

Glen Alpine Elementary School

Student Handbook

(2026–2027)

Welcome to Glen Alpine Elementary!



Our faculty and staff are dedicated to guiding students toward academic excellence and supporting their unique needs. Strong communication between home and school is essential to student success. We look forward to partnering with you for a fantastic school year!

~ Lori Westerfield, Principal

Contact Information & Important Phone Numbers

- **Address:** 302 London Street, Morganton, NC 28655
- **Phone:** 828-584-0661 | **Fax:** 828-584-6669
- **Online:** <https://gaes.burke.k12.nc.us/>
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/glenalpineelementary>
- **Twitter:** @GlenApline

Important Numbers	Phone Number
Glen Alpine Elementary	828-584-0661
W.A. Young Elementary	828-584-0632
Oak Hill Elementary	828-433-1533
Table Rock Middle School	828-437-5212
Freedom High School	828-433-1310
Burke County Central Office	828-439-4312
BCPS Weather Hotline	828-433-8047

Daily Schedule & Hours

The official instructional day runs from **7:50 AM to 2:45 PM**. Students may arrive starting at 7:30 AM.

Morning Schedule

- **7:30 AM:** Doors open; breakfast line opens for bus and car riders.
- **7:50 AM:** Tardy Bell rings. Instruction begins.
 - *Tardy Policy:* Students arriving after 7:50 AM must be walked into the front office and signed in by an adult.

Afternoon Schedule

- **2:15 PM:** Early Check-Out Cutoff. (*Check-outs after 2:15 PM require medical documentation or an emergency exception*).
- **2:30 PM:** Pre-K Dismissal.
- **2:40 PM:** Bus Riders / YMCA Daycare Dismissal.
- **2:45 PM:** Car Riders Dismissal.

Before/After-School Care: YMCA of Catawba Valley hosts programs at W.A. Young Elementary. Applications are available on the YMCA website.

General Information

School Communication

- A monthly school newsletter, calendar, and lunch menu will be shared to keep families informed of school events and important dates.
- Grade-level newsletters will provide classroom-specific information and updates.
- School forms and important documents, including the School Report Card, Parent and Family Engagement Policy, Title I Plan, and School Improvement Plan, are available on the Glen Alpine Elementary and Burke County Public Schools websites.
- Follow the Glen Alpine Elementary Facebook page for school news, student celebrations, and event reminders.
- Glen Alpine Elementary Website: <https://gaes.burke.k12.nc.us/>

Student Information

- Keep your child's emergency contacts, address, and phone numbers current by notifying the school office of any changes.
- Students living outside the Glen Alpine Elementary attendance district must have an approved Burke County Public Schools transfer on file.

Parent & Family Involvement

- Families are encouraged to review the School Improvement Plan and Title I Plan and participate in the annual Title I Parent Survey.
- Parents and guardians are encouraged to volunteer and participate in school activities.
- If you have a concern, please contact your child's teacher first. If additional assistance is needed, contact the principal.

Attendance Policies

Per Burke County Policy and NC Compulsory Attendance Law (GS115C-378), regular attendance is required.

- **Excused Absences:** Student illness, approved religious holidays, death in immediate family (up to 3 days), quarantine, court/administrative proceedings, medical/dental appointments, or family military deployment.
- **Absence Notes:** Send a written note explaining the absence upon your child's return. If absent 3+ days, contact the school office.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Letters are mailed home at 3, 6, and 10 unexcused absences. Beyond 8 total absences (excused or unexcused) in a year, a doctor's note or principal approval is required.
- **Tardies:** School starts at 7:50 a.m. (doors open at 7:30 a.m.).
 - **Sign-In Required:** Tardy students must report to the office. Parents must walk them in and sign them in.
 - **Excessive Tardies:** May require making up lost instructional time with the principal.
- **Early Dismissals:**
 - Students must be in class for at least 196 minutes to be counted present for the day.
 - If your child needs to be checked out after **2:15 p.m.**, medical documentation is required. Please bring the appointment card for verification. Whenever possible, schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Parents or guardians must come to the office to sign students out for early dismissal. If a student returns to school after an appointment, they must check in through the office before returning to class.
 - **To attend after-school activities, students must be present at the end of the school day or return by 1:30 PM following an early checkout. Students who leave early due to sickness will not be allowed to return for the after-school activities.**

