

Fishcreek Elementary School
Family Handbook
2021-2022

Fishcreek Elementary School
5080 Fishcreek Road
Stow, OH 44224
(330) 689-5460
<http://www.smfschools.org>

Mrs. Joanne Bratten, Principal
Mrs. Joyce Paradise, Secretary

Welcome to Fishcreek Elementary!

This handbook has been prepared to provide you with information regarding the operation of Fishcreek Elementary School. Please read each section carefully so that you will be familiar with school policies and procedures.

Our school office is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

All student information must be updated yearly in the FinalForms application. The link is found on the district website under the "Parent" tab, "Forms and Applications." Please make sure that you update who is allowed to pick up your child from school. The links for Free and Reduced Lunch and lunch account (PaySchools) are found there, as well.

Arrival

The school day begins at 9:05 am. Please allow enough time for walkers and car riders to enter the building, go to their lockers and prepare for the day before school starts, otherwise students are marked as tardy.

Only car riders may enter the building through the side entrance (nearest the parking lot). When dropping off your children in the morning, please do not arrive before 8:45 a.m., as students are admitted to the building beginning at 8:50 a.m. Because the driveway is narrow as it goes around the building and by the side door, this will help alleviate the congestion and safety concerns for our morning traffic pattern. Have your children exit the side of your car nearest the sidewalk to ensure their safety.

Attendance

Good attendance is an important factor in school success. Since it is impossible to recreate the instructional day through make-up assignments, regular attendance is crucial. If it is necessary for a student to be absent, the following procedure must be followed:

1. Call the school office between 8:00 a.m. and 9:15 a.m. every day your child is absent. Report your child's name, teacher, and reason for absence. If you send an email, please send it to the teacher and Mrs. Paradise in case one of them is absent and we have a substitute who does not have access to the email.
2. Medical excuses from your child's physician should be sent to the office.
3. At times it may be necessary for a student to be released during the school day such as for a medical appointment. A written note must be sent to the teacher that includes the child's name, the dismissal time, the reason and the person with whom the child will be leaving. All students leaving school early are called from their classroom to the office and signed out to the parent/guardian. If the student should return to school during the school day, s/he must again report to the office and be signed in by the parent or guardian before returning to the classroom.

4. Vacations and other voluntary absences during the school year should be avoided. While make-up work can be assigned, actual instruction and participation in related classroom learning experiences do not occur. If an extended absence is unavoidable, the following guidelines are in effect:
 - a. Parents should discuss the anticipated absence with the teacher/principal as far in advance as possible.
 - b. The [Planned Absence Request Form](#) must be completed. If you cannot print this out, copies are available from our school office.

Building Security

Our building is equipped with a buzzer security system and Raptor ID System. All visitors must ring the buzzer outside the main entrance and state their name and reason for visiting when asked.

- Check in with a staff member upon entering the secure vestibule.
- Visitors who request entry beyond the secure vestibule must present a government issued identification card. This card will be scanned through the Raptor Visitor Management System. Prospective visitors are screened against multiple registries to ensure that prohibited persons do not enter the building.
- Once the visitor is cleared by Raptor, an identification sticker will be issued. The visitor must wear this sticker visibly at all times during the visit.

Bus Information

Students who are transported to and from school by bus may only ride their assigned bus. Students are not permitted to ride a different bus to another student's home after school. If emergency childcare arrangements require a student to be transported by a different bus, a written request must be given to the school and a verbal request must be made to the transportation supervisor (330-689-5234). The request must include the child's name, the day the bus change is needed, the reason, and the name of the family with whom the child will be staying. Approval is granted strictly on an individual basis.

Parents are responsible for the supervision and safety of students going to and from pick-up points and for having students ready to meet the bus at the scheduled time. Riding the school bus is a privilege. Improper conduct on the bus may result in parent notification, bus suspension for a specific period of time or denial of bus riding privileges.

Cafeteria Program

Students may purchase breakfast and lunch daily in our cafeteria using cash (please put in an envelope and clearly label the child's name and what it is for) or through our PaySchools online system found on the district website. School menus are posted on the district website.

A nutritious lunch provided by you or our cafeteria is instrumental in your child's academic performance. Using funding provided through Federal grant programs, school breakfasts and lunches will be available free of charge for all students regardless of parent/guardian income for the duration of the 2021-2022 school year. Despite this provision, all parents & guardians are asked to complete the

free/reduced lunch application that is included in your child's annual forms (Final Forms). Funding for academic programs like Title 1 is determined based on data gathered from these applications. Your willingness to fill out the form helps to maintain funding for these important programs. Applications are confidential, with approval based on family size and monthly income.

Other considerations for breakfast and lunch at school include:

- A peanut-free table is offered for students with food allergies. Contact the school nurse if your child has a food allergy.
- Students are expected to act responsibly, independently open lunch items, and clean up their area.
- Students should be able to open any food item sent in as part of a lunch independently. Juice pouches, "go-Gurt" and fruit cups are items that children commonly struggle to open. Staff will always be available to help any child who needs it, but your child will be able to more readily enjoy his/her lunch if assistance is not needed.

