Student Handbook

2022-2023

Bethware Elementary School
115 Bethware Drive, Kings Mountain, NC 28086
(704) 476-8346

WELCOME!

Dear Families,

Happy New School Year! We are so excited that you have chosen to partner with us in providing your child with an EXCELLENT education! The Bethware faculty and staff are committed to high quality, rigorous instruction that will produce academic, social, and emotional growth for each student.

This handbook is designed to answer many frequently asked questions concerning the activities, rules, and procedures for the successful daily operation of Bethware Elementary School. We believe these procedures will help create a positive learning environment for students.

As the year progresses, we encourage you to call the school as questions and concerns arise. If your questions deal with class events, please contact the teacher. If they concern the overall program, curriculum or school-wide activities, please contact the front office or the principal. We look forward to working with you this year!

Sincerely,
Lee Howell, Principal
Bethware Faculty & Staff

Bethware School Philosophy

At Bethware Elementary School, our primary mission is teaching and learning. Our students know that they come to school to learn. The school staff makes sure that all students learn. At Bethware, we enjoy learning together. Our students can earn awards and recognition for their good work. We hold high expectations for all of our students. We expect them to do well and be prepared to graduate from high school and attend college.

Bethware Mission Statement

The Bethware family will work together as a team to encourage all students to be successful and meet their full potential.

Bethware Vision Statement

Our vision is to fully equip students by striving to be one of the top performing elementary schools in the district.

Bethware Actions & Values

1. We are prominently displaying our mission statement.
2. We are teaching all goals and objectives required by the state of North Carolina.
3. We are utilizing data from state and local assessments to direct classroom instruction and challenge all students to reach their full academic potential.
4. We are using technology to individualize and enrich instruction.
5. We are supplementing instruction to meet individual needs.
6. We are maintaining a safe and orderly environment.
7. We are using various means of communication to keep all stakeholders informed.

Attendance

Bethware students have a tradition of good attendance. We want to continue this pattern of good attendance this year, too! Our attendance policy is:

1. When a student is absent, the parent will be called on that day by the automated Cleveland County School phone system. We encourage parents to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be out sick.
2. When your child returns to school, please send a written excuse. In the note, include your child's name, their teacher's name, and the date and reason for the absence.
3. All absences are recorded unexcused unless a written excuse is returned with your child documenting that the absence was for a lawful reason. Parents have 2 school days after their child returns to school to send an excuse note. After 2 school days, the absence is considered "unexcused".
4. Excused absences will be recorded for these lawful reasons:
   a. Illness/injury of the student
   b. Quarantine
   c. Death in the immediate family
   d. Medical or dental appointment
   e. Court or administrative proceedings requiring the presence of the student
   f. Religious observances
   g. Educational opportunity – Written request must be approved by the principal in advance.

5. After three (3) unexcused absences, parents will be notified by letter. After six (6) unexcused absences, parents will be notified by letter and a referral will be made to the Social Worker. After ten (10) unexcused absences, the Social Worker will proceed with enforcement of the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law F.S. 115C-378 and mediation, if necessary.

6. Students (K-4) who are absent from school more than twenty (20) days for any reason shall receive no credit for the school year and shall be retained in the same grade for the next year except by a determination of the principal upon review of the student's record.

7. According to the Cleveland County Schools attendance policy, three (3) unexcused tardies (late check in or early dismissal) will equal one unexcused absence.

8. To be counted present, students must be at school for at least half of the day. After three (3) unexcused absences, parents will be notified by letter. After six (6) unexcused absences, parents will be notified by letter and a referral will be made to the Social Worker. After ten (10) unexcused absences, the Social Worker will proceed with enforcement of the North Carolina Compulsory Attendance Law F.S. 115C-378 and mediation, if necessary.

- Tardies

  It is important that students arrive at school on time. Students with 3 or more unexcused tardies or early dismissals will not qualify for perfect attendance. In the morning, students are considered tardy if they enter the school building after 8:00

a.m. Parents will need to come inside the lobby to check in their children when tardy. Students who sign out before 2:50 p.m. are also considered tardy (early dismissal).

