



Parent & Student Handbook

2022-2023

All district programs are operated without discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin or handicap in compliance with Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504, and all other applicable Civil Rights Laws.

1016 Fort Mill Parkway
Fort Mill, SC 29715
Phone: 803-835-7555
Fax: 803-835-7593

<http://rtes.fortmillschools.org/>

OFFICE HOURS

7:00 AM to 3:00 PM

FORT MILL SCHOOL DISTRICT VISION:

Because children are the future, we use our ingenuity and imagination to challenge and inspire our students to exceed their greatest dreams and create a better community. That is why we place **Children First... Every Day.**

OUR PURPOSE:

In the tradition of excellence, Fort Mill Schools place **Children First... Every Day** by providing an innovative and rigorous education that empowers all students to achieve their greatest success.

OUR MISSION:

At River Trail Elementary, we will prepare all learners with the skills and mindset to thrive and impact the world.

OUR VISION:



To do this, we will... establish a safe, inclusive, and positive environment where relationships and high levels of learning are valued. We will put children at the forefront of all decisions and will actively collaborate to ensure all Otters reach their full potential.

COLLECTIVE COMMITMENTS:

Carry the Banner
All Children Can
Relationships, Relationships, Relationships
Expect Excellence
Students First

OUR BELIEFS:

We believe that all students have the right to a safe and nurturing learning environment.
We believe that students, faculty, staff, and parents must work together to enhance learning.
We believe a child's home, school, and community should share the responsibility for the success of the child.
We believe that excellence is the result of high expectations and purposeful learning.
We believe that all children can learn and should be provided with the necessary learning opportunities to meet their potential.

STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to River Trail Elementary School! The information in this student handbook has been presented with the hope that it will help you know and understand our school and become an integral part of it. River Trail Elementary School follows all policies and procedures outlined by the Fort Mill School District Board Policy Manual, which can be accessed on the district website.

We encourage you to support our Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) and to become involved with your child's school. Our school website will be updated frequently to inform you of important events going on in the school. In addition, please look for notes and news from your child's teacher and graded work coming home on Tuesdays. You can also stay up-to-date by checking the class website on a regular basis.

We look forward to working with you to create a fun and exciting learning environment for your child!

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ATTENDANCE

Good attendance is essential to the academic success of students **and** all students are expected to be in attendance each day school is in session. Attendance in the Fort Mill School District is traditionally outstanding. This is a tribute to each family's efforts to have their child at school daily. We appreciate this effort! See the [FMSD Attendance Policy](#) for more details.

LAWFUL ABSENCES

According to SC Code of Laws 59-65-10, the following types of absences are the only ones considered lawful:

1. Serious, chronic, or extended illness of the student. (If your child has a chronic illness or is hospitalized for an extended period of time, please submit medical verification to the principal.)
2. Serious illness or death in the immediate family.
3. Recognized religious holiday for the students of the particular religious faith when pre-arranged.
4. Pre-arranged absences for other reasons and/or extreme hardships at the discretion of the principal.

Parents must provide the school with a note identifying the reason for the absence within three (3) days of their child returning to school. The note should be dated and specify the reason for the absence.

Following any absence, a student is required to present a written note from the parent or guardian stating the date(s) of the absence(s), the reason for the absence(s), and the parent's signature. The note should be presented within three days of the child's absence(s). If we do not receive a note explaining the child's absence then it will be coded as unlawful. The school will only accept a parent's written excuse for five total days of absences when the student is ill or absent for another lawful reason. Notes are kept on file by the attendance clerk.

UNLAWFUL ABSENCES

Any absence by a student, with or without the knowledge of the parent not meeting one of the conditions for a lawful absence as defined above will count toward the cumulative limit of absences. Written notification will be sent by the school for accumulated absences. A call will be made by the attendance clerk after 3 consecutive absences. When a child accumulates 5 absences that are unlawful or not excused by a medical note, the parents will be required to attend an attendance intervention (truancy) conference and assist the principal or his/her designee in the development of an attendance intervention plan which will be valid in any SC school district. Excessive absences and failure to adhere to guidelines of an intervention plan could result in a family court referral. The school will only accept a **parent-written note for five days of absence.** Following those days, doctor's excuses are required. All vacations and trips are unlawful reasons for a student to miss school, and will be considered unexcused.

MAKE-UP WORK FOR ABSENCES

Assignments and class work missed may be made up at the teacher's discretion if a student is absent from school. **This is the responsibility of the student.** Should assignments not be available for the entire period of the absence, the student is responsible for getting them upon his/her return in order to cover the material missed. Remember



that experiments, discussions, group activities, etc. may be difficult to replicate. Graded work done or tests taken by the class while the student is absent will be made up, depending on the nature of the assignment; therefore, the student may have fewer grades at the end of the grading period. Additionally, for any tests given after the student returns, the student will be responsible for the material covered in class while he/she was absent. If any work is not made up, it may affect the student's grade. The work needs to be made up within two days of the absence or at the teacher's discretion. If the student is absent, the parent may call and request to pick up assignments **after school** in the office. Please do not expect the teacher to provide assignments during the school day. Virtual/eLearning will not be available for students that are absent.

TARDIES

Our school day begins at 7:35am. Students arriving after **7:35 a.m.** are tardy. These students must report to the office with a responsible adult to be signed in for admittance to class. Tardies cost your child valuable educational instruction. Tardies also interrupt the learning process for other students. Please be considerate of other students' education. Excessive tardiness may result in an intervention meeting for development of an attendance plan which will remain in the child's record and transfer to any receiving school.

EARLY DISMISSAL

It is requested that students not be picked up before the regular dismissal time. This is an interruption of the educational process, not only for your child, but other children as well. A child must be present for at least half of the school day to be considered present as related to perfect attendance. However, any portion of the day a child can attend is to his/her benefit. Please provide verification for medical appointments. Please schedule these as near the beginning or end of the day as possible so your child can be in school.