Visitors may not enter the building for lunch with students.

Change of Address and Other Contact Information

It is extremely important that we have accurate information about your child on file at all times. Parents/Guardians use Final Forms to provide a yearly update. You will also use this form to make corrections or to provide updates like a change of telephone number or who is permitted to pick up your child from school. In the case of a change of address, you will also need to provide updated proof of residency to our Board of Education Offices. The registrar can be reached at 330-689-5445.

[FinalForms Link](#)

Daily Schedule

Car riders are admitted to the building beginning at 8:50 a.m. All other students are admitted at 8:55 a.m. Please do not drop off or have your child walk to school earlier than 8:50 a.m., as there is no supervision available. The tardy bell rings at 9:05 a.m. Lunch period times for each grade level will be shared with you by your child's teacher with their beginning of the year information. Car riders will be dismissed beginning at 3:20 p.m. Walkers and bus riders are dismissed beginning at 3:35 p.m. All students must be picked up by 3:50 p.m.

Dismissal

Car Riders

- All families who have indicated that they will be picking up their child(ren) every day will receive 2 rearview mirror tags with a number on them. Families will also receive 1 bookbag tag with the same number as the car tag for each of their children.
- If your child is not normally a car rider and you need to pick them up at the end of the day, please call the office and let us know who will be picking up your child. That person will need an ID to match what we

have on file in FinalForms for persons allowed to pick up your child and will sign them out at the main office.

- If your child is normally a car rider and someone who does not have a car tag is picking up your child, that person must come to the main office with ID in order to sign out your child. That person must be on the pick up list and you must call the office to confirm those plans so that we know who to expect to sign out your child.
- Please hang the car tag on your rearview mirror when you are picking up your child. Each tag will have an elastic band that will allow you to tuck the tag behind a sun visor when you are driving. The bookbag tag should be securely attached to your child(ren)'s bookbag using the provided strap.
- Parents will stay in vehicles and form a line that begins in the drop off/pick up zone at the side door of the parking lot - much the same as when you drop off your child in the morning. Please pull all the way up to the first sign if you are the first car in line and as cars exit the line.
- Students will be released from the side door to get into their car. There will be staff members checking for car tags and matching numbers on the backpack tags. Children will enter the cars from the sidewalk and will not be permitted to walk around a car to enter on the other side.
- If your child requires a car seat, we ask that your child enter your car and you pull into a parking space to buckle your child into their seat so that we can keep the line moving and allow school buses access to their parking spots at the front of the school.
- We will begin dismissal to cars at 3:20 p.m.

Walkers

- Students designated as walkers are dismissed as a group after the car riders and early bus riders have exited the building. The students line up at the main doors and exit to the sidewalk where they are met by the crossing guard.
- Some parents may choose to meet their children at the sidewalk or crosswalk. Parents who choose to meet designated walkers at the school or on school property must sign out their child/ren at the office.

Bus Riders

- Bus riders will be dismissed as buses arrive following the car rider dismissal. Each day during the first weeks of school, bus departure times from our building will improve.
- Remember that kindergarten students begin riding the bus during the second week of school, so there may be some delays as we make sure that our youngest friends are safely on the correct buses.

Electronic Devices/Cell Phones

Devices that can record, send/receive messages or calls, or function as any type of messaging/communication system are not permitted to be used at school unless they are part of the educational process. Cell phones, smart watches, fitness trackers

with communication capability or any other communication devices must remain turned off and in a student's bookbag during school hours. We are not responsible for any loss or theft of a device. It is best if these items are left at home.

Field Trips

Field trips are an approved portion of the elementary curriculum and correlate with units of classroom study. The purpose of these trips is to extend the learning beyond the school setting and provide learning experiences that cannot be replicated in the regular classroom. Permission to attend field trips is included in the online form system that you complete at the beginning of each school year. If the Emergency Medical Authorization Form and Field Trip Form have not been completed, your child will not be permitted to attend the field trips. Teachers provide information regarding each trip in advance, including the date and location of scheduled field trips, as well as the need for volunteer chaperones, who will be chosen by means of a random drawing.

First Aid

Student injuries which occur during the school day are reported to our health aide in the Clinic. Minor injuries such as cuts and scrapes will be handled in the Clinic and you will not be contacted directly. If the injury is of a serious nature (i.e., head injury, suspicion of bone fracture), the student's parent is notified. If the parent is unable to be contacted and further treatment appears necessary, the information included on the student's Emergency Medical Authorization Form will be used to procure treatment. These forms are online and must be completed at the beginning of each school year.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the parent or other adult designated by the parent will be contacted. The student will only be released from school if the authorized adult can provide transportation and supervision. Akron Children's Hospital provides our nursing care and a licensed health aide is in our school clinic daily.

Lost and Found

Articles that are found are placed on the lost and found table near the office. Items such as watches, jewelry and money are kept in the school office. Students should check these locations when articles are missing. All unclaimed items are donated to a charitable organization at the end of the school year.