Transportation & Traffic Safety

- **Transportation Changes:** *Must be submitted in writing with a date, parent signature, and phone number. Changes cannot be made over the phone. Dojo messages from the parents will not be accepted during the school day. If a student is going home with a peer, written notes from both parents are required.*
- **Bus Eligibility:** Bus transportation is provided for district residents only. Transfer students are not eligible to ride buses to alternate addresses.
- **Car Riders:** Drivers must park in designated spots and display the school-provided **car tag**. Do not walk up to collect students from the car rider line; staff must verify all pick-ups.
- **Bus Area:** The bus loading loop is closed to unauthorized traffic.

Student Guidelines & Policies

Dress Code:

- **General:** Clothes must be clean, modest, and appropriate for physical activity. Tennis shoes are strongly recommended daily (required for PE); flip-flops and sandals are unsafe for the playground.

- **Prohibited Items:** Pajamas, halter tops, spaghetti straps, hats inside the building, and clothing promoting drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or obscene language.
- **Length Requirements:** Shorts and skirts must reach mid-thigh. Dresses must be fingertip-length. Pants with holes above the knee must have bike shorts underneath.
- [BCPC Dress Code Policy](#)

Homework & Reading:

- **Nightly Reading:** Minimum of 15–30 minutes required every night.
- **Assignments:** Homework is mandatory. Incomplete assignments may result in loss of free/reward time.

Technology & Programs

- **Internet Use:** A signed Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) form must be on file for students to access the internet at school.
- **Accelerated Reader (AR):** Quizzes are completed on-site at school through the Renaissance Learning portal.

Student Conduct & Discipline

Students are expected to follow teacher instructions, respect others, keep hands/feet to themselves, and walk quietly in hallways. We expect all students to adhere to the following rules as outlined by Burke County's Student Code of Conduct.

- **Prohibited Items:** Toys, electronic games, music players, and collectible cards are not allowed at school.
- **Immediate Removal:** Fighting, vandalism, defiance, severe disruption, or possession of weapons will result in being sent home immediately.
- **Bus Rules:**
 1. Enter the bus quietly.
 2. Keep your feet on the floor.
 3. Keep your hands to yourself.
 4. Talk in a low voice and use appropriate language.
 5. Remain in your assigned seat at all times.
 6. Absolutely no fighting.
 7. No food, drink, candy, or gum is allowed on buses.
 8. Obey the Bus Driver At All Times.
 9. If the bus is equipped with seat belts, the lap and shoulder straps must be in place.

*****All school rules apply to behavior on the bus AND at bus stops.
- Riding the school bus is a privilege; students will be suspended from the bus for unsafe behavior. Drivers try to maintain a routine schedule; however, traffic could cause the bus to run slightly later or earlier from time to time. Students are expected to be waiting at the bus stop at the assigned time.
- **Bus Discipline Progression:**
 1. 1st Offense: Written Warning
 2. 2nd Offense: 3-Day Bus Suspension
 3. 3rd Offense: 5-Day Bus Suspension
 4. 4th Offense: 10-Day Bus Suspension
 5. 5th Offense: Bus Suspension for the remainder of the school year

(Note: Severe infractions like fighting or vandalism may waive the warning phase).