If a child will be dismissed from school before the close of the day, please send a note in the morning stating the reason for the early dismissal and the time the child will be picked up. Parents are requested to come to the front door and follow the process to sign out their child. **Students leaving early must be signed out in the office and be dismissed only to a parent or approved adult on the emergency contact list. This procedure is for your child's protection – please keep student information updated to facilitate this function, especially in emergency situations or early weather related school closings.** In an effort to minimize disruption at dismissal time, all early checkouts must occur before 1:30 pm.

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:05 AM	Breakfast/Student Drop-Off Adult supervision begins
7:35 AM	Instructional Day begins Students must be in the classroom at this time
2:00 PM	Student Dismissal

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Safety is our top priority. We need your help to ensure that students are not in dangerous situations. By following the guidelines below, we can work together to make sure our children get to school and leave safely.

BUS PARKING LOT

State law requires separation of car and bus pick up areas. **Only school district buses are allowed to park in the bus parking lot.** It is dangerous for our students to be allowed to walk around buses to get to or from cars. The buses must not be blocked as they have many routes to run.



ARRIVAL

When dropping off your child(ren) please pull forward as far as you can in the drop off line (this will help keep the line moving quickly and we can unload more cars). Please follow the directions of all staff members on duty. **ALL STUDENTS SHOULD EXIT FROM THE CURB-SIDE (RIGHT SIDE) OF THE VEHICLE.** Since the instructional day begins at 7:35 AM, no students should arrive before 7:05 (when adult supervision begins) or after 7:35 AM. Students arriving after 7:35 A.M. should go directly to the office with an adult to sign them in and get a pass to the classroom.

DISMISSAL

We ask that the first car start a wait line in the car rider line. Cars must not be left unattended in traffic lanes. When picking up children, parents need to stay in their cars and in the car rider line until it is their turn to have the child walk to the vehicle. This is to ensure a fluid transition for everyone, and if followed, will allow for a shorter time spent in line.

Parents will be given a card to be placed on the right front dash or the rear view mirror. For safety reasons, anyone without a card will be required to park in the parking lot and come into the building office to sign the student out. Without your card, you may be asked to present a driver's license and wait while student records are checked to see who has permission to pick up the student. Additional cards may be acquired from the office for those authorized to pick up the student.

Students should be picked up no later than 2:25 PM. If you are unable to pick up your child by this time, please make arrangements for your child to be picked up by someone else and **notify the office of the arrangements in writing** by note or email. This is extremely important.

For the safety of all,

- All drivers are asked to **not talk/text on cell phones** during drop-off and pick-up.
- We ask that you turn your car engine off and not allow it to idle while waiting for your student.
- We ask that you not smoke in your vehicles or when on school premises during drop-off, pick-up, or visits to the school. Everyone is reminded of the district policy prohibiting smoking on any school property, including buildings, grounds, and parking lots at any time.
- Please do not exit your vehicle to fasten seat belts or open doors for your child(ren). The school will provide an area for you to pull into to complete these tasks.
- Please be sure younger children accompanying you are supervised.

LATE PICKUP

Our school day ends at 2:00. It is important that all students are picked up in a timely manner. While we understand that emergencies can happen, a repetitive late pickup will result in a meeting with a district and/or school administrator to develop a consistent pickup plan for your child.

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

Parents need to notify your child's teacher and our front office staff of any transportation changes. Please email both the homeroom teacher and our receptionist, Robin Mabry. Teachers are to receive **written or emailed** note stating: the way of transportation, the date, and a parent signature. **It is the parent's responsibility to notify daycares of changes.**

Important Phone Numbers

River Trail Elementary –803-835-7555
Fort Mill School District –803-548-2527
Bus Transportation Office –803-548-1998
Special Services – 803-548-8218



BUS TRANSPORTATION

(ALSO REFER TO INFORMATION FROM THE [TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT](#))

Administrators, parents, bus drivers, and students share the responsibility for safe transportation of students.

Riding a bus is a privilege and must not be abused. Action will be taken by district and school officials to ensure that all students conduct themselves properly. Where there is evidence of misconduct by any student, action will be taken to correct the situation.

It is important to review the bus rules and expectations set forth by our district transportation department prior to riding on a school bus. Please note that students will not be allowed to ride a different bus home with friends **without prior approval from the district transportation office.** A complete list of school bus rules, policies and procedures can be found through the [Fort Mill School District Transportation website](#).

To ensure a safe environment on each bus, the school fully supports the driver in maintaining safe bus habits. Anyone who violates these safety standards will be subject to disciplinary action by school officials; when necessary, bus transportation will be denied. The driver will report to the school authorities any offenses committed by the students on the bus. When a student is reported for an infraction of the bus rules, the school administrator will investigate the incident and take necessary disciplinary action. A copy of the incident report will be provided to the parents. When a student is suspended from riding a bus, he/she cannot ride another bus during the suspension period.

Students are assigned to buses at the beginning of the year, and any variation must be approved by the Director of Transportation. If your child needs to ride a different bus home than the one that picks him/her up, then a special request must be made to the district Director of Transportation. Students will be allowed to ride a different bus only as room allows. Forms for making these requests are available in the school office.

It is the desire of the Fort Mill School District that all students arrive at school and home safely. We appreciate your help ensuring student safety.

WALKERS

It is our goal to make sure all of our students arrive to and from school safely. Therefore, parents must complete a [walker/biker waiver form](#) giving permission for their child to obtain a walker/biker pass. Parents giving written permission for their child to walk home recognize the school's responsibility for the safety of the child does not extend beyond school supervised areas. Students who have been issued a walker tag will be dismissed at 2:00pm. An updated walker/biker waiver must be completed each school year.

