

**SHERWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK  
2023-2024**



**Mission:** All children will have the opportunity to learn and grow in a supportive atmosphere that promotes 21st century skills in an environment of mutual respect.

**Vision:** Creating globally competent, confident, and caring kids.

**Sherwood Rams are Motivated to Succeed!**

Sherwood Elementary  
Student and Parent Handbook  
2023-2024

## School Information

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Address: 1744 Dixon Road, Gastonia, N.C. 28054  
Phone: 704-866-6609  
Fax: 704-866-6617  
Receptionist: Debbie Lingerfeldt  
Data Manager/Finance: Melissa Knox

### Administration

Ms. Kristie Gornto – Principal  
Mrs. Tangela Hinton – Assistant Principal

### School Day Schedule

7:00 a.m. – School doors open.  
7:25 a.m. – First bell rings.  
7:30 a.m. – School begins \*  
7:30 a.m. – Tardy bell \*\*  
2:15 p.m. – Bus and daycare riders dismissed  
2:20 p.m. – Car riders and walkers dismissed  
2:45 p.m. – Latest time car riders may be picked up\*\*\*

\*All students who would like to eat breakfast should be at school by 7:30 a.m.

\*\*If your child arrives at school after 7:30 a.m., a parent must sign the child in for the day. To maintain a safe environment, please ring the bell for assistance.

\*The tardy bell rings at 7:30 a.m. and instruction begins at 7:30 a.m. Students arriving after 7:30 a.m. will be counted tardy.

\*\*Students who are not picked up by 2:45 p.m. will be housed in the front office. To maintain a safe environment, parents are required to sign the student out by ringing the bell for assistance and signing our pick-up log. We appreciate having your child picked up on time each day.

## Early Checkout

Please remember the following while checking your child out of school:

1. All students leaving school before the end of the school day must be signed out through the office. To maintain a safe environment, all parents must ring the bell for assistance.
2. Students who leave before 11:00 a.m. will be counted absent for the day, unless they return to school and are present for a total of 3.5 hours.
3. A written note should be sent with the child if someone other than a parent is to sign the student out early. Parents should also ensure that this person is on the child's emergency contact list.
4. Per Gaston County Schools' policy, all parents and visitors who are checking a student out of school **MUST** present a valid driver's license or other photo identification upon checking into the school.

## Transportation Changes

For the safety of our students, transportation changes cannot be made over the phone. Parents should notify the teacher of any transportation changes in writing by the morning of the change. Please indicate when the change takes effect and whether it is for one day or for an extended period of time. Please include a contact phone number for follow-up if needed.

## School Traffic

Please help keep our students and staff safe by remembering the following safety points:

1. Students are not allowed to be dropped off before 7:00 a.m. each morning.
2. Staff members will help unload all car riders in the morning on the front sidewalk. When dropping off a child, please pull all the way down and only unload at the yellow, painted sidewalk.
3. When dropping off or picking up students, please do not pull around another car to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Thank you for your patience.
4. To ensure student safety, please **do not drop off or pick up students in other parking lots or on the side of the road. All students should be dropped off near a Sherwood staff member in front of the school.**

## Dismissal

### *BUS*

Bus riders will load their buses and leave school at approximately 2:15 p.m. each day. All bus riders are expected to follow safety rules and behavior guidelines while on the bus, both to and from school. Parents of bus riders should read and sign the bus guidelines in the enrollment packet. Questions about bus routes and times should be directed to the Assistant Principal.

### *OTHER*

Car riders will wait in the gymnasium and students waiting for daycare transportation will wait in the cafeteria to hear their names called for dismissal. All cars picking up car riders should have a **car tag with their student's number, grade and teacher**. This is necessary in order to coordinate a safe and orderly pick-up. Cars without a tag will be asked to pull into the parking lot while we check our records to ensure student safety.

## School Attendance/Written Excuses

A **written** excuse is required for all absences. This includes a note, an email, or a fax, but not a phone call. The written excuse should include the reason your child was absent, along with the

date(s). Please turn this note into your child's teacher **within three days** of returning to school. After three days, any absence remains unexcused per GCS policy. Reasons for excusing an absence are: Illness or injury, quarantine, death in the immediate family, court proceedings, short term suspensions, medical or dental appointments, religious observances, and educational opportunities to be granted by the principal with prior approval.

