

# Locust Grove Primary School



# Handbook for Students & Families

2023-2024 School Year

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*This handbook is intended to guide our school based on current data and guidelines. As information is available and/or guidelines change this handbook is subject to change. You may find the most up to date handbook on our school's website.*

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Locust Grove Primary School is to create and sustain a safe and caring environment for all students in which they will be provided the highest quality education. We will provide meaningful and creative instruction that meets the individual needs of students; and emphasizes the social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of each child.

Our students will be lifelong learners who demonstrate good character and productive citizenship.

## **Cardinal Way: Doing My Best Everyday**

**Be Safe**

**Be Respectful**

**Be Responsible**

## **Visitors and Volunteers**

Visitors are welcome in our schools. Everyone, including parents/guardians and volunteers, should report to the school office first to help ensure the safety of students. Parents/Guardians are especially encouraged to come to join the PTA meeting. All visitors should be prepared to show a photo ID. All volunteers and field trip chaperones must have a background check on file.

Everyone who visits our school is required to check in at the office on our computer and wear a visitor's badge.

- When you need to get or give information from/to the teachers, please leave a message and number on their voicemail.
- Teachers will not be called out of class to talk with parents during the instructional day (8:50 – 3:43). Leave a voicemail requesting a conference if you feel you need to talk with your child's teacher.

## **Food Safety**

The Orange County Public Schools policy on food allows only food that is commercially prepared to be brought into school. This would include prepackaged foods and foods which are purchased at a licensed bakery. No ice or water-based products (tea, Kool-Aid, etc.) or homemade items may be brought in from home.

Exception: A student may bring food prepared at home for his/her personal consumption. Due to food allergies, no student should share any food whether purchased or prepared at home.

## Field Trips

Classes may go on up to two educational field trips per year. It will be left to the teachers' and principals' discretion as to whether approved volunteers are needed for the trips. Students who elect to miss a field trip are expected to attend school, and appropriate work will be provided. Parents MUST sign and return permission slips sent home by the teacher indicating approval for his/her child to participate in the field trip away from school. No permission will be accepted by phone for your child (ren) to participate.

## LEARNING

### Structure of the Day

- Language Arts (150 min)
- Math (75 min - 15 min Calendar 60 min Math)
  - Math starts with calendar/number talks
- Connect (45 min) - Art, Physical Education, Music, Library, Tech
- Lunch & Recess

### Grading

- Report Cards will be issued every 9 weeks.
- Primary (Kindergarten –2) and Connect Grades
- Interim reports will be issued approximately every 4.5 weeks.
- Primary Grading Scale:

E = Excellent

S = Satisfactory

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory

### Homework

Time needed to complete homework may vary from student to student. The general recommendation is 10-20 minutes per night for first grade and an additional 10 minutes per night for each additional grade level (excluding reading time). Additional time may be needed for advanced courses at the high school. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers for any concerns related to homework.

Kindergarten – 2nd Grade: Teachers may help students get homework completed at school when it is not being completed at home. Concerns related to homework should be addressed in the Comment section of Social Skills on the interim/report card.

## BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

### Philosophy:

At LGPS, we believe that students have the right to a learning environment that is safe and free from disruptions. In order to achieve this, we believe that all students must be:

- 1) Safe
- 2) Respectful
- 3) Responsible

These three simple rules encompass all that we expect to see from our students: being kind, walking in the hallways, using inside voices, taking ownership of mistakes, and repairing relationships that are strained. We expect that our students will make mistakes, but in those times we must have a productive dialogue of the effects of those mistakes and how to correct them for future success. If expectations for student behavior have not been met, consequences may be deemed appropriate. When this is necessary, we ask for your cooperation and support.



