

WOODS CREEK PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-26



All students are responsible for complying with and are expected to be familiar with the WCPSS Code of Student Conduct and school board policies governing student behavior and conduct. All Code of Student Conduct policies are contained in the WCPSS Student/Parent Handbook, which is distributed to all students and parents at the beginning of each school year or upon enrollment in the WCPSS. If there is a conflict between the rules expressed in this handbook/agenda/planner and the Code of Student Conduct policies, the WCPSS Code of Student Conduct policies shall take precedence.

Todos los estudiantes son responsables de cumplir con y familiarizarse con el Código de Conducta Estudiantil de WCPSS y las políticas de la Junta de Educación que gobiernan el comportamiento y la conducta de estudiantes. Todas las políticas del Código de Conducta Estudiantil se encuentran en el manual de WCPSS de Estudiantes/Padres, el cual se distribuye a todos los padres y estudiantes al principio de cada año escolar o al matricularse en el WCPSS. Si hay un conflicto entre las reglas expresadas en este manual de Estudiantes/Padres y el manual/agenda/planificador de la escuela de su hijo(a) las reglas expresadas en este manual deben tomar prioridad.

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WOODS CREEK VISION STATEMENT

Woods Creek Elementary is a collaborative family of joyful, diverse learners. We inspire and empower innovative thinkers with the knowledge, skills, and courage to positively impact their communities and beyond.

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AFTER SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

- The WCPSS Transportation Department does not allow students to ride any bus other than their regular assigned bus. Riding a different bus home with a friend is not allowed.
- The teacher needs to know by what means each student is to go home, and, if this is to be changed, the teacher should be notified in writing.
- If your child is to go home with a classmate after school, through carpool, BOTH the hosting and visiting student should bring a note from his/her parent requesting this.
- Students are not allowed to leave school campus during the day without an authorized adult.
- Students leaving campus within 30 minutes of dismissal are only dismissed through carpool (3:15 PM – 3:45 PM). PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL DISMISSALS AFTER 3:15 PM ARE THROUGH CARPOOL [carpool begins at 3:45 PM]. If you know you have to pick your child up early from school, plan accordingly and please do so before 3:15 PM.

APPROPRIATE DRESS

Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance compatible with an effective learning environment. Attire with messages or illustrations that are lewd, indecent or vulgar or that advertise any product or service not permitted by law to minors; head covering of any kind; see-through clothing; any adornment such as chains or spikes that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon; and any symbols, styles or attire frequently associated with intimidation, violence or violent groups about which students at a particular school have been notified. The principal or principal's designee may require the student to change his or her dress or appearance (WCPSS Board Policy 6410.1).

Specifically:

- Students must wear clothing that covers their skin from chest to mid-thigh with opaque (non-see-through) fabric in front, back, and on the sides.
- Students must wear shoes at all times except when changing for physical education or athletic practices or events or when specifically directed otherwise by a teacher or administrator.

Parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes if deemed necessary. Students will wait in the office until dressed appropriately.

Students need to wear sneakers for PE.

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ATTENDANCE

- Unless a child is in attendance for at least ½ of the school day, he/she is considered absent.
- Students may leave with a parent for dental or doctor appointments. Prior notice to your child's teacher is appreciated. If possible, the appointments should be made after school hours or while your child is tracked out.
- If it is necessary for a parent to take his/her child from school during school hours, the parent should ring the front doorbell and notify the office staff of their need. Office personnel will call your child from the classroom after you arrive. Parents will wait in the office for their child and sign them out using the Verkada system.
- When a child is going to be absent, you can notify your teacher through email or Talking Points.
- When your child returns to school after being absent, please send a **written** note to the school within 2 days of return. Emails are acceptable. Please include the following information:
 - Your child's name
 - Date(s) of absence
 - Specific cause of absence
 - Your signature
- If a student is tardy, parents must ring the front doorbell and state their intention. Parents must come in and sign in their child using the Verkada system. The child will receive a tardy slip to provide to the teacher when reporting to the classroom.
- Letters will be mailed to parents of students who accumulate excessive absences or are regularly tardy. This is done in an effort to keep parents informed. A referral to a school social worker may be made if absences or tardies are excessive. It is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child is on time.
- **Family vacations should be planned during scheduled breaks (track out times).**
- Excused absences can be requested for religious and educational reasons. Forms for requesting excused absences for either of these reasons are available through the office. These requests must be made in advance. Excused absences for educational reasons will be granted only if (1) the *primary* purpose of the trip is educational and (2) the event does not occur at another time (e.g. launching of a space shuttle, presidential inauguration). Excused absences for religious reasons will be granted if suggested by the religion of the student or student's parents.