PETS

Pets are not allowed on school property as a violation of health code, and as a courtesy to students and staff who may have allergies or anxieties related to animals. If you should choose to bring your pet through the car rider line, then they must remain calmly in their car. We all love our pets, but we must remember that the primary purpose of the car rider line is to have students enter safely and happily into the school. Designated service dogs may be on school property.

POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

RETURNING TO CLASS AFTER SCHOOL

Students are responsible for bringing home materials needed for assignments. To respect teachers' professional work hours and to encourage responsibility, students will not be allowed to return to their classroom after the school day has ended. At no point should a student or adult enter a classroom after hours without an escort from the school.



FERPA INFORMATION

The Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the US Department of Education. The law requires that student records be managed in a confidential manner. Regulations and procedures for compliance of this act are provided through board policy. For more information about your rights under FERPA, please refer to the district's website.

TITLE IX

It is the policy of (Insert School Name) not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by the Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to the District's Compliance Coordinator or to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington D.C.

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Safety of our students and staff is an extremely important priority for us here at River Trail Elementary. We work closely with local law enforcement and first responders to create a safe learning environment for each individual.

1. Fire drills are held at least once a month.
2. Tornado and earthquake drills are held periodically.
3. Lock down and emergency procedure drills also will take place at least two times a year.

VISITORS TO SCHOOL

Visitors and volunteers must enter by the front door and stop by the office. Opportunities where we may have visitors include school programs, parent-teacher conferences, book fairs and other special events. Volunteers will be required to have a background check prior to volunteering in the school. Security doors to other parts of the building will be opened by an office person after the visitors log in at the computer and scan their driver's license or official government-issued identification. Security procedures require that badges of visitors/volunteers must be visible at all times. Visitors must always sign in at the office and obtain this visitor badge before entering the school building. This ensures all students' safety by letting office and classroom personnel know who is in the building. The school will communicate events that allow parents to attend in a safe and controlled manner.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT RIVER TRAIL

VISITING FOR LUNCH

Due to increased security protocols and limited seating, parents and guardians may join their child during their lunch period up to four times per year per child. Visitors coming for lunch should limit the number of adults to two per visit.

STUDENT NUTRITION

"FOOD FOR THOUGHT!"

Our cafeteria staff serves breakfast and lunch at school every school day. Breakfast and lunch will be served in the classroom. Menus, nutritional and allergen information are available on our website and teachers post the menu in their rooms. There is also a free App available for your smartphone named Mealviewer. The cafeteria also offers extra sale items, milk, ice cream, juice, water and snacks to purchase. For a student to purchase extra sale items, the parent must fill out a form giving permission. All foods served by the cafeteria meet state and federal guidelines. Our kitchens are tree nut and peanut safe.

The following are easy ways to pay for extras:



- Online via the district website's Pay Fees lunch card feature. You are also able to see meal purchases and balances. You can set up email alerts for balances on Parent Portal.
- By a separate check made out to your school's cafeteria. The check should not include other school fees. Please note the child's cafeteria account number on the check - if the check is written for more than one child, each child's account number and the amount to credit to each child should be noted on the check. Include a phone number.
- Cash is also accepted as payment but is strongly discouraged as it can be lost.
- Transfer of funds from one sibling to another is also available via the Student Nutrition tab on the website.

The meal costs for students are as follows for the 2022-2023 school year:

- o Breakfast \$1.35
- o Lunch Elementary \$2.25

[Applications for free and reduced-price meals](#) are available at all times in the school office, in the cafeteria and on the district website and you can apply online at www.lunchapplication.com. Students must reapply each school year.

Due to the number of food allergies, homemade or home baked foods are not allowed to be distributed to students within the classroom or applicable classroom setting. Acceptable foods for distribution are those items that were prepared in a commercial and/or licensed kitchen, and most importantly, are packaged with a label clearly listing the contents and ingredients of the food item. This policy is designed to provide consistency and minimize allergy risks in all classrooms, while maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all students. ([Board Policy J LCDD](#)) Our district also has a Wellness Policy [Board Policy ADF](#) and [Board Policy EFD](#). For more information, review the [FMSD District Policy](#)

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Our school encourages your participation in PTO sponsored activities during this year. Our PTO is an extension of the school family, and is dedicated to the support of instructional programs, teaching/learning, and safety. This important group has one major fund-raiser each year ([Booster-Thon](#)). In addition, the PTO needs volunteers to help with special programs and serve on committees. Please consider volunteering your time to assist this organization in helping all classrooms, teachers, and students through their many beneficial projects.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Visitors and volunteers must enter by the front door and stop by the office. Opportunities where we may have visitors include school programs, parent-teacher conferences, book fairs and other special events. Security doors to other parts of the building will be opened by an office person after the visitors log in at the computer and scan their driver's license or official government-issued identification. Security procedures require that badges of visitors/volunteers must *be visible* at all times. Visitors must always sign in at the office and obtain this visitor badge before entering the school building. This ensures all students' safety by letting office and classroom personnel know who is in the building. The school will communicate events that allow parents to attend in a safe and controlled manner.

We appreciate that many parents and grandparents like to help our school. In order to provide a learning environment free from distractions, we ask that volunteers dress in an appropriate manner, check in at the office, turn off cell phones, and avoid unscheduled conferences. Children are not allowed to accompany volunteers in our school. Volunteers should plan to attend the volunteer orientation. Because the maintenance of copying machines can be expensive, we require that volunteers be trained by a River Trail staff member before using any school machines.