- Early Dismissal
  Parents are urged to leave their children in school all day. Doctor or other appointments should be scheduled outside school hours or on school holidays, whenever possible. If a child needs to be dismissed early, he/she should bring a note to the teacher stating the time and reason. Parents must sign the child out in the school office. If a child needs to be dismissed early, plan to pick your child up by 2:30 p.m. Only in emergency situations should your child be signed out between 2:30 and 2:50 p.m.

Awards and Events

We are planning to have quarterly award presentations by grade level in our auditorium this school year. We will have an end of year and 4th quarter awards for all our K-4th grade students.

After School Care

BOYS and GIRLS CLUB of CLEVELAND COUNTY is an after school program at Bethware. Parents who need child care may enroll their child in this program. Information about the Boys and Girls Club program, including the costs, is available by calling the Boys and Girls club and 704-471-2582 or visiting their website at: https://www.bgccleveco.org/

Cafeteria Services

Breakfast and lunch are served daily. Breakfast will be offered in the cafeteria each morning. Children should arrive by 7:45 am if they plan to eat breakfast. Lunch will be served in the cafeteria. Students will sit with their class. A monthly menu is sent home with students the first day of each month and is available on the Cleveland County Schools website. All students at Bethware will enjoy free breakfast and lunch. Snacks and ice cream are also offered for a cost. Check with your child's teacher to see what days they may purchase snacks. Students may also bring lunch from home. Please pack items that are easy for students to open and that do not need to be refrigerated or microwaved. If providing snacks for the classroom, parents should bring individually wrapped or store-bought items. No home-made items will be allowed due to allergies. If your child has special nutritional needs, please call the school.

Character Education

Cleveland County Schools wants to nurture appropriate character and citizenship in our students. To help in this endeavor, we will emphasize one trait each month as follows:
August/September-Respect: Showing high regard for authority, other people, property, self, and

country. Treating others with fairness, and recognizing that people of all cultures have values as human beings.
October-Responsibility: Being dependable and cooperative in carrying out obligations and duties; showing reliability in words and deeds. Being accountable for your own actions and working together for mutual benefit.
November-Good Citizenship: Obeying school rules and the laws of the state and nation. Understanding a citizen's rights and responsibilities.
December-Service to Others/Kindness: Providing meaningful assistance to those in the school and community through individual actions or cooperative efforts. Being considerate, courteous, helpful, and understanding of others. Showing compassion, friendship, caring, and generosity. (Golden Rule)
January-Self-Discipline: Demonstrating hard work and commitment to purpose; restraining from inappropriate behaviors; and controlling words, actions, impulses, and desires.
February-Courage: Doing the right thing even when others do not, following conscience rather than the crowd. Attempting difficult things that are worthwhile.
March-Honesty/Integrity: Being truthful and trustworthy in all things. Acting justly and honorably.
April-Good Judgment: Choosing worthy goals and setting proper priorities. Making wise decisions after thinking through the consequences of actions.
May-Perseverance: Being persistent in the pursuit of worthy objectives despite difficulty and opposition. Being patient and willing to try again when confronted with delays, mistakes, or failure.

One student from each class will be recognized for each of these traits on our character wall near the cafeteria and front office.

Code of Conduct & Student Discipline

Discipline is the shared responsibility of the home and school. It is the key to good conduct and proper consideration for other people. Recognizing and praising good behavior and taking corrective action when necessary maintains good discipline. Students are expected to put forth their best effort and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that will promote a safe, orderly learning environment. School and classroom rules and expectations are directly taught to students through PBIS. Any behavior which causes the learning atmosphere to deteriorate or be disrupted or which infringes upon the rights of others in the school will not be tolerated and will subject the student to corrective measures as set forth in the Student Code of Conduct.

Cleveland County Schools "Student Code of Conduct" contains detailed information on disciplinary offenses and actions, attendance violations, school bus rules and law violations. The "Student Code of Conduct" is available online at www.cleveland county schools.org. Disciplinary action will be administered based on the CCS Code of Conduct when incidents occur.

- Positive Behavior Intervention & Support (PBIS)
  Bethware will continue to implement a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program this school year. Bethware has been a PBIS NC Model School since 2008! Bethware has adopted school-wide expectations based on the theme Buccaneer PRIDE.

