

Parent Guide



2016-2017

We are delighted to have you as members of the Wards Creek Elementary family. Our faculty and staff are dedicated to creating an engaging, challenging, and productive learning environment for each student. Our partnership with you is the foundation for helping students maximize their full potential. Thank you for your involvement, commitment, and support. Together, we will make this school year the best ever!

OUR CORE VALUES

We believe that:

- The Character Counts Pillars of Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship are essential qualities to model and instill in our students.
- The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People are the foundation for developing leaders.
- All individuals are valuable and can make meaningful contributions.
- A caring and compassionate learning environment will support the needs of the whole child and inspire all to reach their full potential.
- Leaders are life-long learners.

OUR VISION:

We are a school **W**here **C**hildren **E**xcel
by developing leaders with character and a passion for lifelong learning.

OUR MISSION IS TO:

Engage Learners to Excel in Life and Embrace Leadership
to Enhance our Local and global society.

THE EIGHT HABITS OF HAPPY KIDS

1. Be Proactive – *I am in charge of my choices!*
2. Begin with the end in mind – *I have a plan!*
3. Put first things first – *I work first, then play!*
4. Think win/win – *There's plenty for all!*
5. Seek first to understand, then to be understood – *I listen before I speak!*
6. Synergize – *Together is better!*
7. Sharpen the saw – *Balance feels best!*
8. Find your voice, and inspire others to find theirs – *I'm on a mission!*

WIGs

(Wildly Important Goals)

Engage Learners–RIGOR

Proficiency–Meet standards
Growth–Make learning gains

Excel in Life–RELEVANCE

Mission Statement
Academic & Personal goals

Embrace Leadership–RELATIONSHIPS

Student Empowerment
Community Impact

**Wards Creek Elementary is a Leader in Me LIGHTHOUSE School
in partnership with FranklinCovey**

ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER CHANGE

Please notify our office immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, or your emergency contact. This information is very important in case your child becomes ill or injured.

- **Students will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the emergency information card.** If you would like a neighbor or friend to be eligible to pick up your child from school, please list them on your emergency contact card. Please make sure this information is updated whenever necessary.

Remember: **A photo ID is required.**

AFTERNOON PARENT PICK-UP PROCEDURES

Parents must use the west entrance. Cars are not permitted in the east bus loop during arrival or dismissal times. Cars will line up along the sidewalk near the school, back to the cafeteria loading dock, and then back along the entrance drive. A staff person will assist with helping “weave” the cars through the parking lot so that all traffic can be stacked off of SR 16. Parent Pickup cars **MUST** have a “Parent Pickup Card” attached to their rearview mirror. If your car does not have a “Parent Pickup Card” (available at Orientation or from the school office), you will be required to show appropriate ID and may have to check your child out at the office. Students will be called to line up at a numbered cone. As cars move to those cones, a safety leader will open the door for your child to enter your car. Please use your turning signal when exiting the campus to assist the PSA directing traffic on SR 16.

ATTENDANCE

The importance of regular attendance cannot be over emphasized. All students should be in school every day that they are physically able. It is extremely difficult to successfully keep up with class work if attendance is irregular. We have a very serious attendance issue at Wards Creek which is an ongoing focus target for us.

Excused absences include:

Personal illness, family emergency, death in the family, religious holidays of the student’s established religious faith, required court or law agency appearances, public functions, state competitions, scheduled doctor or dentist appointments.

Unexcused absences include: shopping trips, pleasure trips, suspension from school, appointments without prior approval except in case of emergency, truancy.

Refer to the Student Code of Conduct for more information.

Absences

If your child is ill and absent for two or more days, contact your child’s teacher to arrange for the school work your child has missed. Students should always bring a note explaining their absence on the day they return to school. Failure to bring in a note will result in an automatic unexcused absence. Any student who is absent must make his/her own arrangements with the teacher to make up the missed work.

Tardiness

School begins at 8:30, but you may drop off your child any time after 8:00. **Any student reporting to school after 8:30 must be escorted by a parent to the front office** to receive an admittance slip before going to the classroom. Tardiness is disruptive to the learning environment and has a negative impact on student achievement so please have your student at school by 8:25. They must be in their classroom by 8:30.

Early Check Out

Our academic program runs from bell to bell. It is very important for students to be present for the entire school day. Please schedule appointments after school and make every attempt to have students present for the full day. If you must pick up your child early, please be aware that children may not be checked out of school between 2:00-2:50 pm (1:00-1:50 on Wednesdays). If you need to pick up your child early from school, please do so before 2:00 pm (1:00 on Wednesdays). Anyone checking out your child **MUST** be listed on the Student Information Form in our office. You **MUST** also show a picture ID. There are no exceptions.

Excessive absences, tardies, and early check-outs may lead to truancy violations which may be addressed by law enforcement. Please make your child’s school attendance a priority in your family.