All volunteers in the building and chaperones for off-campus field trips MUST first be approved by our district-wide background check. This check typically takes approximately 2 weeks to complete and may be initiated by completing the form found [here](#). Once approved, chaperone status is in effect for 3 years.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

All elementary schools have a School Improvement Council made up of teachers, parents, and administrators that will help to facilitate communications between the community and the school. Officers of the PTO may be elected to serve on the School Improvement Council. Additional members will be elected in the fall.

CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

Messages can be taken for students and teachers, but it is not always possible to deliver them immediately. Teachers cannot leave their classes for telephone conferences. Students wishing to call home may use the school phone for health and transportation EMERGENCIES ONLY. Forgotten snacks, improper shoes for physical education and assignments left at home do not constitute an emergency.

The main job for our teachers is to provide quality instruction in a safe environment. In addition, all Fort Mill Elementary Schools have a schedule of duties for teachers. Each teacher has a short planning time on most days. Because teachers are busy teaching and planning, please do not expect an immediate response to an email that you send. A teacher may not check email until school is out, so you should send any change in afternoon transportation plans (for example, ride the bus instead of car rider) via e-mail to Robin Mabry. Her email address is mabryr@fortmillschools.org.

The main job for our teachers is to provide quality instruction in a safe environment. In addition, all Fort Mill Elementary Schools have a schedule of duties for teachers. Our goal is to respond to emails within 24 hours.

CUSTODY

A change in custody will require new custody papers and a change of address will require a new proof of residency. If you are separated or divorced, we need to have a copy of your custody papers on file. If at any time you feel that a problem of abduction may occur, we need to have immediate knowledge of this in the school office. Please contact Nicole Gaunt at gauntn@fortmillschools.org for more information.

STUDENT CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Student cell phones should be kept in a book bag. Electronic devices, including cell phones, must be turned off during the school day and while on the school grounds. A cell phone may not be used during the day to play games or to text message. The student may not use a cell phone to call or text a parent during the school day without a teacher's permission. This includes devices like smartwatches or electronic communication devices that serve as telephones.

If a student has a smart watch and is only using the basic watch features while at school, it is fine to have and wear. Students should not use the watch features that make it function like a phone, such as calling, texting, using apps, or playing games. If this is happening, the teacher can ask the student to put the device away in their book bag or confiscate it and contact the parent. We want to minimize distractions and maximize engagement in our school environment.

As noted in School Board Policy JICJ, the school principal or his/her designee will have the authority to limit the use, take disciplinary action and/or confiscate electronic communication devices if the use or possession of these devices may cause or is causing a disruption to the school and/or event. Unauthorized use of a cell phone or personal electronic device may include, but is not limited to, taking pictures or recording without permission, cheating, harassment or bullying, use during any emergency drill, use during unauthorized time or use for unlawful activities.



The use of e-readers may be permitted under the supervision of the teacher. It is a privilege for students to use their personal electronic device at school, and this privilege can be taken away if students act irresponsibly or violate school policy.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The decision to close or delay schools will be made by 6:00am. Announcements will be made via **Blackboard**[®], and on WRHI AM radio, CN2, and Charlotte TV stations (WSOC, WBTV, WSOC). Delays and closings will be posted on the district website www.fortmillschools.org and available at the district office phone number 548-2527. Information will be listed for FORT MILL SCHOOL DISTRICT #4 not York County Schools. No breakfast will be served if school is delayed. All district half day preschool programs will be canceled in the event of a school delay.

When weather is threatening, please be sure your child and the teacher know how he/she is to get home if school is dismissed early. The **Blackboard**[®] phone system (803-548-8379) will leave messages about changes of schedules. In order for you to receive these messages, we must have your up-to-date phone number and e-mail address in our PowerSchool database. It is the parent's responsibility to contact after-school care to learn about their procedures.

ASSEMBLIES AND PERFORMANCES

Our first commitment is to classroom instruction. Assembly programs and performances are sometimes an important part of the educational program. It is expected that an atmosphere of respect will be maintained throughout all assemblies by presenters, participants, and members of the audience. When visitors come to the school, it is expected that they will demonstrate polite behavior and be role models for students by staying for the entire program to avoid disruption. For example, if attending a performance, please do not get up and leave as soon as your child's part is over.

LOST AND FOUND

Items found at school are turned into the Lost and Found area in the cafeteria. Students are encouraged to check this area if they are missing any items. Several times a year when the area is overflowing, we take items not claimed to a local clothing closet. Please put your child's name on clothes, lunch boxes, notebooks, etc.

SCHOOL FEES

Students must settle all fees and property owed to the school prior to the end of the school year. This includes library books, textbooks, and teacher materials.

Fort Mill School District has implemented an online payment process. Our goal is to keep cash and checks out of the schools and classrooms. The online system is set up to accept payment for registration fees, lunch accounts, activity fees (i.e. field trips) and classroom fees (i.e. class t-shirts and yearbooks).

Click on '\$ Pay Fees' on the school home page or go to <https://www.studentquickpay.com/fort-mill/> and you will be able to see current fees and your child's lunch account. If you have not created an account and need your child's student ID, please call the school office.

DELIVERIES

The school will not accept nor deliver to students any items before, during, or after school unless they are of an educational nature/value or medically necessary. When sending balloons or flowers to a child, please use his/her home address. Do not send these items to the school. District procedures do not allow these items on a bus.

MEDICAL INFORMATION



IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All students in grades Pre-kindergarten through 12 are required to furnish a valid South Carolina Certificate of Immunization prior to enrollment. School officials shall record the immunization data on the student's health record and/or attach a copy of the certificate to the health record. For more information from DHEC [see this link](#).

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

Students with contagious diseases are not allowed to attend school. Children should be kept at home if they have experienced vomiting or fever during the night. Students should be fever free for 24 hours without using medicine to bring the temperature down before returning to school.

