

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

2024-2025



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Wills Valley Elementary School General Policies

GRADES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SECOND

ACADEMICS

PROMOTIONS- Promotional standards vary from one grade to another

- Standards based report cards will be utilized in kindergarten, first grade and second grade. Students not mastering at least 60% of standards at the end of the school year in reading or math could be retained.

REPORTING STUDENT PROGRESS

- 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 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 7:10 a.m. **Students may not be dropped off until 7:10 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 on the side of the car closest to the covered sidewalk/curb (passenger side). Students should not exit on the driver's side. 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. We encourage students to be prepared to exit the car carefully and quickly. We will have teachers to help, however it is difficult to open every door for every child and keep the car flow moving. If your child is able, please encourage them to open the door and hop out. **Please do not drop-off students at other areas causing them to cross or be within the flow of traffic.**

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 (3:10pm-3:30pm).

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 **may not** wait inside the building during dismissal. You must stay in your car until all children are in their assigned space. **Please do not wait directly outside of the doors because it blocks the**

entrance. You will not be able to get your child until all students are in their assigned space and the teacher has seen your Paw Pass.

- Parents **may not** wait outside in the bus loop area 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 10 days/tardies/check-outs can be excused with a parent excuse per school year. 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.* 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 10 occurrences (absences, check-ins, check-outs) 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.** 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 lining 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. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as our goal is to dismiss 800 young students in the safest way possible.

MAKE-UP WORK

- Students are responsible for making up work missed due to an **excused** absence. 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. We encourage each student to eat breakfast to ensure his or her best daily performance. Your child must arrive at school by 7:30 if you want them to eat breakfast. Breakfast is not served after 7:40am. Breakfast **WILL** be provided **FREE** of charge for 2023-2024 school year **FOR ALL STUDENTS.**

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 on the school website at www.fpcsk12.com as well as the Fort Payne City Schools Child Nutrition Program facebook and instagram page. All food is prepared, stored, and served according to Health Department guidelines.
- Meals **will be FREE for all students. Lunch forms will not need to be completed.**

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 is 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.
- Bus misbehavior is not tolerated and repeat offenders will be suspended or expelled from riding the bus. Further information concerning bus regulations can be found in the student code of conduct.

CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Early Dismissal

- 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 or dismiss early, an announcement will be made on the local radio stations and TV stations as early as possible. The superintendent will also use the School Notification System (SNS) to notify parents. It is imperative that you keep your SNS accounts up-to-date with current phone numbers at all times.
- Please be aware that your child will need to follow the same transportation method as they normally do on a daily basis.
- If your child is a bus rider, he/she will be a bus rider on the early dismissal day. You will need to ensure that someone is at home when the bus arrives. **SOMEONE MUST BE AT THE STOP**, or the bus driver will not let the child off the bus.
- If your child is a car rider, he/she will be a car rider.
- If your child attends EDP, he/she will be a car rider.
- We ask that parents do not rush to the school to check students out. We have around 800 students and it can be very difficult to check out mass numbers of students at the same time. It is best for someone to meet the child at the normal bus stop.

Delayed Start

- During winter months, there is a chance that school could be delayed due to inclement weather. When the superintendent sends out a message that school will be delayed, this is the schedule that we will follow at Wills Valley Elementary School.

School Delay Schedule

1 Hour Delay

Teachers on Duty Report	8:05 AM
Doors Open	8:10 AM
Teachers Report	8:30 AM
School Starts	8:45 AM
*Buses will run 1 hour later than normal	

2 Hour Delay

Teachers on Duty Report	9:05 AM
Doors Open	9:10 AM
Teachers Report	9:30 AM
School Starts	9:45 AM
*Buses will run 2 hours later than normal	

2 ½ Hour Delay

Teachers on Duty Report	9:35 AM
Doors Open	9:40 AM
Teachers Report	10:00 AM
School Starts	10:15 AM
*Buses will run 2 ½ hours later than normal	

3 Hour Delay

Teachers on Duty Report	10:05 AM
Doors Open	10:10 AM
Teachers Report	10:30 AM
School Starts	10:45 AM
*Buses will run 3 hours later than normal	

DELIVERIES

- Wills Valley will ***not*** be able to 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 to 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 his/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.

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.** Each year, hundreds of coats are left at school and go unclaimed because there is no way to identify who it belongs to without a name.

OUT OF DISTRICT

- Any student residing outside of the city limits of Fort Payne must apply EVERY YEAR for re-enrollment the following school year according to the Fort Payne City Board of Education Policy. Failure to do so will result in the student being un-enrolled for the next school year. In order to be accepted for enrollment, the student should not be chronically absent or tardy (18 or more absences is considered chronic), should have proficient scores academically, and should not have behavior issues in school or on the bus.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

- 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.
- Teachers are available to communicate through email, phone call, conferences and through the REMIND text messaging app. Please be mindful that teachers are very busy teaching and supervising children and are unable to text message during instructional time. Please do not depend on getting an important time sensitive message to a teacher during the school day (i.e. change of transportation). Emergency messages should come by phone call to the front office. In addition, teachers are encouraged to have set hours of availability on the app and are not available to text in the early morning hours before school starts or in the evening hours after they get home.

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 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.

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.

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 online database, POWERSCHOOL. Every student/parent has an account and the ability to update phone numbers. Updates can also be made through the school office. Contact information 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 (paper copy) sent home at the beginning of the year and include phone numbers of people that can be contacted in case you cannot be reached.
- **Please update in POWERSCHOOL or notify the school if you change addresses or phone numbers during the school year.**

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

- Each child will need to bring needed classroom supplies. The list can be obtained from the school or from the school website.
- 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

- Students should 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).
- Teachers **will not** take transportation changes throughout the school day by remind, text message or email. Please remember that teachers are very busy teaching and supervising students and will not be able to answer messages throughout the school day.
- Transportation changes **cannot** be taken over the phone as this creates a safety concern.
- In an emergency situation, the principal may be able to approve a transportation change.

VISITING THE SCHOOL/VOLUNTEERING

- **All visitors must use the main entrance at Wills Valley Elementary.**
- 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. 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.