Positive Attitude
Respect
Integrity
Determination
Environment

- Expectations are posted throughout the building. We will offer school-wide rewards throughout the year.

Emergency School Closings & Inclement Weather

Severe weather or an extended loss of power or water could cause a change in school operating hours. Please go to local TV stations or the CCS web site at www.clevelandcountyschools.org for information about school operations. Cleveland County Schools also uses an automated phone system to inform you of changes in our school day(s); therefore, it is important that you inform the office of any change in your telephone number(s). Usually severe weather decisions are made by 6:00 a.m. If early dismissal becomes necessary, the website will be updated and TV stations will be notified. Since it would be impossible to reach 500+ parents by telephone, families need to discuss in advance their plans for early dismissal.

Field Trips

Periodically, students will have the opportunity to go on field trips. Information will be sent home by the teacher. These field trips are educational in nature and, at times, will have a cost. However, all children will have the opportunity to go on field trips, even if they can not afford it. We have a fund at Bethware specifically for this purpose. Please let us know if your family needs assistance.

Head Lice Policy

Students with head lice or nits will be sent home. Cleveland County Schools has a "nit-free policy". Any child sent home because of lice must be treated and free of all lice and nits (the eggs that are attached to the hair shaft) before returning to school. Lice medicine is available at the Cleveland County Health Department. The school nurse should be notified if a parent is wishing to obtain lice medicine from the Cleveland County Public Health Center, located at 200 S. Post Road, Shelby. Parents must bring the student into the office for a re-check before their child can return to class.

A student who has been sent home with head lice/nits should return to school, free of head lice/nits, by the end of 2 (two) calendar days; absences from school during the two calendar days will be excused. For each occurrence, absences beyond 2 (two) calendar days will be unexcused.

Homework

All students will have homework according to his/her ability and grade level. Homework allows independent practice of skills that have been taught in the classroom. Homework is assigned at the discretion of the teacher. If your child is absent from school, parents may request missed class work and homework assignments. We ask that these requests be made prior to 11 a.m, so that teachers have ample time to gather work. Requested work will be available for pick-up in the office after school.

Illness or Injury

In the case of illness or injury, the school nurse or other school staff will administer first aid. Emergency Medical Services will be contacted if deemed necessary. If your child is seriously ill or injured, we will contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will use the emergency contact information you have provided. The teacher, administration, and school nurse should be notified of any chronic illnesses, surgeries, or any other health concerns. *PLEASE KEEP ALL TELEPHONE NUMBERS UPDATED, ESPECIALLY EMERGENCY NUMBERS.*

Insurance

School Insurance is available to all students.You may inquire about OPTIONAL school insurance through the front office.

Lost & Found

Clothing and personal belongings that are brought to school should be labeled with the child's name. Found articles are turned in to the school's lost and found table. Unclaimed property is turned over to an agency or someone in need several times per school year. Please label your child's clothing and bookbags/lunch bags with his or her name.

Media Center & Book Fairs

The media center will be open for school-wide checkout daily. Students will go to the library every week for class and book check-out as specified in the specials schedule. If additional library time is needed, the teacher should schedule this time with Mrs. Kerns. There will be opportunities for collaborative lessons and interventions. School book fairs will be offered twice during the school year. *If books are not turned in, students will be fined for the cost of the book. We will withhold report cards until the book is returned or the fine is paid.

Medication Policy

If your child must have medication during school hours, you have the following choices:

1. Come to school and give the medication to your child at the appropriate time(s).
2. Comply with the following procedures so the medication can be given by the school staff:
   a. An authorization form, entitled "Permission to Administer Medication", must be completed and signed by the parent and licensed medical provider.
   b. Prescriptions brought to school must be in a pharmacy labeled container. You may ask

the pharmacist to give you two labeled containers to split the doses for school and home use.

c. Non-prescription medications must be in original container and authorization form completed by the parent and the child's doctor.
d. If any question concerning A-C arises, medication will not be given. The parent will be contacted immediately.

No medication of any kind is to be given to any student unless the parent has completed and signed a "Request for Medication to be given during School Hours" permission form. In addition, the medication must be in a prescription bottle marked properly with the child's name and directions for administering it.