Online Reporting of Close/Household Contacts or Positive COVID-19 Cases

The district will continue to use the online reporting system developed to receive information regarding close/household contacts or positive COVID-19 cases. Please click on the link below to report information. The reporting form can also be accessed on the district website at fortmillschools.org.

[Student Reporting Form](#)

[Staff Reporting Form](#)

Please report information to the online system as soon as you receive it to allow the district to begin contact tracing as soon as possible. A FAQ sheet regarding online reporting is available on the district website or by [clicking here](#).

If your child is displaying symptoms and awaiting test results please notify your school nurse by phone or email:

Jennifer Sova, RN (803) 835-7543 or sovaj@fortmillschools.org

Students will need to contact their school regarding missed assignments or schoolwork during their quarantine or isolation period.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Our school district partners with Bollinger Insurance to offer parents a variety of economical insurance plans: Student Accident Insurance, Life Insurance and Dental Accident Insurance. Enrollment information is available at: www.bollingerschools.com/site.

HEALTH SERVICES

Parents will be notified if a student becomes ill or is injured during school. When it is necessary for the student to leave school, a parent, guardian, or designated alternate must sign the student out in the office. **The health and well-being of all students is of utmost importance. We will request that you pick up your child if his/her medical condition is unstable, or if he/she is not capable of participating in the daily school activities. This decision is based upon an assessment conducted by the school nurse. In addition, the school must also follow the DHEC School Exclusion List for specific medical conditions to be in compliance with SC State Health guidelines.**

If a student brings medication to school, the following requirements must be met:

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

1. The Medication Consent Form must be completed and turned in with each medication. The form must be signed by the doctor and the parent.
2. Prescription medicines must be in the pharmacy container with your child's name on it. (Ask your pharmacist for an extra bottle in order to divide the prescription between home and school.)
3. Parents must deliver all medications to school.
4. The medication must carry a prescription label with the following information: student's name, date, medication name, dosage, strength, and the directions for use (frequency, duration, mode of administration), the name of the prescriber, and the name and address of the pharmacy.



5. Medication will be kept in a locked cabinet in the office at all times.
6. School personnel will give medication only with a completed form signed by the parent and the doctor.
7. Medication must not be sent with a child on the bus or with a child walking to school.

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION

1. The Medication Consent Form must be completed, signed by the parent and turned in with the medication when the parent brings it to the office.
2. The over-the-counter medication must be in the original container or box, unopened with the manufacturer's seal intact (not in a plastic bag).
3. The following items will be available in the health room for first aid treatment of your child during the school day: Saline eye wash, Vaseline, Hydrocortisone 1% cream, and Aloe Vera. If you do not wish for your child to be treated with these items, please send a written note to the nurse including your child's name, the teacher's name, the date, and your signature.
4. NO other medications are supplied by the school.

NOTE: ASPIRIN OR PRODUCTS CONTAINING ASPIRIN CANNOT BE GIVEN OUT WITHOUT A DOCTOR'S PRESCRIPTION.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

If medical emergencies arise, the school nurse and school administrator will enact medical care deemed appropriate to the student (i.e. call 911 or transport the student to the hospital). In these cases, the schools will make every attempt to contact the parent/guardian. Please be sure to keep your student's emergency information updated with correct phone numbers. **If a parent/guardian is out of town and has left their child in the care of another adult, written documentation should be on file with the school. This documentation will authorize the school to contact the alternate person in case of illness or a medical emergency.**

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education is required by the state for all students unless the student has an excuse from a physician due to a physical disability. If a child must be excused for a temporary illness, a note from a parent or doctor must be sent with the child. Any illness extending more than a week must be excused by a doctor. Children must wear athletic shoes to participate in Physical Education.

HOMEBOUND

Students who experience extended illness or injuries that result in long term absence from school may apply for homebound instruction. Information concerning homebound may be obtained from our school psychologist.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

The safety and security of all students is of the utmost importance to our faculty and staff. Should a concern arise about a student being a danger to him/herself or others, District protocols for conducting a risk assessment (suicide and/or threat) will be followed to the extent appropriate. These assessments may include interviews with students and staff, a review of student records, and consultation with district mental health staff, local law enforcement, or other community agencies that help support our schools and students. If, as part of its assessment and response, the District determines there is an articulated and significant threat to the health or safety of a student or other individuals, it may disclose personally identifiable information from education records to any person whose knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

RESTRAINT

For the purposes of these guidelines, physical restraint is defined as a personal restriction that immobilizes or reduces the ability of an individual to move his or her arms, legs, or head freely. This definition encompasses



mechanical restraints, further defined as a device that restricts the movement or function of a child or a portion of a child's body.

Restraint, as defined by these guidelines, does not include the following:

1. temporarily holding an individual to help him or her participate in education or daily living activities;
2. escorting techniques, where a student is provided limited physical encouragement to help him or her move from one location to another without rising to the level of physically forcing compliance (e.g., hand on the back or a hand on the elbow);
3. chemical restraints (medication for safety or behavioral supports) determined by medical personnel;
4. appropriate use of adaptive equipment or products, provided they are used in accordance with manufacturers' recommended usage.
 - a. Adaptive equipment may include, but is not limited to, adaptive seating products or therapeutically prescribed devices such as weighted vests.
 - b. If adaptive equipment, such as Rifton chair or weighted vest is used for the purpose of limiting mobility or as a punitive measure, its use constitutes restraint.

The use of restraint is limited to emergency situations where the behavior of the student poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others and the student has the ability to cause such harm. Restraint may be used only as a last resort after proper positive behavioral interventions and de-escalation techniques have failed to de-escalate the risk of injury.

Restraint should never be used: 1. as punishment; 2. to force compliance or address non-compliance; 3. as a substitute for appropriate educational support; 4. in response to property destruction; 5. in response to a student's flight, escape, or running away, unless there is imminent risk of injury related to the escape; 6. in response to verbal threats and profanity that do not rise to the level of physical harm unless the student demonstrates a means of carrying out the threats; 7. longer than needed to resolve the risk of actual harm.

