

NORTHERN SHORES
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



Student Handbook
2023-2024

**Northern Shores Elementary School
6701 Respass Beach Road
Suffolk, Virginia 23435**

September 5, 2023

Dear Parent/Guardian:

On behalf of the staff at Northern Shores Elementary, we welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year! It takes a village to ensure student success, and we are looking forward to a collaborative partnership. We will do our best to help your child experience academic, social, and emotional growth.

Please consider joining our PTA to assist in volunteer opportunities. This school year we are encouraged to offer more opportunities for community participation, and we need your help.

The information contained in this handbook is intended to help keep our parent community informed about the general operations of our school. We encourage each of you to review the information carefully, and discuss the contents with your child. Check our school's website for upcoming events and announcements. The Northern Shores faculty believes that open communication is key to the success of our students and our school.

Please feel free to contact your child's teacher, the office staff, or the administration with any questions or concerns you may have throughout the school year.

Northern Shores Faculty and Staff

NORTHERN SHORES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

OFFICE STAFF:

Dr. Andrea Wilkins	Principal
Leonardo Q. Barbosa, Jr.	Assistant Principal
Dr. Valerie Taylor	Dean of Students
Shellie Whear	Secretary
Debbie Daubenspeck	Bookkeeper
Queenie Mason	Receptionist
James "Dave" Smellie	Safety Monitor
Amanda Solmonoff	Nurse
Carol Mustard	Nurse

SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER: *923-4169*

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS: *8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.*

SCHOOL INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF HOURS: *8:50 a.m.-4:20 p.m.*

SCHOOL STUDENT HOURS: *9:25 a.m.-3:50 p.m. (Arrival 9:00 a.m.)*

SCHOOL COLORS: *BLUE AND WHITE*

SCHOOL MASCOT: *SPLASH the DOLPHIN*



NORTHERN SHORES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

COMMITMENT. COMMUNITY. COLLABORATION.

Northern Shores Elementary School Faculty and Staff Beliefs

- Parents, students, educational staff, and community collaboratively work to achieve the mission of Northern Shores Elementary School.
- Positive relationships and mutual respect among students and staff enhance self-esteem.
- A safe, supportive, comfortable, and challenging environment promotes student learning.
- Instruction which incorporates all learning styles increases understanding.
- A higher level of learning is achieved through an interrelated curriculum.
- A variety of instructional approaches provides the concrete foundation necessary for abstract thinking, problem-solving, and learning.
- Continuous technological advancement is essential to compete in our increasingly complex and culturally diverse global society.
- Challenging cooperative learning activities develop positive social skills.
- High expectations increase students' achievements.
- Students learn best when they are actively involved in developmentally appropriate activities (physical and academic).
- Cultural diversity promotes an understanding of different people and cultures.
- Learning is enhanced by continuous educational opportunities.

Northern Shores Elementary School Mission Statement

The mission of Northern Shores Elementary School is to provide all students with challenging opportunities and experiences that will enable them to succeed; academically, socially, physically, and emotionally. Administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and the community share the responsibility to build a safe, nurturing, and continuous learning environment that encourages students to achieve their maximum potential.

SELECTED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Special Note: *The information in this handbook is subject to change pending CDC, VDOE, and SPS guidelines and recommendations for the 2023 - 2024 School Year.*

ABSENCES:

Students are required to bring a written excuse signed by a parent/guardian or physician explaining the absence(s) on the day the student returns to school. **Documentation for an absence must be submitted the day the student returns from the absence(s). Excessive unexcused absences (5 or more days) will result in a truancy meeting.**

Below are reasons for “excused” absences, tardies, and early dismissals:

1. Sickness of student
2. Severe illness in the **immediate** family
3. Exposure to contagious disease
4. Death in the immediate family
5. Fire to place of residence, which requires the family to move
6. Other extenuating circumstances (Principal discretion)

ADDRESS/TELEPHONE CHANGES

Please notify the school immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, or person to contact in an emergency. This information is important in case your child becomes ill or injured.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Our school day begins at **9:25 a.m.** Students **should not** arrive prior to **9:00 a.m.** Students arriving after **9:25 a.m.** will be considered tardy and should be accompanied by a parent or guardian to the office to sign in and receive a “tardy slip” for admittance to class.

Student drop-off lines are operational in the front of the building from **9:00 a.m. to 9:25 a.m.** In the mornings, all vehicles should enter the parking lot with **right hand turns only from Respass Beach Road.** Once in the parking lot, vehicles should immediately turn right, following the established traffic pattern.

Promptly at **9:25 a.m.** staff will return to the building to begin their instructional day with students. At that time, students will need to be escorted to the main entrance and obtain a tardy slip. Do **not** allow your child to exit the vehicle and enter the building without proper adult supervision. (Visitors are asked to adhere to the crossing guard’s direction, posted signage, and established traffic patterns for the safety of our school community.)

