The superintendent of schools has the authority to temporarily close schools or dismiss early in the event of severe weather, inadequate heat or other conditions that threaten the safety and well being of students.
- When the decision is made to close schools, an announcement will be made on the local radio stations and TV stations as early as possible. If early dismissal of school is necessary, the local radio and TV stations will be notified. The superintendent will also use the School Notification System (SNS) to notify parents. The School Notification System (SNS) will contact all guardians by phone to notify them of an early dismissal. It is imperative that you keep your SNS accounts up-to-date with current phone numbers at all times. Parents should have an alternate plan in the event schools do close early.
- Pre-K students will dismiss 30 minutes earlier than scheduled early dismissal time.

FIELD TRIPS

- Due to the young age of our students, most of our field trips are conducted within the Fort Payne City limits. Field trips cannot be taken the first two weeks or the last two weeks of school. A permission form must be completed and signed by a parent or legal guardian before a child will be allowed to participate in any field trip.

INSURANCE

- A school accident insurance policy is available for all students. Students are able to sign up for the policy at the beginning of the school year. Students have an option of two forms of school insurance. They are as follows:
 1. School-time coverage
 2. Round the clock coverage
- If you wish to purchase the insurance, checks should be made payable to the insurance company. Please read the policy benefits carefully. If you do not have family health coverage, you may want to consider this service.

LIBRARY

- Library classes are scheduled on a bi-monthly basis for all grades with instructional and free exploration periods. Students may check out three books weekly and they may be renewed for an additional week if the student brings the books in on the due date. Students/parents are required to pay for lost or damaged books.
- Students are responsible for library books issued to them during the school year. Reimbursement must be made for all lost and damaged library books. All monies collected are recorded by the school bookkeeper and paid to the proper fund for replacement purposes.

LOST AND FOUND

- Lost and found items are turned into the school office with the exception of coats that are placed on hooks attached to the wall near the gym. Students should check there for missing coats. **Parents should make sure that their child's name is written on all clothing and other valuable items.**

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

- Communication is an essential part of any educational program. We feel it is very important for parents to keep close contact with their child's teacher concerning his/her academic and social progress. Please remember to **schedule a conference in advance** so a time that is convenient for all can be established; i.e. before or after school, during teacher planning periods, etc.

PARTIES IN CLASSROOM

- Special snacks for school parties (i.e. Valentine's Day) will be purchased through the Child Nutrition Program. The parties will be planned and coordinated by the room mothers, teachers, and principal. **No food may be brought in from outside sources and served to other children.** This procedure is in accordance with the Fort Payne City Schools Wellness Policy. Please see student code of conduct for further information.

******Due to current social distancing guidelines, visitors will NOT be allowed in the building for parties.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- All students are scheduled for physical education daily and are expected to participate. To be temporarily excused from PE class, the student will be required to bring a note signed by a parent. To be excused for an extended time, a note from a doctor will be required. **All students should have an extra pair of tennis shoes to be left in the student's cubby/locker during the school year. These shoes must have non-marking soles. They are to be worn during physical education every day.**

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

- PTO will be organized the first month of school. PTO will encourage families to help their children, their school, and their community to be the best they can be.

SAFETY

TORNADO, FIRE and INTRUDER DRILLS

- Tornado and fire drills are held regularly to develop safety practices that will help students move quickly and in an orderly manner to pre-designated safety areas during an emergency. The procedure for tornado and fire drills will be posted in each classroom. Teachers will review these procedures with the students during the course of the year. Intruder drills will also be held at least twice a year.

SICKNESS

- It is the responsibility of each parent to monitor his/her child daily for signs and symptoms of sickness. Students should not be sent to school sick.
- **Your child should be free of fever and/or upset stomach for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school.**
- If your child becomes seriously ill at school, we will contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided during parent orientation. Please remember, we cannot keep a seriously ill child at school around other children.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

- Wills Valley School provides special education services for all grades. Any student who needs help in a content area will be tested (with parental consent) and may receive services based on eligibility requirements.

STUDENT INFORMATION

- Up-to-date student information is crucial to the daily operations of a school. All student information is kept in the school office and must be kept up-to-date so that you can be contacted in the case of an emergency or illness. Please make sure that all **telephone numbers and addresses are accurate and clearly written**. Make sure that you complete the student information sheet and include phone numbers of people that can be contacted in case you cannot be reached.
- **Please notify the school if you change addresses or phone numbers during the school year.**

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- The Fort Payne City Council donated funds this school year to purchase school supplies for each student enrolled in the Fort Payne City School System.
- You will need to supply your child with a backpack and a pair of comfortable tennis shoes with non-marking soles to be left at school for physical education.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

- Parents are highly encouraged to follow the same transportation plan each day. It is very confusing for small children to switch transportation modes (i.e. two different buses each week or ride a bus two days a week, and a car three days a week).
- However, if you must change your child's transportation, you must notify the office in person or in writing. Transportation changes **will not** be taken over the phone as this creates a safety concern.
- **Transportation changes or check-outs are not allowed after 2:30 p.m.**

VISITING THE SCHOOL/VOLUNTEERING

- **All visitors must use the main entrance at Wills Valley Elementary and go directly to the office.**
- To be allowed beyond the office, an I.D./Driver's License will be required so that it can be entered into the visitor management system.
- A visitor's pass will be printed which identifies the visitor and destination.
- If you are questioned about your reason for being on campus, please do not consider this intrusive. We are simply trying to keep our campus safe and the instructional day uninterrupted.
- During the year, parents will be solicited to volunteer their time for the benefit of the students. If you have a service that you could lend to the school, or if you would like to help on a school project, please contact the school office.
- Volunteers must schedule visits in advance and visitation cannot occur during core instruction.
- Parent Orientation is held prior to the first day of school. PTO Open House is held in the fall. Parents are encouraged to attend these events and become well acquainted with your child's teacher and school.

*****Due to current social distancing guidelines, visitors will not be allowed in the school building.**