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- Parents can decide a trip is in their family's best interest and choose to accept it as an unexcused absence.

BEFORE SCHOOL/AFTER SCHOOL/ TRACK OUT PROGRAMS

The Kraft Family YMCA provides a Before and After School program at Woods Creek Elementary. Before school YMCA begins at 7AM, and after school YMCA closes at 6PM. Track-out programs are housed at the YMCA facility. Information about these programs and associated costs can be obtained from YMCA at 919-719-9622. Other daycare centers may also provide care for our students and a list is available at our front desk.

BIRTHDAY PARTY INVITATIONS

Teachers / Teacher Assistants will not pass out birthday invitations for birthday parties. This is an outside of school activity and is the responsibility of the parent. Staff is not allowed to provide student contact information.

BUS SERVICE

Questions about bus stops and schedules should be directed to transportation at <https://www.wcpss.net/page/43>. Transportation can be reached at 919-694-8998. Concerns about behavior should be directed to Lauren Patterson, Assistant Principal, at lpatterson2@wcpss.net or 694-8422.

All elementary students must have their bus ID tag on their bookbag for the entire year. Afternoon bus departure times are posted on the website <https://www.wcpss.net/woodscreekes>

Information on PM late buses can be obtained by calling the main desk at 694-8422 before 4:30 PM or at <https://busupdates.wcpss.net/school/920306>. If a bus is scheduled to be late by 20 minutes or more families will be contacted by transportation through school messenger.

Another way to monitor the times and locations of the bus is using the Here Comes the Bus APP. This APP allows you to track your students bus in real time. More information can be found at <https://herecomesthebus.com/getting-started/>. When signing up you will need the district code of 67500 and your students ID number/lunch number.

EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS RIDING SCHOOL BUSES INCLUDE:

1. Ride only your assigned bus.
2. Remain seated in your assigned seat, keeping head and arms inside the bus.

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3. Follow the bus driver's directions.
4. Talk softly (with permission of the bus driver).

Riding the SCHOOL bus is a privilege, not a right. Students must display the same appropriate behaviors on the school bus that are expected in the classroom.

SCHOOL BUS DISCIPLINE INVOLVES THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

1. The driver will report students who misbehave on the bus to the Assistant Principal. The parent will be notified if the student displayed inappropriate bus behavior. If necessary, a conference may be scheduled with the student, parent, and Assistant Principal.
2. Inappropriate behavior can lead to the student being denied the privilege of riding the bus for 1 to 5 school days or more, depending on the severity of the misbehavior. Parents are responsible for providing transportation to and from school during this time period.
3. Additional reports of misbehavior may result in removal from the bus for additional days or long term.

Bus Drivers will NOT release Kindergarten and 1st grade students at the bus stop unless a responsible person is present at the stop for that child. The bus driver will bring the child back to the school office and the parent/guardian will need to come pick up that student.

BUS TAGS

If you have requested bus transportation, your child will receive a bus tag which will be attached to their backpack the first day of school. The bus driver will not permit any student to board the bus without this bus tag. If your child switches bookbags, please make sure you attach the bus tag to the new backpack. If your child loses their bus tag, please notify the front office to reissue another one. If your child does not ride the bus 10 consecutive days, they will be removed from the bus roster and you will need to go to our website and resubmit your transportation request.

CAFETERIA – Breakfast/Lunch

Breakfast is available each morning during the 30 minutes before instruction begins (8:45 – 9:15 AM). Each class is assigned a 30 minute lunch period daily. Meal prices for the 2025-2026 year are breakfast for \$2.00 and lunch for \$3.75. There will be additional treats or snacks available for extra purchase.

In order to receive free or reduced-price meals, families need to submit a meal benefits application. Please allow 10 business days for processing. Families can add money to student accounts, monitor the

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balance, and apply for free or reduced-price meals by visiting www.MySchoolApps.com.

CARPOOL

All students who arrive on campus in the morning or leave in the afternoon by private vehicle will use the carpool entrance at the front of the school. Please do not park, walk your child to the door, and then exit. Use the carpool lane.

AM Arrival: Upon arrival through carpool, students will enter the school through the main doors and proceed to their classroom or the cafeteria for breakfast.

Carpool in the AM begins at 8:45AM. Morning announcements begin at 9:10 with instruction beginning at 9:15 AM. Students are expected to be in the classroom ready to learn at 9:15 AM.