### The LGPS Cardinal Way - Doing My Best Every Day!

	Classroom	Bus	Hallway	Cafeteria	Bathroom	School Grounds	All Settings
<b>Be Safe</b>	Use materials the right way Perform safety drills quietly	Face forward and sit in seat Listen to driver and use quiet voices	<i>Use walking feet anywhere you go inside</i> Stay in your spot in line	Stay in your seat Only eat your food	Use toilets and sinks the right way. Report any problems	Use equipment the right way Watching eyes (be aware of your surroundings)	Hands, feet, and belongings to self
<b>Be Respectful</b>	Listen to others Use kind words and actions	Use kind words and actions Hands to self	Hands by your side Give personal space	Use your manners Pick up after yourself	Keep it clean (trash in trashcan, flush, keep soap and water in sink) Respect privacy	Take turns and share Admire nature	Use kind and polite language Treat others as you want to be treated
<b>Be Responsible</b>	Be on task Have supplies ready and organized	Go straight to seat Know your stop and bus	Silent Eyes forward	One time through the line Know your lunch choice and number	Flush, wash, return to class Wait your turn	Have your jacket/materials Respond to the whistle	Respond to quiet signal Be where you are supposed to be
<b>School Staff</b>	Have clear and high expectations	Stay until your students are loaded on the bus	Monitor hallway behavior	Line students by choice	Monitor number of students	Spread out during recess	Actively monitoring

Outlined below are important portions of the Orange County Public Schools Policy Manual and LGPS School Practice as it pertains to:

### **Dress Code**

In order to ensure that our students' education is conducted in an environment where safety risks, disruptions, and distractions are minimized, all students will adhere to the standards set forth in the Orange County School Board Policies JFCAA and JFCAA-R, Student Dress Code. These policies may be found online in the OCPS Policy Manual. [OCPS Policy Manual](#).

- Please wear clothing suitable for school activities.
- Dress students in accordance with weather conditions.
- Wear shoes appropriate for school activities.
- Labeling clothing will aid with lost and found items.

### **Cell phones and wearable electronic devices**

1. **Cell phones are to be off and out of sight throughout the day.** Students may possess a cellular telephone on school property, provided that the device is turned off and stored in the student's locker or backpack while at school. Taking pictures or videos of students or teachers is prohibited.
2. Students who need to call a parent must ask the teacher for permission to go to the office to make the call.
3. While in the school building, students may not use earbuds, earphones, etc. unless it is part of a class expectation or they have gotten prior approval from an administrator.
4. If a student is found using a cell phone during school hours, it may be taken and held until the end of the class. If it happens again, the cell phone may be held until the end of the day. Parents will be notified and a minor incident report will be completed by the teacher. Confiscated cell phones will be returned to the student at the end of the class or day, depending on the number of violations.
5. Continuous violation of this rule may result in an office referral for violating the code of conduct and consequences will be assigned.
6. LGPS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged cell phones brought to school or on the bus.

### **Graffiti and/or damaging school property**

It is not acceptable to vandalize property that belongs to OCPS, staff, or students. Students causing damage to property belonging to OCPS or other individuals will be **responsible for the cost** of repairing or replacing the damaged property. These students will also be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct **and will face discipline**, as deemed appropriate by the school administration.

Permanent markers, paint, and nail polish are not allowed in school. If these items are required for class projects, teachers will provide them.

## Harassment, Bullying, and Language:

**Bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at LGPS.** Adults in the building have been trained on how to respond to bullying. If a student sees or hears someone being bullied or harassed, he/she needs to report it to an adult immediately. Bullying will be addressed when it is reported to the staff at LGPS. To aid in combating cyberbullying, parents and students should engage in regular conversations and monitoring regarding online etiquette and the consequences for inappropriate postings and messaging on mobile devices. For this reason, personal devices are not allowed to be used at Locust Grove Primary School.

Students should always use appropriate language with adults and students everywhere in the building and on school grounds, including the bus and bus stop. Students must **not** use profanity, hurtful or unkind words, derogatory words or phrases.

Locust Grove Primary School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, political affiliation, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, disability, or any other characteristics protected by law in its employment practices or educational program and activities. **Students must be aware that they are bound by these same laws.**

## Buses

**It is a privilege to ride the school bus** and ALL school rules apply to school bus transportation. The bus AND the bus stop are still within the jurisdiction of the school. The same behaviors and discipline guidelines apply to school transportation. Students should be reminded that they may be suspended from the bus or have their bus privileges revoked for violations of the regulations for student transportation.