Our school day ends at **3:50 p.m.** If a student requires early dismissal for an appointment and/or family emergency **prior to 3:20 p.m.**, he/she must be signed out from the front office. An early dismissal form will be required as part of the student’s attendance record. **(Multiple instances of unexcused tardies and/or early dismissals may result in a truancy hearing.)**

There will be four types of dismissal: every day pick-up, bus transportation, van riders, and on-site after school programs. If your child attends an after school program off-site, it is the responsibility of the parent to arrange transportation for pickup with the organization.

Students will not be removed from a bus once loaded for any reason, including parent pick-up. For this reason, it is imperative that parents inform teachers of their intentions to pick up their students prior to **12:00 p.m.** on that date.

If someone other than the parent or guardian is to pick your child up from school, ***a signed note by the parent is required*** and should be sent that morning to the teacher. ***Alternate arrangements will not be completed over the telephone.*** All students will ride their assigned bus unless the school receives written documentation from the parent stating otherwise. ***All bus changes must be received in writing in the office by 12:00 noon each day.***

****ALL persons signing out students from school must present a proper photo ID.****

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

AlphaBest provides services in the building for before and/or after-school care and may be reached at (859) 240-1519. Parks and Recreation (Kids Zone) offers an after-school program on-site and may be reached at (757) 514-7249.

The following day care providers currently transport students to and from Northern Shores Elementary: Antioch Daycare, Foundation Learning Center, Kindercare, La Petite, Little Grove Baptist Church, New Berean Baptist Church, Savior Martial Arts, Virginia Martial Arts, and YMCA Portsmouth. (Please note that the availability of private day care to transport students is the responsibility of that organization.)

BUS PASSES

Bus drivers are instructed not to pick up or take an additional student without a written bus pass issued by the front office. The parent/guardian must send a permission note to the school office if the student is to ride another bus. A bus pass will be given to the bus driver. Students must ride their regular bus and get off at their assigned bus stop, unless the school has received a written note from the parent.

CLINIC AND ILLNESS

Our school is very fortunate to have the services of a full-time nurse. The clinic is open during school hours; however, parents must make arrangements to pick up sick or injured children ***within 1 hour*** of being notified. Parents should also be reminded that according to the Center for Disease Control, a fever is defined as 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Fever should be gone for 24 hours, without the child having taken fever reducing medicine, before returning to school.

In the case of illness or accident, it is necessary that the school have some means of contacting parents or guardians by telephone. Please make sure your contact information remains current. Accurate contact information is essential in helping school personnel maintain student safety.

The taking of medication during school hours is discouraged. Whenever possible, medication should be scheduled before or after school hours. We recognize that this is not always possible.

If routine medication is to be administered at school, a medication form must be completed by the physician and signed by the parent. ***No medication will be given unless it is in the original container. An updated doctor's order is required for any medication to be administered at school, to include OTC (over-the-counter) medications.*** Anything with an active ingredient list on the packaging, which includes cough drops, is considered a medication and needs to be accompanied by a physician's order. **Medications must be brought to the school clinic by an adult. At no time should students bring medications, over the counter or prescribed, to school.**

COMMUNICATION

Cafeteria menus, newsletters, and other pertinent information will be sent home, and/or provided online, as required to keep you informed of important school events, dates, and other activities. In addition, school-wide information will be disseminated via the Northern Shores Elementary School website, social media platforms, and the School Messenger systems. Please ensure the main office has updated contact information.

CONFERENCES

To ensure student supervision and minimize instructional distractions, we ask that parents contact teachers to schedule individual conferences before or after school hours or during the teacher's planning period. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers throughout the year when a conference is necessary. To avoid conflict with faculty and group meetings, we ask that you make an appointment with your child's teacher. Please note that there are three scheduled Parent/Teacher Conference days: **October 24, 2023, February 15, 2024 and April 26, 2024**

DISCIPLINE

Students attending Northern Shores Elementary School are *expected to conduct themselves in an orderly, courteous, dignified, and respectful manner*. In an effort to maintain an orderly atmosphere, **the teacher's authority extends to all students**, whether or not the teacher has the student in his or her class. When self-control falters and self-discipline fails, disciplinary action must be imposed to protect the rights of others and to ensure uninterrupted instruction by teachers.

Disruptive student behavior is subject to disciplinary action by the teacher or building administrators. The action may take the form of: reprimand, notification of parents, conduct notice/referral, conference, time-out, discipline referral, restriction of privileges, in school suspension (ISS), short-term out of school suspension (five days or less), long-term out of school suspension (ten days or more), and expulsion from school.

A discipline referral will be sent to a building administrator, when the teacher feels that the student's improper behavior cannot be corrected through the teacher's classroom management practices. After consultation with the student and the teacher (if needed), the administrator will determine the course of action required to provide a safe and secure school in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Any disciplinary action taken by the building administrator will be accompanied by a written explanation of the nature of the incident. Please review the **"Suffolk Public Schools Code of Conduct"** with your child. Law enforcement officials may be involved when instances of major violations occur. If such a situation should arise, the parent/legal guardian(s) will be contacted.

Students are not permitted to bring toys, games, electronic devices, trading cards. Cell phones are not encouraged, but if a child has one at school, it must be off and out of sight. The student does not have permission to use cellular devices during school hours. If any of these items are used during instructional time, they may be confiscated until the parent can pick them up in the main office. Loss of such items is the responsibility of the student.