PM Dismissal: Students using carpool in the afternoon need a carpool number. Carpool numbers can be obtained through the main office. As you drive through the carpool line your number must be visible to staff members who are calling students. This procedure will keep carpool running smoothly and quickly. Students will remain in their classrooms until their carpool number has been posted. Carpool will circle counterclockwise through the parking lot and students will be assisted into cars. **PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL DISMISSALS AFTER 3:15 PM ARE THROUGH CARPOOL [carpool begins at 3:45 PM]. If you know you have to pick your child up early from school, plan accordingly and please do so before 3:15 PM.**

Carpool in the PM begins at 3:45 PM and ends at approximately 4:10 PM. Parents are expected to arrive during this time frame. The YMCA offers after school care from 7AM - 6PM if needed.

If you do not have a Woods Creek carpool tag, you will be directed to park and report to the office to sign out your student as safety is our highest priority at Woods Creek.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS/NAME/PHONE/EMERGENCY CONTACT

Please notify the school office and your child's teacher any time you have a change of any pertinent information. This is very important if we would need to reach you in case of an emergency.

Please provide us with the best phone number to reach you between 8 AM – 5 PM each weekday.

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COMMUNICATION

Every Tuesday, teachers send home student folders with important information that has happened during the week or that will be happening in the upcoming week. Review the contents of the folder with your child, remove items to keep, and return the folder to the teacher.

PARENT COMMUNICATION: Every effort is made to send school information home regularly. School newsletters are sent home through email every other week, and more timely messages may be sent through phone or text messages. It is important that parents notify the school with any updates to phone numbers or email addresses.

REPORTING A CHILD'S PROGRESS: Wake County's method of reporting a student's progress includes the best of several reporting procedures. It is a fusion of progress reports, parental conferences, and interim reports. Report Cards will be issued approximately every nine weeks for grades Kindergarten – 5th.

MESSAGES FOR TEACHERS:

- **Talking Points:** Talking Points is the quickest way to get in contact with your teacher. While Talking Points messages are delivered to teacher phones and emails, please remember that instructional responsibilities take priority, and teachers will not respond immediately.
- **By e-mail :** Teacher e-mail addresses can be located on the Woods Creek Elementary website. It is important to realize e-mails may not be read right away because of classroom instructional obligations. Teachers will make every effort to respond to e-mails within 24 hours on school days. Emails are not instantaneous communication.
- **By phone:** Messages will be taken at the front desk and delivered to teachers.
- **By written note :** Written notes help keep communication clear and avoid confusion.

CUSTODY/VISITATION AGREEMENTS

Judges' orders regarding custody and visitation are kept on file in the school office so that staff is aware of who is authorized to pick up a child. Please make sure that the school receives an official copy of the judge's ruling, as we are not required to honor a parent/guardian's interpretation of a court order. For students whose parents have joint custody, the school is not responsible for managing what day the child is allowed to go home with which parent. That is the responsibility of the family. Any changes in court

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orders should be given to the office as soon as possible. The data manager is the contact for custody/visitation agreements.

FIELD TRIPS

Current educational philosophy recognizes the desirability of using the total community environment as a learning laboratory. Field trips are required by WCPSS Board Policy to support the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. To this end, teachers may schedule field trips for their classes. These trips, always arranged for their educational value, enable students to see people at work and serve to broaden the student's total educational experience. Every effort will be made to assure both the suitability of any trip away from school and the reasonableness of any cost involved in the trip.

Before a student can go on a field trip, a signed permission sheet from the parent must be on file in the office. **Verbal permissions are not accepted.** A field trip is defined as any planned activity that necessitates the student leaving the school grounds during the instructional day.

All field trips are paid for by students; however, no child will be excluded from a field trip because of inability to pay.

FIRE DRILLS / SEVERE WEATHER DRILLS / LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Fire drills are conducted monthly during the school year. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom and around the school. Severe Weather drills and lockdown drills are also practiced throughout the year. In the event of severe weather warnings, we require all students and staff members to take shelter until conditions improve.

FOUNTAINS

Students are encouraged to bring a water bottle with them to school. Students will be provided with a cup if a water bottle is not available. Woods Creek Elementary has multiple automatic water bottle filling stations for students and staff to use.

HOMEWORK

At Woods Creek Elementary, we regard homework as important school-related instruction that is to be completed outside of the classroom by the student. It should fulfill the following purposes:

- To enrich and extend school experiences through related home activities.
- To reinforce learning by providing practice and application.

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- To begin to build work habits and independence needed for middle school, high school and beyond.