### Bus expectations

#### Be Safe

- Face forward and sit in seat
- Listen to driver and use quiet voices

#### Be Respectful

- Use kind words and actions
- Hands to self

#### Be Responsible

- Go straight to seat
- Know your stop and bus

### School Staff

- Stay until your students are loaded on the bus

### The following are violations of the Orange County Standards of Student Conduct JFC-R and are not acceptable at Locust Grove Primary School:

- |                         |                           |  |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| • Alcohol Violation     | • Electronic Devices      | • Theft  |
| • Assault               | • Fighting                | • Threatening Behavior                             |
| • Attendance            | • Gambling                | • Vandalism of School Property, including bus      |
| • Bullying              | • Gang Activity           | • Weapons  |
| • Bus Related Offenses  | • Harassing               | • Misuse of technology equipment                   |
| • Cheating              | • Horseplay               | • Other Actions as determined by an administrator. |
| • Classroom Disruption  | • Laser Pointers          |  |
| • Defiance              | • Patterns of Misbehavior |  |
| • Drug Violation        | • Profanity               |  |
| • Electronic Cigarettes | • Skipping Class:         |  |

### Dangerous Behaviors

Dangerous behaviors are unacceptable and will result in out-of-school suspension. These offenses may also result in action by local law enforcement agencies and the School Board. Examples include:

- Possession of weapons (or knowledge of someone possessing a weapon)
- Destroying the school's or other's property
- Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs
- Threatening notes, calls or social media posts

Students who have knowledge of someone involved in these types of situations must report it to an adult at school immediately.

## ATTENDANCE

As required by law, each parent/guardian is responsible for regular and punctual attendance of any child in his or her charge within the compulsory age for school attendance. The faculty and staff at Locust Grove Primary School expect students to be in school every day, ready to learn. We understand that sometimes absences are necessary. In those instances, students must make up any missed assignments during the absence or upon return to school. If your child is absent, please contact the school so that we can correctly code the absence.

## **LGPS Quick Attendance Reference List**

Report all absences to the classroom teacher or front office, by emailing your child's teacher or calling the front office at 540-661-4420. When students are absent, parents must provide a valid note, send an email, or call the school and state the reason for the absence. Parents have five days to notify the school of the reason for the absence.

Families should be aware that students who miss 18 days of school (10% of the school year) are identified as being "chronically absent" from school, this is regardless of the cause of the absence. Research shows that regular school attendance is highly correlated to later success in adulthood.

### **Excused Absences**

The parent/guardian has communicated, with supporting documentation if required, to school officials the reason for their child's absence and school officials consider the reason valid.

Excused absences include but are not limited to: student illness, death or serious illness of a family member, doctor, dentist or therapist appointments, subpoenas for court, and religious observances. A student is allowed up to 10 days of parent/guardian "excused absence" notes; these may be used for student sickness that is not severe enough to require a doctor's visit or for family travel. After 10 days, absences will be listed as unexcused unless other documentation is provided.

### **Unexcused Absences**

If the parent has not communicated to school officials the reason for their child's absence, or if school officials consider the reason invalid, the absence will be recorded as 'Unverified' in Powerschool. Unverified absences count as unexcused absences.

Unexcused absences include the following: missed school buses, oversleeping, recreational activities, child care issues, transportation issues, and a variety of other issues. Absences caused by the bus not operating for the day will be listed as Principal Excused Absences.

- When a child accrues 5 Unexcused Absences, we will issue a letter requesting an attendance meeting. At the meeting, the team will develop an attendance plan.
- Subsequent unexcused absences after the attendance plan is developed will result in notification and documentation that the attendance plan has been violated.
- Further absences may result in a referral to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court for truancy.



### **Tardies to School:**

A tardy is defined as the student not being in his/her designated area (homeroom) when attendance is taken or the last tardy bell rings in the morning. Excessive tardies will result in an attendance plan.

### **Early Dismissals:**

Students are expected to be in school for the full day unless illness, medical/dental appointment, or an emergency that makes it necessary to leave. If early dismissals become excessive, LGPS will schedule an attendance meeting to develop a plan for the future.

### **Attendance Awards**

Attendance recognition will be given at the beginning of each month for perfect attendance for the preceding month. Perfect attendance does not allow for late arrivals, early dismissals or time spent in ISS or OSS.