Parent Notice of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against persons with a disability in any program receiving federal financial assistance. In order to fulfill obligations under Section 504, the Cleveland County School District has the responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a disability should knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school system.

The Cleveland County School System has the responsibilities under Section 504, which include the obligations to identify, evaluate, and if the student is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the school district, he/she has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) also specifies rights related to educational records. This Act gives the parent or guardian the right to: 1. inspect and review his/her child's educational records, 2. make copies of these records, 3. receive a list of the individuals having access to those records, 4. ask for an explanation of any item in the records, 5. ask for an amendment to any report on the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the child's rights, and 6. a hearing on the issue if the school refuses to make the amendment. If there are any questions, please contact our Guidance Counselor, Shayne Collins.

Parent/School Communication

Every child will be given a yellow folder for communication between the school and home. Teachers will send the folder home daily with notes, menus, corrected work, progress reports, etc. Please help us teach your child the value of getting all communications to you. Please sign and return needed items promptly so that we know you have seen them.

The office will send home a monthly refrigerator calendar and school newsletter reminding you of upcoming events occurring at school during that month. The phone messenger system

will be used, so please make sure to keep the office updated when you change phone numbers. In addition, please check out our school website, the Cleveland County Schools website and our Facebook page.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

We will have 2 parent teacher conference nights. Students will be released from school both of these days at 1pm. Teachers will send home sign up sheets closer to time. The fall parent teacher conference night is September 29, 2022 . The spring parent/teacher conference night is February 16, 2022. You may also contact the teacher through e-mail or remind/dojo at any time.

PTO

PTO stands for Parent Teacher Organization. Involvement in PTO provides an opportunity for parents to contribute suggestions for the improvement of Bethware's educational program. Throughout the year, PTO will sponsor many educational, fun-filled, and fundraising events. The Bethware PTO is an active organization and help is NEEDED! Parents will receive a notice of meeting times and dates through the school newsletter and our website. Please make plans to join!

Safety Drills

Bethware has a plan to provide for the safety of each student in the event of a fire, tornado, or intruder. Drills are held regularly during the year to ensure speed and efficiency in getting the students to their assigned places of safety.

School Day

*7:30 a.m.—School opens for students.
K-2 students go to the Cafeteria
3-4 students go to the Media Center
7:30-8:00 a.m.—Breakfast is available
7:45 a.m.—Students go to classrooms.
SCHOOL BEGINS
8:00 a.m.—Tardy Bell
2:50 p.m.—Dismissal for car riders, after-school care, and bus riders
**There is NO adult supervision in the building until 7:30am. Please do not drop your child/children off before that time.*

School Pictures & Yearbooks

School pictures will be made in the fall and spring by Carolina Photography of Denver, NC. Holiday pictures will be optional. Graduation pictures for PreK and 4th grade will be taken in the spring as well as classroom group pictures. Yearbooks will be sold online in the spring.

Student Dress Code

Students are expected to adhere to standards of dress and appearance that are compatible with a safe and effective learning environment. The Cleveland County Board of Education adopts a dress code to create a positive learning environment, teach good grooming and hygiene, instill discipline, prevent disruption, avoid safety hazards, and teach respect for authority. Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is disruptive, provocative, revealing, profane, vulgar, offensive or obscene, or which endangers the health or safety of the student or others, is prohibited.

1. Caps, hats, bandanas, sweatbands, other head coverings or sunglasses may not be worn inside school buildings or other areas designated by the school.
2. Shirts or blouses may not be see-through and must cover the abdomen, chest, both shoulders, and back completely.
3. Pants may not be excessively baggy or drag the floor. Pants must be worn on the waist, with a belt, if necessary, to hold them up. Any type of wording or message appearing on the seat of the pants is prohibited.
4. Messages, imagery or advertisement on clothing, bookbags or jewelry that promote or encourage the use of tobacco, alcohol or illegal drugs; depict violence; are of a lewd, obscene, vulgar or sexual nature; or are disruptive are prohibited.
5. Undergarments must not be exposed.
6. Appropriate footwear is required. Bedroom shoes or slippers are not allowed.
7. Any adornment, such as chains or spikes, that reasonably could be perceived as or used a weapon are not allowed.
8. Sleepwear is prohibited. (unless on special days called by the school - guidelines must be followed)
9. Excessively short, tight or oversized clothing is prohibited.