Glen Alpine Elementary Greenwave W.A.V.E.S. Expectations

W.A.V.E.S.	Classroom	Hallway	Cafeteria	Restroom	Playground	Bus	Theater	Before School	Car Riders	Devices
W – Work Responsibly	Complete assignments and stay on task.	Travel directly to your destination.	Clean up your area and return trays.	Use supplies appropriately and return promptly.	Follow game rules and use equipment correctly.	Follow bus procedures and directions.	Be prepared and follow performance expectations	Report to your designated area and follow routines.	Enter and exit vehicles quickly and safely.	Use devices for learning purposes only.
A – Act Safely	Keep your hands, feet, and objects to yourself.	Walk quietly on the right side.	Stay seated and walk at all times.	Wash your hands and keep water in the sink.	Use equipment safely and stay within boundaries.	Remain seated and keep aisles clear.	Enter and exit quietly and safely.	Walk and keep personal space.	Stay inside the vehicle until directed to exit.	Handle devices carefully and keep food and drinks away.
V – Value Others	Use kind words and respect differences.	Respect personal space and learning environments.	Use good manners and include others.	Respect privacy and school property.	Show good sportsmanship and include others.	Use respectful language and actions.	Listen attentively and encourage performers.	Speak kindly and respect adults and peers.	Be courteous to staff, families, and other students.	Respect others' work, privacy, and digital property.
E – Engage in Learning	Participate, listen, and do your best.	Be ready to learn when you arrive.	Follow directions and make positive choices.	Return to class ready to learn.	Participate positively in activities.	Follow directions the first time.	Watch, listen, and participate appropriately.	Be ready for the school day.	Follow directions from staff members.	Stay focused on assigned tasks and activities.
S – Show Greenwave Pride	Take care of materials and your classroom.	Keep hallways clean and quiet.	Leave your area cleaner than you found it.	Leave the restroom clean for others.	Take care of the equipment and the playground area.	Represent Glen Alpine positively on and off campus.	Represent the Greenwaves through respectful audience behavior.	Demonstrate positive behavior while waiting.	Follow procedures to keep traffic moving safely.	Use technology responsibly and be a positive digital citizen.

Health, Safety & Visitor Guidelines

- **Visitors:** All visitors must check in at the front office and display a visitor pass. **No visitors are permitted during the first two weeks of school.**
- **Health Protocols:** Students will be sent home for a fever of 100.5°F or higher, suspicious rashes, severe nausea/vomiting, or head lice/nits.
 - *Fever Policy:* Must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning.
 - *Head Lice Policy:* Must be cleared by the office before re-entry. The first absence is excused; subsequent days are unexcused.
- **Medications:** Requires a signed authorization form from both parent and physician. Forms are available in the main office.
- **Weather Cancellations:** Closures are broadcast via local radio, automated phone calls, BCPS website/Facebook, and the Weather Hotline (828-433-8047). Ensure your child's emergency transportation plan is updated on their registration form.

Cafeteria, Debts & Celebrations

- **Cafeteria Menu:** [Burke Nutrislice](#)
- Breakfast and Lunch will be free for the 2026-2027 school year.
- **Cafeteria Payments:** Payments can be sent to school or made online via the LinqConnect website.
 - <https://linqconnect.com/main>
- **Class Celebrations:** Classes are limited to two scheduled parties per year.
- **Birthdays:** Store-bought treats (with ingredient labels clearly visible due to allergies) may be brought during lunch with prior teacher approval. **Balloons and flowers are not permitted** due to classroom distractions and bus safety.

- **School Materials:** Textbooks, library books, and devices must be returned by the end of the year. Unpaid debts for lost items carry over to subsequent school years.

Parent Involvement & PTO

- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Required annually for all grade levels (Pre-K/K: 3+; Grades 1–3: 2+; Grades 4–5: 1+). Home visits can be arranged if parents cannot meet at school.
- **Volunteers:** Volunteer applications must be submitted 30 days before any school activity or field trip. Approved volunteers must sign in and wear a badge. [Volunteer - Burke County Public Schools](#)
- **Field Trip Rules:** All chaperones must be approved volunteers, pay adult ticket fees, adhere to the dress code, and refrain from using tobacco. Siblings are not permitted. Students must ride the bus to the event and may only ride home with a parent after being signed out with the homeroom teacher.
- **Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO):** Meets monthly from 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM in the cafeteria. Join to support campus beautification, classroom supplies, and student programs!
- **PTO Members:** Kristin Hise, President; Tessa Radosevich, Vice President; Allison Gardner, Treasurer; Jessica Stiles, Secretary
- **PTO Meeting Dates:**
 - September 17, 2026
 - October 15, 2026
 - November 19, 2026
 - December 17, 2026
 - January 21, 2027
 - February 18, 2027
 - March 18, 2027
 - April 15, 2027
 - May 20, 2026

How to Help Your Child Succeed

1. **Maintain routines:** Ensure 8+ hours of sleep, a healthy breakfast, and on-time arrival.
2. **Stay connected:** Check ClassDojo, daily planners, and monthly grade-level newsletters.
3. **Encourage reading:** Visit local libraries and provide a quiet workspace for nightly reading and assignments.
4. **Be positive:** Speak enthusiastically about school, teachers, and learning!

Sight Words for Kindergarten-Fifth Grade