## **School Counseling Services**

School counseling services are available to students in all Orange County Public Schools. Through these services, students are encouraged to make decisions that will lead to effective functioning in school and society. The services include the following: Academic/Educational Counseling, Career Counseling, and Personal/Social Counseling.

The LGPS school counselors are:

- **Mrs. Stephanie Beard: Grades K-1**
- **Mrs. Candace Jackson: Grade 2**

If a parent or guardian does not wish for his or her son or daughter to participate in any of the counseling services available please contact your school counselor.

### **Medications**

Because of the dangers of misuse of medications, the administration of medications is only allowed by our school nurse. Medications will be administered according to the written order(s) of a physician or licensed nurse practitioner. This order must contain the name of the medication, the dosage to be administered, the times to be administered and the duration of the order. No herbal products will be administered at school, unless requested by a physician. No medications will be administered above the suggested dosage guidelines. Children with inhalers need a completed medication order. *If a student is to carry the inhalers with him/her, it should state so on the form.* Students may take medications at school only under the supervision of the school nurse or main office personnel. **Students should not be in possession of any over the counter or prescription medication while at**

**school.** Any medication (prescription or non-prescription) must be brought to school by an adult and delivered directly to the school nurse. Students cannot transport medications to and from school.

Students may not give any medication to another student, even cough drops. This can be dangerous and can be a serious violation of the law. A medical form will be given to your child to bring home the first day of school, along with the other forms and information.

Again, please follow these simple safety rules below:

- Medications must be brought to the nurse's office by the parent or guardian;
- They must be accompanied by specific written directions;
- They must be in the original labeled container;
- They must be kept in the locked medicine drawer/cabinet in the nurse's office; and
- They must be dispensed by school personnel.

### **Bus Changes/Notes**

- Students must ride the bus that they are assigned to by the OCPS Transportation Department.
- Requests to ride a different bus will only be allowed if there is space on the desired bus and the student brings a parent/guardian note to the office at the start of the day. The note must include the parent's name/signature, parent's phone number, the student's first/last name, and information about what changes are desired. If approved, the students will be given a bus pass at the end of the day. Bus passes are only valid on the day issued unless otherwise specified on the note. If the change can not be accommodated, staff will contact the writer of the note.
- We realize that from time to time, situations arise that require changes in a student's regular transportation plans. If an *emergency* transportation change is needed, please call the school office by 3:00 pm. This will allow time for our staff to verify that the change is possible and notify the student before dismissal.

### **Emergency Information**

Please ensure that parent/guardian contacts, and emergency contacts, are kept up to date as there are instances where emergencies occur at school and we must reach you.

Student information can be updated on the PowerSchool Parent Portal:

- <https://ps.ocss-va.org/public/home.html>

### **Arrival to School**

- **By bus** - Students will enter through the door identified for all bus riders. Buses begin unloading at 8:50 am.

- **By car** - Students will enter the car rider doors and report to their homeroom. Arrival time is from 8:50 a.m. The bell rings at 9:05 am. Students that arrive after 9:05 are considered tardy and must check into the front office to receive a pass to class.

