

MARY FORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Parent/Student Handbook

MIFES

**Mary Ford
Elementary
School**

2180 Thomasina McPherson Boulevard

North Charleston, SC 29405

Phone: 843-745-2160

Fax: 843-529-3927

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3180 Thomasina McPherson Blvd.

North Charleston, SC 29405

<https://maryford.ccsdschools.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/MaryFordElementary>

Important Numbers

Main Office.....843-745-2160 Cafeteria.....843-745-2169

Fax.....843-529-3927 Nurse.....843-745-2365

Durham School Bus.....843-745-7084

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new year at Mary Ford Elementary. Thank you for the opportunity to work with your family and educate your child(ren). It truly is an honor I cherish.

It is the goal of all of us at Mary Ford to make sure this is the best year yet for our students. In order to accomplish this goal, both home and school must work as partners. This handbook is written to inform our families of the policies and procedures intended to ensure a positive, safe, and productive school year.

We hope to see you at our PTO meetings and other school events. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have questions or need support. Please remember that Mary Ford Elementary is your school. Working together we can insure student success. We look forward to a terrific school year with your family.

Melesia Walden
Interim Principal

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook serves as a quick reference for general information and procedures at Mary Ford Elementary School.

In addition to the guidelines in this handbook, your child's teacher will provide specific classroom/grade level and schoolwide positive behavior expectations.

Our handbook is designed to work in conjunction with the Charleston County District Code of Conduct and the Charleston County School Board Policies, which can be found at www.ccsdschools.org.

SCHOOL DAY SCHEDULE

7:00 AM	Students May Enter the Building
7:25 AM	School Day Begins
2:25 PM	Walkers and Car Riders
2:30 PM	Bus Riders and Afterschool Dismissed

Morning:

Please arrive between 7:00 AM and 7:25 AM in order to eat breakfast, which will be in the cafeteria this year. Car riders will enter the building in the gym area and will walk directly to the cafeteria. Bus riders will enter the cafeteria through the outside door to the cafeteria.

There is no supervision before 7:00 AM so please do not drop students off to wait outside.

Afternoon:

Car riders will be dismissed at 2:25 PM. Students not picked up by 2:55PM will BE REQUIRED TO PAY A FEE of \$15 per hour (with a 1 hour minimum fee). All fees must be paid directly to Mary Ford Elementary when you arrive to pick up your child. If students are consistently picked up after that time, parents may be referred to outside agencies in order to get help in picking up students on time. There is no supervision for these students after school because of employee work hours and meetings. We encourage you to sign your child up for afterschool early if you know that this may be an issue because of work.

- CAR-RIDER TAGS MUST BE DISPLAYED ON THE DASH OF THE CAR OR THE PERSON PICKING UP THE STUDENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO COME IN AND SIGN THE STUDENT OUT FROM THE OFFICE. ID'S WILL BE REQUIRED. THESE WILL BE GIVEN OUT AS YOU COME IN AND REGISTER FOR THE YEAR.**

ATTENDANCE

2016-2017 Goal: 97% student and staff attendance rate.

- Students need to attend school every day and arrive before 7:25 AM.

Absences

- **All absences require a note from the parent/guardian, doctor or dentist WITHIN THREE SCHOOL DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE ABSENCE explaining the absence.**
- The note **must** contain the following information: **PARENT'S FULL NAME, PHONE NUMBER, DATE(S) OF ABSENCE(S), and the REASON FOR THE ABSENCE and SIGNATURE.** This request is a requirement of South Carolina state law.
- **Without the note, the absence is unexcused.**
- **Irregular attendance/tardiness WILL result in a referral to the CCSD truant officer, the appropriate outside child protection agency and/or possible retention.** It is very important that **ALL** students be in attendance regularly so that learning may occur.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Arrivals

- **Students who are eating breakfast should arrive between 7:00AM and 7:25AM.**
- Students should not arrive before 7:00AM.
- **IF A STUDENT ARRIVES AFTER 7:30 AM THE PARENT MUST WALK THE STUDENT IN THE BUILDING AND SIGN THE STUDENT IN SCHOOL.** A note is required for a tardy to be excused.