The use of prone restraints (face down on stomach) with the exception of approved Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) endorsed floor restraints, supine restraints (face up on the back), or any hold or maneuver that places pressure or weight on the student's chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, neck, or throat are strictly forbidden. Moreover, the degree of force used must not exceed what is necessary to protect the student or others from imminent bodily injury.

Necessary Documentation & Review: The use of restraint in the school setting triggers the district's obligation to create and maintain specific documentation regarding the incident. Documentation must include:

1. actions attempted prior to the restraint in an effort to manage or de-escalate the situation;
2. a clear description of the safety concerns posed to the student or others;
3. student's behavior before, during, and after restraint;
4. location of the restraint;
5. amount of time in restraint;
6. a description of the physical restraint techniques used and training personnel received prior to implementing restraint;
7. names and position titles of personnel involved with the incident;
8. date and time the administrator was notified;
9. date and time the parents were notified and by whom;
10. name and position of person(s) completing the documentation.

Training: Restraint training must be provided, and reviewed, at least annually, by a credentialed trainer through a nationally recognized, externally developed professional training program. The training must include the following components:

1. prevention of behavior problems through a positive behavioral supports climate;
2. conflict prevention and conflict management skills;
3. de-escalation skills that enable staff members to respond to students in ways more likely to calm, rather than escalate, the situation;
4. information on physical and emotional risks of escalation and restraint;
5. instruction on personal safety skills for staff who work with students who are more likely to present safety concerns;
6. prohibition on the use of prone restraints (face down on stomach) with the exception of approved Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) endorsed floor restraints, supine restraints (face up on the back), or any



hold or maneuver that places pressure or weight on the student's chest, lungs, sternum, diaphragm, back, neck, or throat.

The training program used must include some method of assessment that ensures appropriate skills are in place. The program must also provide documentation that a participant has successfully completed the training, either through a certificate or other credential. Fort Mill Schools must keep a list of those who have completed training, including a description of the content of the training, on file. The school district retains discretion as to which personnel should receive restraint training. However, training must be provided to enough staff members that the school district can ensure a sufficient number of staff is available if restraint is used.

REHABILITATIVE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

A mental health worker from Rehabilitative Behavioral Health Services sees children on-site that qualify for the services of that agency. Teachers or parents may refer children. Parent permission is required for service.

STUDENT POLICIES

STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

In order for students to have a positive school experience, an atmosphere of good behavior must be maintained. We expect our children to behave properly. While each child is responsible for his or her own behavior, we encourage parental support of the school rules.

River Trail Elementary follows a behavior matrix consisting of clearly defined expectations which are consistently and fairly enforced throughout the building. Individual and class incentives may be used to reward students who exhibit good behavior. Interventions such as verbal warnings, checklists, buddy room, mediation, taking away privileges, parent contact and/or conference, in school suspensions, and out of school suspensions may be used with students who do not follow the expectations.

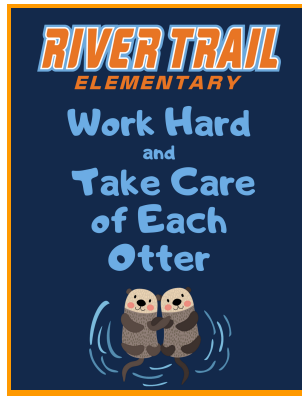
Students are to report problems with other students immediately and are expected not to retaliate. Any student participating in a disruption - regardless of who started the argument, fight, etc. - will be subject to consequences. Parents will be contacted regarding repeated or major problems.

In the event that a student is sent to the office for a discipline referral, a copy of that referral will be sent home for the parent/guardian to sign and return. Depending upon the nature of the problem, some possible consequences for inappropriate actions include parent conferences, denial of privileges, and in school or out of school suspension. Student actions that disrupt class work, involve substantial disorder, or invade the rights of others could be a basis for out of school suspension or expulsion. Examples of these student actions or major offenses are: theft, fighting, possession of weapons, damage to school property, assault of school personnel, defiance of school authority, profanity, etc.

Parents are asked to support the schools in their effort to maintain discipline and high standards of conduct. At the beginning of each school year teachers and administrators discuss with students behavior expectations, but parents are requested to discuss with children the importance and the need for good behavior and a positive attitude at school, too. Children must learn self-discipline in order to become effective learners and good citizens. With home-school cooperation, an environment in which all students are safe, secure, and able to learn can be created and maintained.

[Reactive Plan](#)





BULLYING

While every effort will be made to shape behavior through positive reinforcement, we must all keep in mind that every child should have the right to study, participate in class, and work in a safe environment. Name calling, intimidation, threats, and disrespectful attitudes toward classmates, volunteers, school staff members, or visitors is not acceptable. Bullying is intentional aggressive behavior. It can take the form of physical or verbal harassment and involves an imbalance of power. It is not acceptable for a child to draw, write, or make threatening statements online or in person. **Bullying is also an ongoing pattern of behavior, not a one-time occurrence.** This behavior will be addressed through disciplinary action at the discretion of the school administrator, as per [FMSD Board Policy JICFAA](#). Resources for addressing bullying behaviors are available from the school counselor.

Please be aware that School Board policy and South Carolina Code 59-24-60 require school officials to contact law enforcement officers when a student engages in any activity that *may or does result in injury or serious threat of injury to a person or property*.

DRESS CODE

In the interests of health, safety, cleanliness, decency, and decorum, students will follow these guidelines as identified in [FMSD Board Policy JICA-R](#)

Students will follow these guidelines during the traditional school day. School administration reserves the right to permit exceptions to the policy for school-sanctioned events. In the interests of health, safety, cleanliness, decency, and decorum, students will follow these guidelines.