### **Afternoon Dismissal**

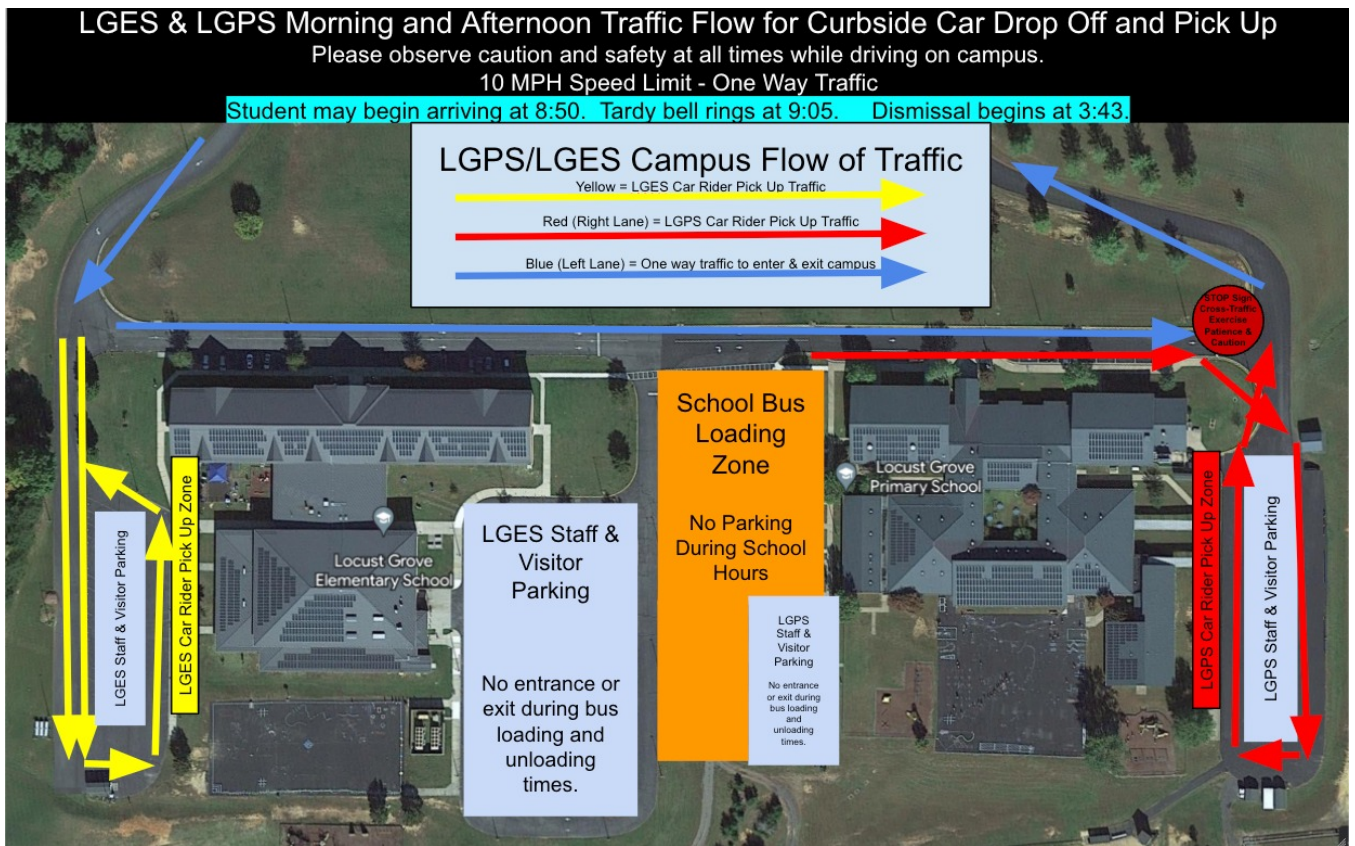
- Students will be led by teachers & staff to:
  - the buses loading area, or
  - to areas designated for car riders to wait until their parents arrive

### **Traffic Flow: Car Riders**

Morning -- Parents are asked to follow the established traffic for dropping off your student. Please pull your car up as far forward as possible before discharging students in the mornings. AM drop off will occur for all student on the side car drop off location. Students will not be received into the building in the front of the school without an appointment.

Afternoon -- Display the student name tag given by the school in the front windshield until your child is in the vehicle. Do not drive or park in the Bus Lot (pavement between LGPS & LGES). Share this information with grandparents and others who will pick up your child.

Please remain in your vehicle as you wait for your child (ren). In order to pick up your children, you must display your Car Rider sign in your window. A window sign will be provided for you at the beginning of the school year. If you need an additional one, please request that from your child's teacher. Car riders are dismissed from the car rider parking lot ONLY.



### Breakfast

- Free breakfast is offered to all students
- Upon arrival students may visit the cafeteria to pick up breakfast on the way to homeroom
- Breakfast will be eaten in the homeroom classroom

### Lunch

- Free lunch is offered to all students
- Visitors are not allowed during lunch
- Teachers may assign students to specific tables during the 25 minute lunch period

### Emergency Drills

Locust Grove Primary School has a detailed plan for emergency situations. Our staff is trained on how to handle emergency situations. Fire drills, lockdown drills, tornado drills, and earthquake drills will take place from time to time, so students and staff can practice what to do in the event of a real emergency.