Dismissals

- **At 2:15 PM our staff members begin dismissal procedures and because of this, students will not be released from class after 2:15 PM for early dismissal.**
- Please schedule medical appointments for your child after school hours, if possible.
- All students being released early must be signed out in the front office
- Remind your child(ren) that **phone calls home will not be allowed in order to make an after-school arrangement to visit a friend.** Notify the office in advance with your written permission, if any such arrangement of this nature is necessary for your child. **WRITTEN PERMISSION IS REQUIRED FROM PARENTS OF BOTH FAMILIES.** The office will call and verify the arrangement. This is for the safety of our students.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

- **All students in grades 1-5 will eat breakfast & lunch in the cafeteria, except those times students receive bag lunches for special event days. Students should report to the cafeteria when arriving at school. CD has breakfast and lunch in their rooms. Kindergarten will have breakfast in their rooms for the first semester and then will begin breakfast in the cafeteria in preparation for moving up to first grade.**
- **Students entering the cafeteria at breakfast and lunch are to eat quietly and follow the school expectations and the directions of the adults on duty.**
- **Students who bring their lunches will not have access to refrigerators or microwave ovens. In order to help with energy conservation in our district, refrigerators or microwaves in the classrooms will no longer be available.**

CHARACTER EDUCATION and PBIS FOCUS

Respect, responsibility, anger-management, empathy, honesty, politeness, self-discipline, perseverance, kindness and communication are some of the social skills and character traits taught and emphasized at Mary Ford Elementary School. We ask that all students adhere to our school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) discipline model: **“Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be in Control of my Actions, Words, and Body”**.

CONFERENCES

Open communication is encouraged for your child’s academic success. If you need to talk to your child’s teacher, please send an e-mail directly to the teacher or leave a message in the office **and/or** leave a message in the teacher’s individual phone mailbox.

- **DROP-IN CONFERENCES OR CONFERENCES WHEN TEACHERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.**

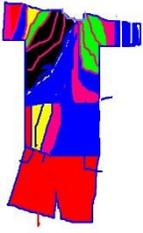
DISCIPLINE

The faculty, staff, and administrators believe that every child is important and **has the right to learn in an environment which is comfortable and safe.**

Specific classroom expectations, routines, and procedures will be discussed with students and sent home to parents within the first few days of school.

We will follow the CCSD Code of Conduct. A copy of this will be sent home with the students, discussed in a parent meeting, and reviewed throughout the year. This behavior system will be followed exactly as written.

- **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO STOP THE LEARNING PROCESS FOR OTHERS.** As parents, you will be asked to be involved in the discipline process if your child is one who continuously disrupts the education of others or who refuses to follow the expectations of the school.
- **CONTINUOUS REFUSAL BY THE STUDENTS TO FOLLOW THE EXPECTATIONS ESTABLISHED BY THE SCHOOL MAY RESULT IN THE STUDENT BEING SENT TO AN ALTERNATE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT.** This will be done after interventions at the school have been tried without improvement in the behaviors.
- **Students who destroy school property will have to pay for the materials destroyed and if items are ripped or torn from the walls of the building by the student, the parent will be required to help the student redo the display.**



DRESS: UNIFORM REQUIRED

SHIRT/PANTS

- Solid color oxford or polo style, short or long sleeve – Navy, Burgundy, light blue, yellow, pink, red, green.
- Khaki or Navy pants, long shorts, jumpers, or skirts – If there are belt loops, a belt **MUST** be worn.
- Halter tops and tops with spaghetti straps are not allowed.
- No hats or bandanas in the building (special days are an exception).
- Wearing **ANY** attire, including jewelry, hair styles, make-up, or hair color, which may cause a disruption in learning or which may become a safety issue is not permitted.

SHOES

- Students must wear closed-toe athletic (tennis) shoes on PE days.
- Sandals are permitted on non-PE days, but must have a heel-strap.
- **NO flip flops.** This is for the safety of the students.
- Leather shoe or tennis shoes and white, navy or black socks.