Guidelines:

1. Before making a homework assignment, the concept/skill will be thoroughly explained and practiced.
2. Homework assignments will be specific, within the student's ability and have defined expectations.
3. Homework assignments will not be given as punishment or busy work.
4. Homework assignments will not require the use of books or materials which are not readily available in the home or accessible to the student.

Frequency:

The research-based guidelines for the maximum time spent on homework per day (which we will also follow) are:

K – 2nd 20 minutes per day
3rd – 5th 50 minutes per day

Homework will be assigned during the week as the teacher deems appropriate. Suggesting for Homework during the 2024-25 school year include independent reading and online Dreambox practice. Homework completion is reflected in the work habits section of the report card. If your child spends more than the specified time on homework, please notify the teacher in writing. Teachers will provide feedback on homework assignments. The policy governing homework can be found on the county webpage at www.wcpss.net , Board of Education, policy #5510.

HEALTH ROOM

A health room is available near the main office for all students. Services include covering cuts, scrapes, and medication administration. A child may stay in the health room for 30 minutes but then must return to class or be picked up by a parent. Students who run a fever, vomit, or have diarrhea will have parents called to go home as soon as possible.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

When weather conditions (snow, etc.) threaten the safety of our students, it may be necessary to close school for the entire day, delay opening of school, or dismiss earlier than usual. As soon as the superintendent makes a decision, local radio and TV stations will be notified. Listen carefully to the announcements. Weather updates for the county can be found at the WCPSS website (www.wcpss.net).

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Parents are responsible for monitoring the school website or TV during times of possible weather related closings. The school district will also send out messaging through school messenger to the contact information provided. If there is a possibility of inclement weather, please send a note stating the transportation plan for your child in case of early dismissal. Students will follow their regular dismissal plan in the absence of a written note. Please note that the YMCA will NOT have before or after school care on weather related early dismissal. Buses are only available for students who normally ride the bus home.

LOST & FOUND

Please label your child's personal belongings. This will help teachers and staff members locate lost items. Do not allow your child to bring extra money, valuable items, toys, trading cards, iPods, Nooks/Kindles, radios, or sports equipment etc. to school unless prior written approval has been communicated directly from a child's teacher. We will not assume responsibility for the security of such items. If your child has lost an item, please encourage him or her to check this area as soon as possible. Clothing and other items not claimed by the end of each academic semester will be donated to charity.

LUNCH WITH PARENTS

Beginning August 15th, you may eat lunch with your child. Please arrive at school before your child's scheduled lunch time. After signing in at the main office, please wait for your child in the designated area. Your child can come join you and then you can eat together at the provided tables. Students are not able to invite a friend to eat lunch for safety reasons.

MEDICATION

If your child needs to take medication at school, a physician must fill out a Form 1702. Parent Request and Physicians' Order Form for Medication .

MEDICATION WILL NOT BE DISTRIBUTED UNTIL THE REQUIRED FORM HAS BEEN RETURNED TO WOODS CREEK. It is the parent's responsibility to:

1. Sign the Parent Request, have the physician complete the permission form, and return/have it returned to school.
2. Provide medication in the container, with the pharmacist's label, which includes the child's name, medication name, dose and time to be given, and how it is to be administered.
3. Provide new, labeled containers when either medication or dosage changes or when replacing expired medications.

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4. Remove medications from school when treatment has been completed or school is over for the year.
5. **Parents must transport the medication to school** . Empty bottles may be sent home with the student.
6. Medication must be counted in the presence of parent and a staff member.

At a designated time each day, your child will report to the office where we will dispense medication. The date and time medication was taken and the signature of the staff member who administered the medication will be recorded. **PLEASE NOTE: WE CANNOT GIVE OR ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO TAKE OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION WHILE AT SCHOOL UNLESS WE HAVE THE DOCTOR'S FORM. THIS INCLUDES ASPIRIN, COUGH DROPS, SUNSCREEN, ACETAMINOPHEN, ETC.**

PARENT PORTAL

Home Base gives parents and students access to real-time information including attendance and bus information. With Home Base, powered by PowerSchool application, everyone stays connected. Families with multiple students can also set up their accounts to view all of their students at one time, with one login. Please apply for access information by filling out the form and returning to your child's school to receive your access information.

<https://www.wcpss.net/cms/lib/NC01911451/Centricity/Domain/69/parent-portal-hand-delivery.pdf>

PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)

Woods Creek Elementary parents are encouraged to join the PTA. The PTA provides a great deal of support to the school and our students. They also organize many of the "extras" that make school fun, such as cultural arts assemblies, spirit wear, family nights, book fair, trunk or treat, movie nights and much more. Parents interested in participating on PTA committees should look for more information in the newsletter or visit the PTA link on our school website.

