

This Parent-Student Handbook has been prepared to acquaint you with the various procedures of Wilderness Elementary School and noted policies of Spotsylvania County. Please review the contents with your child.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Welcome to Wilderness Elementary for the new school year. We hope this handbook will provide information for you and your child. Your child's success at school is very important and we appreciate your support.

Your child will benefit from your support and encouragement. Review and support the code of conduct and bus regulations. Ask your child questions about their day and maintain positive and cooperative communication with their teacher.

Please consider being a part of our PTA and participating in Spirit Nights or other family events! It will be appreciated.

We look forward to working together as a team to provide a quality education in a positive and safe environment. After all, WE ARE WILDERNESS! Every effort will be made to keep the school and community in harmony as we strive to make this year successful.

Parents, we appreciate your interest and support. Feel free to contact us if you require any assistance. Best wishes for a wonderful year!!

Dianne W. Holmes, Principal

W.E.S. MISSION STATEMENT

Wilderness Elementary School is a community of learners where teamwork is embraced, diversity is a strength, and all Wildcats are productive, respectful, and responsible citizens.

Shared Values of the Wilderness Team

Teamwork – We believe education is the combined effort of students, staff, parents, and community.

Learning – We use high quality instruction to build a foundation for lifelong learning.

Sensitivity – We are sensitive to the diversities, feelings, and learning styles of each individual in our community.

Environment – We provide a safe, clean, friendly, and productive learning environment.

Citizenship – We encourage a sense of pride in ourselves, our school, our community, and our nation.

Commitment – We are responsible for the education, physical, emotional, and social success of each student.

GENERAL SCHOOL RULES

We encourage students to take pride in themselves, our school, and the community. Therefore, we have established three general school rules/expectations:

Be PRODUCTIVE
Be RESPECTFUL
Be RESPONSIBLE

Our goal is to help our young Wildcats develop or strengthen these character traits as well as consistently acknowledge their effort in demonstrating positive behaviors. Please assist your child in this process by discussing school expectations. We want our Wildcats to “**Prr with PRIDE**” each and every day!



Give Me FIVE!



- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Eyes Watching | 4. Body Still |
| 2. Ears Listening | 5. Hand Raised |
| 3. Mouths Quiet | |

VOICE LEVELS

Level **0** – NO Voice

Level **1** – Whisper

Level **2** – Table/Inside Voice

Level **3** – Yelling/Outside Voice

SCHOOL HOURS

School Office	8:00AM – 4:00PM
Teacher/Staff Day	8:20AM – 3:50PM
Student Day	8:45AM – 3:30PM
Homeroom Bell Rings/ Morning Drop-off/Breakfast Begins	8:25 AM
Tardy Bell Rings <i>(Late students must get a tardy pass from the office before going to their classrooms)</i>	8:45 AM
Dismissal begins <i>(Parent Pick-up, daycare vans, K to buses)</i>	3:25 PM
Bus Loading <i>(gr. 1-5 to buses)</i>	3:30 PM

STUDENT DROP-OFF PROCEDURE

Parents will use the front entrance to drop off their children. Parents should enter the circle driveway, staying to the right. Please have your child exit the vehicle on the curbside (right side of car). Please pull completely around the circle to allow several cars to drop off at the same time. After your child is safely on the sidewalk, you may exit the circle.

We do not have adequate supervision for children prior to **8:25AM**. Unless the students are participating in a tutoring session with their teachers, students should not be entering the building until **8:25AM**.

Students arriving after 8:45AM must report to the office for a tardy pass.

STUDENT AND PICK-UP PROCEDURES

If your child is going to be picked up after school *every day* by car, please complete a form to receive a **car rider number**. At approximately **3:25 PM**, staff members will begin loading students into their cars parked in the parent drop off lane along the curb in the front circle. Please do not enter the drop-off/pick-up lane prior to 3:15PM

Parents who do not pick up their child on a regular basis **must** send a note to the teacher informing them of the change in departure plans. These parents should go to the office and their child will be dismissed on the bell. Parents will sign their children out before departing. Please be consistent with your child's departure procedure. Many times a child will be reminded to take the bus home or go to a daycare facility; even though they are reminded, they forget.

ALL afternoon transportation changes must be made before 3:00p.m. Otherwise, students will be sent home by their usual transportation.

EARLY RELEASE

Children will be released early only to parents, guardians or persons who have been designated in writing by the parent. **Regular early pick-ups are discouraged as they may impact student learning.**

LEAVING THE SCHOOL GROUNDS OR BUILDING

Parents who pick up their children during the day must sign them out in the office. Students must have written permission from their parents before leaving school with friends, relatives, scout leaders, etc. When parents cannot be contacted for permission, children will only be allowed to leave the school with the person(s) listed as the emergency contact(s) on the student information card.

ATTENDANCE

It is extremely important that students be in attendance on a regular basis. Students who are not in school miss out on valuable educational instruction. **Attendance and tardies will be monitored monthly.**

Notices or letters will be sent home regarding patterns or excessive absences and tardies.

Please call the school or our attendance email Wildernessesattendance@spotsylvania.k12.va.us if your child is going to be absent (540-786-9817). All students who return to school after being absent must bring a note from their parents stating the dates and reason for the absences.

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that governs the maintenance of student records. Under the law, parents of students, or students if they are 18, have both the right to inspect the records kept by the school about the student and the right to correct inaccuracies in the records. Access to the records by persons other than the parents or the students is limited and generally requires prior consent by the parents or the student (refer to the Spotsylvania County Schools Parent Handbook for additional information).