Principals shall exercise appropriate discretion in implementing this policy, including making reasonable accommodations on the basis of students' sincerely held religious beliefs or medical conditions. Individual schools are free to specify additional examples of dress or appearance that are prohibited at that school consistent with this policy. If a student's dress or appearance is such that it constitutes a threat to the health or safety of others, distracts the attention of other students or staff from their work, or otherwise violates this dress code, the principal or designee may require the student to change his or her dress or appearance. A second or repeated violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -390.2 Adopted: October 9, 2017 Replaces: Board policy 4420, Student Dress and Appearance

Technology, Textbooks & Library Books

All chromebooks, iPads and books are loaned to the students free of charge. However, students who lose or damage a technology device, textbook or library book will be charged a fee for replacement or repair.

Transportation

WE MUST HAVE A WRITTEN NOTE IF YOUR CHILD'S MODE OF TRANSPORTATION CHANGES. Please put this in the child's yellow folder so the teacher will see it. In the event of an emergency, please call as soon as possible. It is difficult for us to communicate changes in transportation after 1:30 p.m.; therefore, we will not accept changes to transportation after this time in the school day. You may be asked to properly identify your

child by giving information about him/her and your identity.

CAR RIDERS

Mornings – Drop students off at the covered walkway outside the school office. Please stay in line; do not pass. Follow the directions of staff members on duty. DO NOT DROP YOUR CHILD OFF BEFORE 7:30 a.m.

Afternoons – ALL car riders will go to the gym immediately following the 2:50 p.m. bell. Students will be called to cars beginning at 2:50 p.m. ALL parents should pick students up in front of the gym area. Please have your car visor sign visible for the caller. Cars without a student visor sign will be directed to the office. Two car tags will be given per student. IF your family needs more please send in $1 per car tag to cover the cost of our car visors.Please be patient, stay in line, and wait your turn. We cannot risk children's lives in an effort to save a few minutes. For the protection of your child, if the person they are riding home with changes, we must have a dated, written note with parent signature sent with the child the morning of the change.

*All students MUST be picked up by 3:10 p.m. Students who have not been picked up will be taken to the office at this time.

BUS RIDERS

Riding the school bus is a privilege. Improper conduct on the bus or at the bus stop will result in that privilege being denied. See the Student Code of Conduct for all the bus rules and procedures. We will enforce the rules as outlined in the code of conduct.

For safety reasons, Bethware does not allow Kindergarten (K) or PreK students to get off the bus alone at a stop. If older students or siblings get off at the stop, the K student will also be allowed to get off. However, if the K student is the only child at a stop, a parent or responsible party will need to be at the stop to get the student. Otherwise, the driver will not allow the K student to get off and will bring them back to school. If a parent of a K student wants their child to get off the bus alone, then they will need to put their request in writing and it will be honored. In addition, any child brought back to school more than two times will be suspended off the bus one day for each subsequent incident.

In order for a student to ride an unassigned bus, parents should send a written note requesting the change. In the note, include the reason for the change, the date, location, and responsible party. This process should be limited to emergency situations only.

Visiting School & Parking

We welcome visitors. However, our #1 concern is for the safety of our students and staff. Therefore, you MUST sign in and out through the office. Our front office staff will ask for a

photo ID to ensure each visitor is on the student contact page. Our staff has been instructed to report a stranger's presence in the building so please make sure you are wearing your visitor badge.

Parents who come to school to bring materials or pick up/bring children are requested to handle business in the office. Parents should not go directly to the classrooms. Students must be signed in or out through the office. Messages will be taken for phone calls made to teachers during the instructional day. The teacher will return your call at the earliest possible time.

Unfortunately, parking can be cramped at the front of the school. Please do not park in the bus parking lot or in fire lanes. You may park on the side of the road or in any designated spot.

<u>Volunteers</u>
If you would like to volunteer at school, please request a volunteer application. Once the background check has cleared, someone from the school will contact you.

Please let us know if we can do anything to help your child be successful this school year. We look forward to working with our students and their families to make this the best school year ever at Bethware!