ITEMS FROM HOME

- Students may not bring toys, footballs, basketballs, electronic games, radios, trading cards, action figures, or other items from home, unless they have specific permission from their teacher to show and tell or another activity. This will be sent to you in writing by the teacher. Please do not take word-of-mouth for permission. Items brought to school may be taken and held for you to come in and pick up.

DRESS CODE

- If the dress code is not followed, parents/guardians will be called to bring in the appropriate attire. Students will not be allowed to go to class until they are in uniform.

Lost and found will be located in the storage area beside the stage. Unclaimed items are donated each nine weeks. Please label your child's clothing.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In case of an emergency it is **MANDATORY** for the school staff to have your current emergency contact information at all times. **If by some chance your child is ill or hurt and we cannot get in touch with you, we may have to send our resource officer or another representative to your home or work to ask you to come pick up your child. This will only be done when all avenues of reaching you have been tried.**

- **If the school calls, please do not ignore. We will not call unless there is a concern with your child that needs to be addressed.**

If the information on your child's card changes during the school year, please notify the school immediately.

- **When naming alternate contacts to call in case of an emergency, please make sure that the person knows you have given the school their name. Also please make sure that the person is someone who is willing to come to the school and/or act on your behalf until a parent/guardian can be located.**

FIELD TRIPS

When a field trip is to be taken, your child will bring home a permission form giving the destination, date and means of transportation for the trip. This form **must** be signed and returned to the teacher **before** your child will be allowed to go on the trip.

GUIDANCE

The purpose of our Guidance Program is to help each individual student develop mentally, emotionally and socially. Ms. McCoy, our guidance counselor is available to provide the following services:

- ❖ Counseling, individually and in groups.
- ❖ Tardy and Absence Intervention.
- ❖ Classroom guidance lessons.

HALLS

- Students should be in the halls only at the beginning and end of school and while moving from one class to another **unless** they have special permission or special duties that require them to be there.
- **Students in the halls during class time must have a pass.**
- **Walking and whisper voices or silence in the halls are required, as well as hands and feet by our side.**
- **Students deliberately destroying the displays in the hallways will be asked to replace the items by paying for the replacement and by either the student or the parent replacing the work.**



HEALTH SERVICES

Clinic and Medication Procedures

- **Parents should keep a child at home if s/he is throwing up, has a fever, or acts sick or if s/he has had these symptoms within the previous 24 hours.**
- If a child becomes sick at school, a parent will be contacted and will be responsible for taking the child home.
- When a child has a fever, throws up, has diarrhea or other severe sickness, please keep the student home for 24 hours after the last episode.

It is extremely important that phone numbers on emergency cards and information cards be kept current.

First Aid

The school makes every effort to provide a safe environment for your child. If a minor accident occurs, a member of the staff or the school nurse will render first aid. In case of an accident or illness, or if there is any doubt about the seriousness of the injury, parents will be notified immediately. If needed, the student will be taken directly to the hospital accompanied by a staff member using the appropriate mode of transportation. **Any treatment beyond first aid must be the responsibility of the parent.**

Immunizations

All shots **MUST** be recorded on the proper DHEC form and will be maintained in your child's permanent record. The school is audited yearly on this information. Please bear with us as we attempt to meet DHEC's regulations. The school nurse or guidance counselor can answer your questions about the required immunizations.

MEDICATION

If it becomes necessary for a student to take prescribed medication at school, CCSD forms and/or a signed note from a doctor must be presented to the school nurse. **We will not dispense prescription or non-prescription medication without proper permission and documentation.** You will receive additional information from our school nurse. Prescription medication is to be kept in its original container. All medication will be kept in and dispensed through the nurse's office. The adults dispensing the medication will keep a record of the medication and the dosage. All medication is kept in locked drawers.

HOMEWORK

Students will be assigned homework based on Charleston County School District's recommendations. This does not mean that students must have this amount of homework each night. It is a recommendation only. The recommendation is:

- Kindergarten 10 minutes
- Grades 1-2 20 minutes
- Grade 3 30 minutes
- Grades 4-5 45 minutes

INTERIM REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS

Student report cards are sent home quarterly. Interim reports are sent home midway through each 9-week grading period. Please sign and have your child return the report the following school day. If your child is not making satisfactory progress, your child's teacher will request a conference to make plans on the best way to help your child.