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress in a neat and appropriate manner, which will not discredit the school or the student body. Students are expected to dress in a manner suitable to the activity in which they are engaged. Any student whose clothing or appearance disrupts the learning environment will be required to change to proper attire.

The following attire is not permitted: hats, shorts shorter than finger-tip length, tank tops/t-shirts bare midriffs, flip flops, or spaghetti straps. Please use good taste and judgment.

SCHOOL VISITATION

Due to COVID-19 mitigation procedures, we are unable to welcome visitors or volunteers to school as we normally do. Should you wish to meet with a teacher or administrator, please contact the school to make an appointment.

Should you have a need to deliver lunches, tennis shoes, eyeglasses, etc, please drop these items by the main office and they will be delivered to the student.

Parent volunteers may help their child's teacher by doing work at home; please contact the teacher if you are interested. WESPTA also has volunteer opportunities.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS OR GUARDIANS

Work samples, notices, and newsletters will be sent home periodically. Please review your child's work as this provides insight into their progress. The information sent has details pertaining to various school events. Report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine weeks. Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year. The staff is available to meet with parents to discuss student progress at any time during the school year if prior arrangements have been made. Please contact your child's teacher or the school office to schedule an appointment.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH PROGRAM

Our cafeteria offers balanced and nutritious breakfasts and lunches for any student. A school lunch menu is published monthly. For the 2020-2021, with CARES Act funding, breakfast and lunch are available at **NO COST** to students.

For students who bring their lunch, milk or bottled water may be purchased in the cafeteria. No glass bottles/containers are permitted. Snacks are also available for purchase in the cafeteria. Money can be placed on student accounts throughout the year. If you would like to review your student's account balance and transactions you can do this through <http://www.myschoolbucks.com>. This site allows you to view current balances, receive low balance email alerts, add money to your student's account, and set up automatic payments. If you send in a check with your student to add to his lunch account, make check payable to *Spotsylvania County Food Service or your student's school name Cafe (example: Wilderness Elem Cafe)*. Please include your student's name and ID number on the check.

In accordance with the Federal School Lunch Program, a carton of milk is served with all lunches. If your child is allergic to milk, please present a note from your doctor so that a juice substitution may be made.

Our cafeteria also offers pre-packed breakfasts, lunches and dinner kits at no cost. These can be picked up curbside on Wednesdays from 8AM-4PM.

CAFETERIA MANNERS

All students are to be instructed in proper table manners and general cafeteria behavior throughout the year. We will again be connecting to our three expectations of being respectful, responsible and productive. Students may certainly talk to one another during this time, but excessive movement and congregation will not be

allowed. Noise should be kept at a normal conversation level. It should be stressed that food and paper are to be kept off the floor.

FIRE DRILLS/EVACUATIONS/ALERTS

Wilderness has established procedures to deal with a variety of emergencies. Fire drills are held monthly and bus evacuations are conducted three times a year. There will also be other safety drills conducted throughout the year in accordance with division and state protocols.

HEALTH SERVICES

Wilderness has a full time registered nurse whose clinic is located in the main office. Our school nurse provides a variety of medical services for our students. **ALL** medications must be kept in the nurse's office for safekeeping. **Parents must bring medication to the school, and it must be accompanied by a doctor's order.** Medicine kept at school is to be picked up at the end of the school year. Students wearing a cast or heavy bandages, requiring the use of crutches, a cane, walker, orthopedic braces, or the use of a wheelchair in school must check in with the nurse upon arrival at school and present a note from a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner listing any restrictions or specifics pertaining to the injury.

Spotsylvania County Schools has a "**NO Live Lice**" policy regarding head lice. This policy states that students will be sent home and must remain out of school until **all live lice are removed** and must be checked by the nurse on return. A notice is sent home to all parents in any classroom/bus where lice are found.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Weather conditions sometimes exist that require an early dismissal from school. Please listen to these announcements on your radio (101.5, 93.3), or check cable TV channel 17, SpotsyAlert, or the Spotsylvania County Schools web site www.spotsylvania.k12.va.us and have an alternative plan available for your child, if needed. **Parents should not phone the school for closing announcements.** We must keep our lines open to receive the message ourselves.

LOST AND FOUND

The lost and found area is located in the cafeteria. **Please label all children's clothing, lunch boxes, book bags, etc.**

PARTIES AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Due to COVID-19, we are unable to allow treats to be shared at school. Invitations to parties may not be passed out to students at school.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

Please contact your child's teacher about volunteering. All volunteers will be requested to complete the county volunteer form and provide up-to-date information. Helpers are needed to assist with paperwork, for special projects and activities. You may also reach out to the PTA Volunteer Coordinator at wildernesselementarypta@gmail.com

WILDERNESS PTA

Wilderness Elementary School PTA takes an active role in working with teachers, school administration, and local school officials to ensure all students are provided the best education possible. The PTA has helped to provide our Wildcats with a variety of opportunities throughout the year.

Our Wilderness Elementary PTA is part of a county, state and national network of more than 26,000 PTAs that strive to: support and speak on behalf of children and youth in our schools, assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children, and encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools.

We encourage you to join and participate actively in the PTA and in the school-wide volunteer program. Every member who joins our PTA automatically becomes a member of both the Virginia State PTA and National PTA. Volunteers are always needed and you can volunteer for any activity by simply contacting one of the PTA Officers at

wildernesselementarypta@gmail.com

**Follow Wilderness on Facebook
@WildernessWildcats**

<p>Wilderness Elementary School WEBSITE: http://www.spotsylvania.k12.va.us/Domain/23</p>