BLACKBOARD MESSAGES

You may receive a message from Mrs. Jarrell or another member of the school or district staff via the Blackboard system. These messages are for time urgent information. We ask that you listen to the complete message for this timely information and that you maintain current phone numbers on file so we can make sure these messages are reaching our families in case of urgent or emergency situations.

BUS REGULATIONS

Students are given the privilege of using the transportation services of the St. Johns County School District. Standards of discipline must be maintained at all times in order to satisfy safety requirements. Whenever a driver must direct his/her full attention away from the road, danger exists. No student will be allowed to endanger the other students on the bus. Parents are not to board the bus at any time. A complete list of bus regulations is available in the **Student Code of Conduct**.

DRESS CODE

We strongly encourage parents to play an active role in determining how their children dress for school. Please follow the guidelines below:

1. Clothing of a distracting nature is unacceptable. Clothing with reference to cigarettes, alcohol, illegal drugs or violence is prohibited.
2. Tennis shoes are the daily recommended footwear for safety.
3. Clothes must not be intentionally torn or slashed.
4. Swim wear or biking shorts are prohibited.
5. Outfits must not expose the midriff while in normal activity.
6. Shirts are to remain buttoned; shirts with cutout sleeves are not permitted. Shirts must also have straps that are at least 3 fingers wide.
7. Hats, caps or coats must not be worn in class or buildings.
8. Halter tops, tube tops, "muscle shirts", fishnet shirts and see through blouses are improper dress.
9. Boys pants must be worn at the waist; no sagging. Pants that have belt loops should be belted.
10. Extremely large jewelry, extreme makeup, and/or unusual hair color or styles that create a distraction to the normal routine of school will not be permitted.
11. Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than four inches (4") above the top of the knee.

Students should come to school dressed in a manner that demonstrates respect for oneself and others. Parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes if their child is wearing inappropriate clothing.

ILLNESS

Students who become ill will have to wait in the clinic until they are picked up by a parent or guardian. If a child runs a temperature or requires medical treatment, the parent or guardian will be called immediately to pick up the child. All children who are ill or who have a fever must stay home.

If a student is to receive medication while at school the parent must obtain a form from the school office, and bring all medication in the original container. Aspirin, cough drops, etc. must be brought to school with a note of parental authorization as well. All medications must be distributed through the office. **Children are not permitted to keep medication of any kind while attending classes, or transport medication to and from school.**

If your child is ill at home before school, please do not send him/her to school with the understanding that he/she may call home. If a child is sick, he/she does not need to be in school. Not only might he/she be contagious, but also the ability to learn is also impaired.

Any student with a health problem should have a letter on file explaining that problem.

LOST & FOUND

All personal belongings (jackets, hats, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) should be permanently labeled with your child's name before being brought to school. Check our lost and found if an item is missing. Items not claimed from the lost and found will be given to charity at the end of each nine-week period.

MORNING DROP OFF PROCEDURES

Parents may drop off their child using the parent pick-up side of the building which is the west entrance (closest to SR 13). Parents may drop off students no earlier than **8:00** am. Safety Leaders will assist opening the car door for your child's arrival. Cars are not permitted in the bus loop during arrival or dismissal times. It is important that your child arrive at school between 8:00 am and 8:25 am. Safety Leaders leave their posts at 8:25 so that they arrive in their classroom for the morning news program. Please make sure your child arrives at school by 8:25 am so that they can be in their classroom ready to learn by 8:30 am.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

If you have an emergency and need to change the way your child goes home in the afternoon, we must receive a written note or email from your listed email address to your child's teacher and to Tammy Stewart before 1:30 pm (12:30 pm on Wednesdays). We cannot accept phone calls for those changes. Changes in afternoon transportation should only be for emergency situations. Thank you for your understanding.

VOLUNTEERS

We are delighted and grateful to have parent volunteers in our school. Please be sure you have been cleared and then make arrangements with your child's teacher to schedule a time and activity for you to help with. All visitors must sign in through the KeepNTrack system in the front office.

If parents need to give a message, medication, homework, lunch money, supplies, etc., you should go to the front office. Interrupting class hinders valuable instruction time.

We are looking forward to a great year. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns. We are privileged to serve your family.

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| Edie Jarrell | Principal | 904.547.8733 |
| Kevin Klein | Assistant Principal | 904.547.8734 |
| Leanne Adolf | School Counselor | 904.547.8743 |
| Christie Ritchie | Instructional Literacy Coach | 904.547.8747 |
| Susan Wells | Secretary/Bookkeeper | 904.547-8733 |
| Christina King | Registrar | 904.547.8737 |
| Tammy Stewart | Front Office Clerk | 904.547.8731 |
| Casey Messenger | Extended Day Coordinator | 904.547-8750 |
| Tim Lundquist | Maintenance Manager | 904.547.8736 |
| Jeanie Gray | Cafeteria Manager | 904.547.8739 |