PARENT VISITATIONS

Parents are welcome at Mary Ford Elementary and encouraged to visit classes, but please remember that student learning and safety are our top priorities. Please remember to stop at the front desk, sign in and receive a "VISITOR" pass, which will indicate your destination. Please refrain from looking in other classes or discussing other students you may know with the teacher. Also, please do not discipline other students or make comments to other students.

PARENTS AND TEACHERS: PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Your child's attitude mirrors yours. Therefore, you can help him/her develop good attitudes by showing confidence in the teacher and your school. If you are upset over a situation at school, please schedule an appointment with the teacher or principal. Please DO NOT criticize the school or a teacher in front of your child or in public places. Whatever the problem, we can work together to get it settled.

PETS AND ANIMALS

When animals are a related part of the program and approved by the school, they may be brought to school by approved program and taken home that same day after the lesson. These animals are usually therapy animals with a specific purpose.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Whenever it appears that a student will benefit from another year at the same grade, the teacher will inform parents of the student's specific academic needs. Promotion and retention will be based on Charleston County School District policy.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (P.T.O.)

We encourage you to become a member of our P.T.O. There is no cost to you. We just want your attendance and ideas. Becoming involved in the PTO provides an opportunity to contribute suggestions for the improvement of your child's school. Reminders of the times/dates of each meeting will be sent home through newsletters, phone call reminders, calendars or notices.

SCHEDULE CHANGES/WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Parents should make **advance preparations** for children in the event of inclement weather schedule changes. We encourage you to listen to local radio and television stations for decisions about school closings, delayed openings or early dismissals.
- **PLEASE AVOID CALLING THE SCHOOL FOR THIS INFORMATION. THE CCSD WEBSITE IS A WONDERFUL TOOL FOR THIS. THE SCHOOL OR DISTRICT WILL ORDER A CALL-OUT TO ALL PARENTS AND GUARDIANS IF THE SUPERINTENDENT DECIDES TO CLOSE SCHOOL, DELAY THE OPENING OF SCHOOL OR ISSUES AN EARLY DISMISSAL.**
- **WE WILL ALWAYS MAKE A CALL-OUT WITH ANY CHANGES ON SCHOOL MESSENGER. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR NUMBERS ARE UP-TO-DATE.**

SCHOOL GROUNDS

The school district and our staff have made, and will continue to make, improvements in the appearance of Mary Ford Elementary. Please help us in this effort by not throwing trash on the ground.

- **MARY FORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND GROUNDS ARE SMOKE FREE/TOBACCO FREE ZONES. NO SMOKING OR USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS IS ALLOWED.**

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

The School Improvement Council (SIC) works closely with the faculty and administration to develop and implement the Strategic Renewal Plan for the school. The SIC meets the second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM at Mary Ford Elementary.

STUDENT WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Parents withdrawing their child/ren from Mary Ford Elementary are asked to inform the school of the withdrawal and complete a **NOTICE OF TRANSFER FORM** from the office. The attendance clerk will assist you in fulfilling this requirement. This form has extremely important information for the new school, which will facilitate proper placement. Upon withdrawing from Mary Ford Elementary, the child should return all textbooks, library books, and pay all outstanding fees.

TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks and some workbooks are issued without charge to students for their use during the school year. Students who lose or damage textbooks and/or library books **will be charged a replacement or repair fee.** You will receive a receipt for your payment. Textbooks will be sent home **at appropriate times** for completing a specific assignment. Student report cards will be held at the end of the year for any fees owed for lost or damaged books.

TESTING PROGRAM

Standardized testing will take place according to the South Carolina Department of Education regulations. Additional tests may be given and additional grades may be tested. We will give you further details as the information is received from the district's Office of Student Assessment.