Grades K through Five

Shoes must be worn at all times for safety reasons. Shoes with cleats may not be worn.

Logos or clothing that promotes alcohol, drugs, tobacco, racism, hate, gang affiliation, nudity, violence, or profanity is not allowed. No clothing or accessories are allowed to disrupt the educational process. The administration reserves the right to determine what is appropriate for school.

Students may wear shorts, dresses, skirts, etc. which are of appropriate length. Tops must be long enough that they can be tucked into pants or shorts. Basketball jerseys must be worn with an appropriate garment (i.e. tee shirt). No headwear (hats, caps, hoods, etc.) or sunglasses may be worn in the building.

The following items are considered inappropriate for school:

- flip flops
- tops with straps that are less than 3-fingers wide of the student
- pants or jeans with holes, tears, or tattered to the extent that skin or undergarments are visible above the mid-thigh
- visible undergarments

Violations will result in the following: First and subsequent offenses: phone call to parent/legal guardian.



STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES

River Trail Elementary recognizes the importance of being a well-rounded individual. In order to help students reach their potential, several opportunities await every child as he/she enters the doors of RTES.

Throughout our school, one will find many activities, clubs, and service organizations. Many groups have membership based on performance criteria, and others have open membership based on common interest or enjoyment. Whatever your choice, RTES can help meet your needs. *Activities vary from year to year based on student interest and the availability of teacher supervision.*

CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

Classroom Celebrations – Acceptable Food Guidelines:

Homemade or home baked foods are not allowed to be distributed to students within the classroom or applicable classroom setting. Acceptable foods for distribution are those items that were prepared in a commercial and/or licensed kitchen, and most importantly, are packaged with a label clearly listing the contents and ingredients of the food item. Please be mindful that if your child is in an allergy classroom, food brought in may not be allowed to go to the cafeteria and/or classroom depending upon the ingredient list. For example, if there is a peanut allergy in your child's classroom, the packaging must clearly state that it does not contain peanuts. With the continued rise in severe and often life-threatening food allergies, this policy is designed to provide consistency and minimize allergy risks in all classrooms district-wide, while maintaining a safe and positive learning environment for all students. If you wish to "play it safe" the best option is to refrain from sending in food and opt for pencils, erasers, stickers, etc... A safe option is to purchase a treat from our school cafeteria. You can do this in advance by contacting our cafeteria manager. It is important to note that the policy does not apply to a student's personal lunch.

OUTSIDE FOOD / DRINK

Outside food and drink will only be allowed through student lunchboxes or containers. No fast food or food service deliveries will be allowed for students. We appreciate you helping us minimize the amount of deliveries to classrooms with lunches. We understand that sometimes, parents need to deliver lunches for a variety of reasons. Lunches will need to be in a bag or lunch box to come into the building. We will turn away all food delivery services and/or food that is delivered by parents in a restaurant bag or container.

INVITATIONS

Parents/students cannot hand out invitations to out-of-school birthday parties or get-togethers unless every child in the class receives an invitation.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

School Counseling Services

The River Trail Elementary School Counseling program strives to prepare all students for academic, social/emotional, and career success by providing data-driven, comprehensive school counseling programming. School Counselors teach core curriculum to all students to support academic, social/emotional, and career development. They offer small group and short-term individual counseling services as needed to support student success in the school environment. School counselors do not provide long-term counseling or therapy and will refer parents to outside resources for ongoing issues or issues beyond the scope of school counseling (trauma, mental health, family dynamic, etc). Parents can refer students to the school counselor by reaching out to their child's school counselor via phone or email or in person by appointment. Students can also self-refer. Students may inform their teacher that they would like to see the school counselor in which case the teacher would put in a referral on behalf of the student. School counselors are available to consult and collaborate with teachers and parents to help



students achieve school success. They can provide information about community resources for families as well as recommendations for books or online resources upon request.

Parent Resources

The school counselor is available to consult and collaborate with parents and teachers to support student success. You may want to consult the counselor when you have concerns about your child's social/emotional well-being and behavior as these areas may impact school success. Please reach out via phone or email to your child's school counselor if you wish to discuss concerns or if you would like to learn more about the River Trail Elementary School Counseling Program. School counselors can sit in on parent-teacher conferences upon request when there are social/emotional or behavior concerns present.

CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

HOMEWORK SCHOOL POLICY

1. Homework will be reinforcement activities; no new skills or material will be introduced as part of homework.
2. Written homework will be such that it can be completed with a minimum of parental help.
3. Teachers will send home completed classwork/homework for parental review and support.
4. Homework assignments should be such that they can be completed within a reasonable length of time taking into consideration the age and ability level of the children
5. In addition, children are expected to read *daily* as part of their homework assignments.

HOMEWORK SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

1. Designate a homework spot and time and be available to assist if help is needed.
2. Encourage your child to write down assignments and check on a daily basis to see what homework is due.
3. When assistance is needed, talk your child through the problem or question until he/she can find the solution.
4. Help your child check his homework and discuss specific problem areas.
5. Be observant for signs of problems and if homework becomes too challenging, meet with your child's teacher.
6. Remember to help your child balance household responsibilities, play, and study.
7. Review the classwork that the teacher sends home.

AT HOME RESOURCES

Resources have been purchased with Student Activities money collected at registration. Students can utilize these resources at home and school. Contact your child's teacher for links and passwords.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

Every parent and teacher would like for students to move along successfully through each grade. Our goal is to take each child, evaluate their skills at the beginning of the year, and provide instruction to ensure academic growth throughout the year. Please examine student work that is returned for your review because it will help you to see how your child is progressing. Parent conferences in October will provide you with another opportunity to discuss your child's progress.