Medication

Some students are required to take medication during the course of the school day. The following policy applies to both long and short-term administration of prescription medication and over-the-counter medications and must be followed in order to dispense this medication:

1. A medication form must be obtained from the school clinic, completed and returned to school. This form includes the type of medication to be taken, the prescribed dosage and the signature of the physician.

2. The medication must be brought to school by a parent/guardian in the original container. Students are not permitted to carry medication with them. Prescription medication must have the prescription label attached.
3. The medication is stored in a locked cabinet in the clinic and from there dispensed to the student.
4. If the type of medication or dosage is changed, a revised form must be completed and resubmitted.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Individual conferences with parents of all students are scheduled in the fall. Conferences are also held throughout the school year by teacher and/or parent request. To schedule a conference, write a note to or email the child's teacher. A date and time that is mutually convenient will then be established. Arrangements should also be made in advance for conferencing with the school principal.

Parking

Please use the parking spaces to the side of the school. The visitor parking in front is available between the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. due to arrival and dismissal traffic. Parents and visitors may not park on the front circular drive or along the curb in the fire lane. Vehicles parked in the spaces designated for individuals with disabilities must have a permit clearly visible.

Recess

Students will go outside daily for recess unless the wind chill temperature is 15 degrees Fahrenheit or below, it is raining, or if there is thunder/lightning in the area.. Please have your child dressed appropriately for the weather.

Report Cards

Report cards are completed for each student four times per school year. We use a standards-based report card to communicate progress to families.

Safety

The safety of our students and staff is a paramount concern. We invest a great deal of time and resources into ensuring that our school is a safe and healthy place. We conduct safety drills to make sure that all students and staff are familiar with our safety plan.

Community members who have a concern about school safety are invited to contact the school principal at 330-689-5460.

You can also report a safety concern directly to the Stow Police Department (330-689-5700 for non emergencies; 911 for emergencies).

Finally, we offer a tip line that accepts reports of safety concerns. If desired, this can be done anonymously. A concerned party may call or text 1-844-SAFEROH (1-844-723-3764).

School Communication

The district communicates with the community in a variety of ways. We will disseminate any information about school or district operations (including weather related school delays and closures, adjustments to our operational plan, etc.) via phone blast and internet.

If you miss a call from the school please check your voicemail prior to calling the school's main number.

School Parties

Your child's homeroom teacher will send information seeking volunteers for the Halloween and Valentine parties. In the case that there are more volunteers for these events than needed, a random drawing will be held to choose the volunteers. All school volunteers must be fingerprinted according to district policy.

Student Appearance

Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate for school. Cleanliness, neatness of appearance, comfort and safety are essential considerations.

- Hats are not to be worn in the building except on designated Spirit Days.
- Clothing should be clean, properly fitted and in a style appropriate for school.
- Tank tops should have wide straps and strapless/spaghetti straps tops are not permitted.
- Shirts advertising anything inappropriate for the educational setting (alcoholic beverages, weapons, etc.) are not permitted.
- Flip flops or shoes that are not secured on the entire foot are not permitted as they present a safety hazard during an active school day. Footwear should cover the entire foot and be secured by shoe laces or straps. Students should wear tennis shoes for the days that they have Physical Education class.
- Appropriate shorts of mid-thigh length ("fingertip length") may be worn to school during warm weather.
- Jackets and coats must be placed in student lockers and may not be worn in the classrooms.

Student Behavioral Expectations

Fishcreek Elementary School students are supported by our PAWS Positive Behavior Program. PAWS stands for: **P**repared for Success, **A**ct Responsibly, **W**ork Hard, and **S**tay Safe. Students can earn PAWS tickets for exhibiting appropriate behavior and being kind to one another. Students who make inappropriate choices may experience a variety of consequences based on a progressive discipline model. We provide opportunities for students to learn from their choices and make better choices in the future. Expectations are in place for all school environments, including the school bus.

Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Teacher/classroom consequence
- Loss of privileges
- Loss of recess

- Lunch/recess detention
- Office referral
- Parent contact
- Suspension
- Expulsion

All students at Fishcreek Elementary School are subject to the Stow-Munroe Falls Schools Student Code of Conduct.

Transportation

You will be asked to provide your child's teacher information about your child's transportation arrangements at the beginning of the year.

Consistency in your child's transportation is imperative. This alleviates anxiousness for the child, unnecessary confusion, and provides a safe and orderly dismissal routine.

- Parents/guardians must provide prior written notice if there is to be a change in transportation.
- If no notification is received your child will follow his/her regular mode of transportation.
- If an emergency situation arises please call the office as early as possible. DO NOT EMAIL as emails may not be read in a timely manner or in case the person you are contacting is not in that day.

Volunteers

Volunteers provide a valuable service to Fishcreek Elementary School. Classroom teachers facilitate the scheduling of volunteers to assist in individual classrooms. All volunteers will need to be fingerprinted according to district policy. This is done through our Central Office at 4350 Allen Road. You may call (330) 689-5445 to make an appointment or schedule it through the link on the district website.