DISCIPLINE AND SCHOOL JURISDICTION

The authority of the school over the conduct of students extends to the following locations:

1. On the school grounds before, during, and after school hours.
2. On the school grounds as either a spectator or a participant, and any other time when the school is being used by a school group.
3. Off the school grounds at any school-related activity, function, or event as a participant or a spectator.
4. During the time spent at bus stops waiting for the bus and on school bus transportation.

FIRE LANE AND HANDICAP PARKING

The fire lane directly in front of the main entrance is to be kept clear of vehicles at all times. **Visitors are not permitted to park vehicles in this area for any reason.** The No Parking signs and Handicap Parking signs should not be ignored. Violators are subject to being ticketed by the Suffolk Police Department.

LUNCH

All students breakfast and lunch will be free of charge for 2023-2024 school year. We will continue the bag-and-go breakfast. The cafeteria will take cash, HOWEVER; No change will be provided. Any excess money will be put on the student account. Parents can also go to the Titan Link website to put money on their child's account.

METAL DETECTORS

In an effort to increase the safety and security of our building, students, staff, and visitors will be required to walk through metal detectors when entering the building. We truly appreciate your support as you visit your child's school to walk through our metal detectors and comply with any requests made by our staff. Please know that your child's safety and the safety of all our staff in Suffolk Public Schools is our number one priority.

MONEY

The school accepts online payments only. You can use a credit or debit card (VISA, Mastercard or American Express) on a secure online payment system. Parents will need their child's student ID number for payment. Payment options will be added as needed (e.g. field trips, lost/damaged library books, donations). Please visit the school's website for additional information. The ONLINE SCHOOL PAYMENT link is located under the "For Parents" tab.

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Parents are encouraged to join the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and attend Parent-Teacher Association Meetings. Please contact our PTA President, Kirstyn O'Neill at nses.pta@gmail.com if you are interested in being an active member of the PTA. We also strongly encourage parents to subscribe to the PTA's Facebook page and website for meeting dates and times and regular updates.

PARTNERS-IN-EDUCATION

Northern Shores Elementary proudly partners with local businesses. Each partner works with the school to enhance academic, instructional, and community programs. If a business is interested in partnering with our school, they may contact our business partner liaison, Dr. Valerie Taylor (valerietaylor@spsk12.net) or Amy Manns (amymanns@spsk12.net).

PETS

Pets should not be brought into the school building or school grounds at any time.

PHONE CALLS

Phone calls to students will not be forwarded to classrooms. A message will be taken and delivered to the student. Phone calls to teachers will only be forwarded during the teacher's planning time or **before 9:00 a.m. and after 3:50 p.m.** Phone messages will be taken and placed in teacher mailboxes. Teachers will return phone calls; as soon as possible, within 48 hours.

PICTURES

School pictures are taken twice a year; early fall and early spring. Reminder dates and instructions for ordering school pictures will be announced and notices will be sent home or posted online prior to picture day.

RECOGNITIONS

Students are recognized for both academic and behavioral successes and growth. Recognitions include (but are not limited to): **Principal's List, Honor Roll, Perfect Attendance, PBIS Student of the Week, and Student of the Month.** An annual awards assembly will be held at the end of the school year.

SAFE SCHOOLS

Northern Shores implements the following initiatives to ensure safe schools: a crisis management plan, a school safety committee that meets monthly, annual safety audits, employee identification badges, student code of conduct, school safety patrols, bullying prevention program, conflict mediation strategies, scheduled safety drills, CPR and First Aid Training for staff, video cameras on school buses and premises, and collaboration with Suffolk Police Department and other law enforcement agencies. Parents who are interested in being a member of the school safety committee are asked to contact our principal. For specific information regarding Suffolk Public Schools Covid Protocols, please visit the Suffolk Public Schools website.

STUDENT SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Northern Shores Elementary uses the Virginia Tiered Systems of Support (VTSS). VTSS is a data-informed decision-making framework for establishing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs needed for a school to be an effective learning environment for all students. The VTSS systemic approach allows divisions, schools and communities to provide multiple levels of support to students in a more effective and efficient, clearly defined process. Implementing the VTSS requires the use of evidence-based, system-wide practices with fidelity to provide a quick response to academic, behavioral, social and emotional needs. The practices are progress-monitored frequently to enable educators to make sound, data-based instructional decisions for students. Please see the link to view the Northern Shores PBIS Matrix. [PBIS Matrix](#)

VISITING OUR SCHOOL

Visitors are seen by appointment only unless the visitor is approved and scheduled to volunteer at that time. All visitors and parents must indicate the purpose of their visit after ringing the bell at the main entrance. All visitors will need to go through the metal detector and show proper photo identification upon entering the school building. Volunteers must sign in using the Raptor System and wear a "Visitor" sticker to visit any area in the building. Parents or visitors that are not serving as a volunteer are not permitted to visit classrooms. For safety, this includes drop off and pick up of students. Visitors can only enter through the front/main door.