THREATS, BULLYING, INTIMIDATION

- **STUDENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO THREATEN STAFF MEMBERS OR CLASSMATES. THREATENING STATEMENTS WITH LANGUAGE SUCH AS "KILL" ARE UNACCEPTABLE AND MAY RESULT IN REFERRAL TO THE OFFICE OF STUDENT PLACEMENT WITH POSSIBLE PLACEMENT IN AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM.**

TITLE IX-SEX DISCRIMINATION AND TITLE VII-CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

At all times and under all circumstances, students at Mary Ford Elementary School will receive equal and fair treatment from every member of the staff regardless of sex, race, nationality, or religion.

TRANSPORTATION

To ensure the safety of all students, changes in student transportation must be provided in **A WRITTEN, SIGNED NOTE from the parent** to the office prior to 2:10 each day. **NO PHONE CALLS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION, except in extreme emergencies.**

Emails, faxes and phone calls will not be accepted. We cannot verify the person sending the information.

BUSES

- Students must follow the rules on the bus, just as they are expected to in the school building.
- Drivers may stop the bus at any time if misbehavior or threatened misbehavior becomes a hazard to safe driving. Students who create a disturbance will be reported to the school principal and appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken. Bus drivers must be certain that their passengers understand and observe all safety rules. These rules can be found in the Code of Conduct, which is sent home the first day and signed by the parent. Parents are asked to reinforce the importance of bus safety at home.
- **Students cannot ride a bus to which they are not assigned without a note from the parent/guardian, which must be signed by the principal or his designee. The note must be presented for a signature before 2:10 and it must be given to the driver upon stepping on the bus.**

CARPOOL

- Car riders may be dropped off in the carpool land between 7:00 AM and 7:25 AM.
- **After 7:25 AM, you must pull around to the front of the school and walk your child in and sign them in.**
- **Until the late sign is out, the carpool line is the only place students should be dropped off. We will ask the Resource Officer to monitor parents dropping off students in front of the school. This is not safe.**

THE MFE YELLOW CAR pick-up card MUST BE PLACE ON YOUR DASH WINDOW TO ASSIST OUR STAFF. If the card is not in the window you will be asked to drive around to the front of the school and walk in and have your child called to the front office. Identification must be shown at that time before the child is released.

WALKERS

- **In the event of lightning walkers will remain at school until conditions are safe. A phone call will be made home to inform the parent.**

USE OF TELEPHONE BY STUDENTS

Students will **NOT** make nor receive telephone calls during the school day, except in cases of emergency and/or by request of the teacher. **The telephone is NOT meant to be a replacement for responsibility.**

VANDALISM AND PROPERTY DAMAGE

Our school buildings and equipment cost (you) the taxpayers to construct, purchase, and maintain. Students who destroy or vandalize school property will be required to pay for losses or damages. If you should happen to damage something by accident, you should report it to a teacher or the office immediately.

Volunteers

Volunteers are encouraged to assist their child's teacher. Your help is a vital component for the successful operation Mary Ford Elementary. Parents support the school in a variety of ways, including volunteering for PTO committees, working in the Media Center and helping teachers in the classroom. Clerical assistance for school and PTO projects is always welcome.

Wellness

Mary Ford Elementary's Wellness Committee has developed a water policy for our students and staff. The purpose of the Wellness Committee is to promote the physical health, improve nutrition and provide stress management techniques and opportunities for Mary Ford staff, students, and community.

Students will be allowed to bring in and carry a clear, capped water bottle filled with water only and will be allowed to keep this with them and drink from it, as needed, throughout the day (with the exception of special areas). Water will also be offered as a choice with meals.

WEAPONS

- **Charleston County School Board policy states that any student found with a weapon will be referred to the District Board with a recommendation for expulsion. This policy pertains to any student of any age, race, or sex. Please note that weapon replicas, toy weapons, or pocketknives are not permitted at school.**

Please sign and return to school within three days of receiving this handbook. Thank you.

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE
CONTENTS OF MARY FORD ELEMENTARY'S
HANDBOOK. I HAVE DISCUSSED THE
CONTENTS WITH MY CHILD.**

STUDENT NAME _____

TEACHER _____

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE _____

PARENT'S SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____

****Students will not participate in special school programs
until this is signed and returned.**