State law requires that the school send a letter at the end of the second quarter (usually January) and at the end of the 3rd quarter (usually in March or early April) to alert parents of the possibility of retention for a student. The final decision will be made in May, but the letters give parents a chance to work together with the teacher to make the progress needed to meet state standards for their grade. If you receive a retention letter, it does not mean that your child will be held back because we continue to hope that she/he will improve and be ready for the next grade. Retention can often be prevented by making sure the child completes and turns in all assignments, examining the possibility of health issues which may affect classroom performance, providing a routine time and place for the



child to study daily, reading daily with the student, and making sure children have enough sleep. If you are unsure of what your child needs to know to pass, you can visit the state website at <http://www.ed.sc.gov> and search for curriculum standards, or ask your child’s teacher or administrator for the information. Many things are taken into account in determining if a child is ready for the next grade: attendance, mastery of state standards, knowledge of the English language, age, physical size, intellectual ability, previous grade placement, behavior, maturity, level of achievement, motivation and disabilities are all considered. A Light’s Retention Scale is a normed assessment used by elementary schools in Fort Mill to assist with making this important decision. Review [FMSD Board Policy IKE-R](#) Promotion And Retention Of Students for additional information.

PROGRESS REPORTS AND CONFERENCES

Academic achievement will be graded using a numerical grading scale to denote respectively, excellent, good, average, poor, and failing. The numerical ranges for grades will be as follows:

90-100 =	80-89 =	70-79 =	60-69 =	59 or below =
A = Excellent	B = Good	C =Average	D =Poor	F =Failing

The letter S-satisfactory or N-needs improvement will be used to denote participation in certain related arts classes.

Schools in Fort Mill use a computer program called [PARENT PORTAL](#) to post grades. By logging on to this secure program, parents will be able to check the grades of their students in grades 2-5. Teachers will post grades within 2 weeks of the due date of the task. Kindergarten and first grade will be using a Standards Based Report Card.

If you would like to view the report card in its entirety please utilize the desktop version of Parent Portal. Report cards will ONLY be printed and issued to parents IF the parents/guardians request a paper copy. Otherwise, please access your child’s grades using Parent Portal. All K-5 grades will be issued report cards on a 9 weeks grading period as an indication of their progress and confirmation of their achievement and are expected to take them home to share with their parents. Schools in Fort Mill use a computer program called [PARENT PORTAL](#) to post grades. By logging on to this secure program, parents will be able to check the grades of their students in grades 2-5. Teachers will post grades within 2 weeks of the due date of the task. All users will need access to the student’s Powerschool number. If you are unable to locate your student’s Powerschool number, please contact Nicole Gaunt and she will be happy to assist.

A parent-teacher conference opportunity will be scheduled in October or early November. These conferences are an opportunity to learn about your child’s strengths and areas needing improvement. You need to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss your child’s progress. Teachers are also available to meet with you before or after school if you make an appointment. Additional conferences may be requested by families or school personnel.

STANDARDIZED TESTS

Standardized tests are administered in grades K through 5 as indicated below:

	K	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
KRA	X					
COGAT Ability Test			X			
STAR Reading & Math	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) Reading Assessments	X	X	X	X	X	X
State Achievement Test (SCReady & SCPASS)				X	X	X

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) | A readiness test given individually to kindergarten students within the first 45 days of school.

COGAT | An ability test usually administered in the fall of 2nd grade to select participants in the Gifted and Talented Math and English Language Arts for grades 3-5.

STAR Reading & Math | STAR Reading & Math is a standards-based computer-adaptive assessment that measures students' reading comprehension. These assessments are administered throughout the year and provide teachers formative data to guide instructional decisions in the classroom throughout the school year.

F&P Reading Assessments | The F&P Benchmark assessment (fall & spring, as well as throughout the year as needed) is used to determine student's independent and instructional reading levels. Teachers are able to observe student reading behaviors one-on-one, engage in comprehension conversations that go beyond retelling, and make informed decisions that connect assessment to instruction.

SC Ready (May) | The South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Assessments (SC READY) are statewide assessments in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. The SC READY Assessment items measure student performance on the 2015 South Carolina College-and Career-Ready Standards.

SCPASS (May) | The South Carolina Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (SCPASS) is a statewide assessment administered to students in grade four for science. SCPASS test items measure student performance on the South Carolina Academic Standards. SCPASS test items are written to assess the content knowledge and skills described in the academic standards and indicators.

*The staff and administration of River Trail Elementary want to caution all parents about putting too much emphasis on test results. These tests only measure a certain set of skills and a student's performance at a certain point in time. Because of this, we are continuously developing alternate ways of assessing student progress. These assessments offer a much more accurate picture of student performance and provide much greater information concerning needed instructional approaches.

Do not hesitate to contact us at River Trail if we can be of assistance. Let us know if you have any questions.
We look forward to a wonderful year together!



Fort Mill Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following persons has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Non-discrimination Inquiries (Students and Families):

Grey Young, Executive Director of Student Services
Fort Mill Schools
2233 Deerfield Drive
Fort Mill, SC 29715
(803) 548-8421

Non-discrimination Inquires (Employees):

Liza McGarity, Executive Director of Human Resources
Fort Mill Schools
2233 Deerfield Drive
Fort Mill, SC 29715
(803) 548-8381

Non-discrimination Inquiries (Students and Families - Disabilities Inquiries)

Dr. Amy Maziarz, Executive Director of Special Services
Fort Mill Schools
2233 Deerfield Drive
Fort Mill, SC 29715
(803) 548-8038

Additional information regarding non-discrimination policies may be obtained from:

Washington DC (Metro)
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-1475
Telephone: 202-453-6020
FAX: 202-453-6021; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email:OCR.DC@ed.gov