RECESS

Students are provided 30 minutes of physical activity each day. Recess can include structured or unstructured activities depending on the needs of the classroom.

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RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS

It is recommended students be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and have an improvement in symptoms before returning to school.

SCHOOL NURSE

Woods Creek Elementary has a school nurse assigned from the Wake County Health Department who is on campus two to three days each week. The school nurse provides vision screenings for students who have been identified as a risk. The nurse also creates health plans due to medical conditions and case manages students in a group setting. Specific office staff have received appropriate training to dispense medications and care for students with medical needs, as well.

STUDENT BIRTHDAYS

Woods Creek Elementary is a community of joy and learning. While there are no birthday celebrations during the instructional day there are options that families/students can take advantage of including:

- Providing birthday cupcakes or treats to be handed out during lunch, snack, or recess. (All food provided to students must be commercially prepared, no homemade items are allowed to be distributed in school)
- Eat with your child during their designated lunch time.
- Make a donation to your child's class such as recess equipment or a game for indoor recess.

STUDENT CELL PHONES/SMART WATCHES

Students are allowed to bring cell phones/smart watches with them to school. The expectation is that cell phones are kept in the bookbag and silenced or powered off. Smart watches should be placed in airplane mode and not used during the instructional day. Teachers will provide students with a warning and clarifications of school expectations if they see a child not following these expectations. If a child has received a warning, the next infraction will result in the teacher holding the cell phone/smart watch until the end of the day and contacting parents to let them know. If these measures have been used and the cell phone/smart watch continues to be used during the school day, school administration will collect the item and call parents for them to pick it up from school.

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STUDENT INFORMATION

Each school year parents are asked to complete a student data sheet (Green paper). **It is important that parents inform the office of any changes, so we always have a way to contact a parent or emergency back-up person.** Current telephone numbers (home, work, and cell) are essential. The office must be able to reach an adult in the case of an emergency. You may contact our data manager, Mrs. Eichvalds at reichvalds@wcpss.net or 919-694-8422 x44350 to notify her of any changes.

STUDENT NAME AND PHOTO/VIDEO PRIVACY RELEASE

Every parent who enrolls a child at Woods Creek Elementary completes a Student Name and Photo/Video Privacy Release form giving permission, (or not), for us to use a picture of your child and their name in social media (e.g. our website, Twitter). This form is kept in your child's cumulative folder and is good for the entire time he/she attends WCPSS. You may change your preference at any time by contacting the Data Manager.

TECHNOLOGY

While attending school students are expected to use the provided WCPSS device.

Toys

Students may not bring toys from home, this includes electronics which do not serve an educational purpose. If your child brings electronics on campus, Woods Creek does not accept responsibility for securing these items. Any toys or electronics that interfere with the learning environment will be taken and parents called.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

If you need to communicate a change in transportation, please notify your teacher using Talking Points and/or a handwritten note. If you don't hear back from your child's teacher by 3pm, please notify the front office of this change.

VISITORS

Wake County Board of Education Policy and the State of North Carolina GS #14-132 require: "All visitors must report first to the office when entering the building and pick up a Visitor Pass." Visitor passes must be prominently displayed.

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All parents are welcome and encouraged to visit and volunteer at Woods Creek Elementary, when prior arrangements have been made with the teacher. In order to minimize disruption to the instructional day “drop in” visits to classrooms are not allowed. Teachers cannot be distracted from their students during the school day. If a parent drops off an item for their child, it will be delivered by the office staff. All conferences should be scheduled with the teacher at a mutually agreed upon time.

Any request for classroom observations must be submitted to administration for approval. If approved, classroom observations are limited to 30 minutes and will be conducted with an administrator who will meet with you before the observation to complete required confidentiality paperwork. Please be mindful same day request for classroom observations cannot be honored as the Administration has to schedule time to be available to accompany you.

VOLUNTEERS

Woods Creek Elementary welcomes volunteers. You must be a WCPSS approved volunteer to work with students. You can complete the volunteer registration process online at <https://www.wcpss.net/domain/42>

Please reach out to the school or teacher to organize specifics regarding any volunteer opportunities.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Main office	694-8422
Cafeteria	694-8422 x44378
Guidance	694-8422 x44361
Transportation	919-805-3030

Woods Creek Elementary Website: www.wcpss.net/woodscreekes