An automated call is sent around 10:00 a.m. to alert parents that their child is not in school. This phone call will label the absence as "unexcused" until written documentation is received.

According to Gaston County Policy, a student with more than 12 absences (excused or unexcused) can be considered for retention. In addition, the parents of students with 10 or more unexcused absences could face truancy charges. Thank you for having your child at school on time each day.

### **Medications, Sickness, and Injuries**

Gaston County Schools has established policies for administering medications and treating injuries for students. If your child must have medication of any type, including over-the-counter drugs given during school hours, you have the following choices:

1. You may come to school and give the medication to your child at the appropriate time(s).
2. You may obtain a copy of a medication form from the school nurse or school secretary. Take the form to your child's doctor and have him/her complete the form by listing the medication(s) needed, dosage, and number of times per day the medication is to be administered. **This form must be completed by the physician for both prescription and over-the-counter drugs.** The form must be signed by the doctor and by you, the parent or guardian. Prescription medicines must be brought to school in a pharmacy-labeled bottle which contains instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. Over-the-counter drugs must be received in a container labeled by a pharmacist, complete with instructions (like a prescription drug).
3. You may discuss with your doctor an alternative schedule for administering medication (i.e., outside of school hours).
4. Self-medication: In accordance with G.S. 115C-375.2 and G.S. 115C-47, students requiring medication for asthma, anaphylactic reactions (or both), and diabetes may self-medicate with physician authorization, parent permission, and a student agreement for self-carried medication. Students must demonstrate the necessary knowledge and developmental maturity to safely assume responsibility for and management of self-carry medications.

School personnel will not administer any medication to students unless they have received a medication form properly completed and signed by both doctor and parent/guardian, and the medication has been received in an appropriately labeled container. If you have questions about the policy, or other issues related to the administration of medication in school, please contact the school nurse at 704-866-6609.

If a student becomes ill or has been injured at school, the parent or guardian will be notified. Students who suffer from **fever, vomiting, or diarrhea** will be expected to be picked up from school, and they should recover at home until they are free from these ailments for 24 hours.

Parents of students with **health plans** for chronic illnesses or life-threatening allergies should renew these health plans each year by providing the school nurse documentation from your medical provider. Medicine and forms should be provided to the office at the start of each new school year, with attention given to the medicine's expiration date.

As part of our regular school preventive dental health program, a Public Health Dental Hygienist for Gaston County will conduct dental screenings for children in kindergarten during the school year. We are again partnering with Gaston Family Health Services and the Kintegra Dental Bus. Information regarding dental services will be sent home.

### Updating Personal Information

Each week, Sherwood will send out an electronic phone message to all parents and staff members informing them of important calendar events. Please help us keep our school records up-to-date by sending in any new **phone numbers**. A copy should be given to the teacher and to the front office. We want to make sure you have the most up-to-date information concerning school events. If your family moves during the school year, the office has a form for updating your address and providing new proofs of address. Please ensure that these records stay up-to-date. Please make sure you keep your child's teacher updated on any **family members or contacts** who may or may not be allowed to eat lunch with or pick up your child at school. In a similar manner, parents who have **custody or other legal paperwork** through the court system are asked to provide a copy to the principal. This paperwork will be kept in a secure and confidential location in the front office to ensure school personnel are following court orders.

### Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.)

Sherwood Elementary is fortunate to have a very active P.T.O. that conducts fundraisers, donates supplies to the school, honors teachers throughout the school year and during Teacher Appreciation Week, and plans celebrations for our students. We hope that you will support our school by joining the P.T.O. Meetings are not required for members, but you are encouraged to come.

### Parent Portal/ Grading Practices

Student grades and attendance data are available at <https://gaston.powerschool.com/public/>. You can contact Sherwood's Financial Secretary for a password. This year, all 3rd - 12th grade teachers in Gaston County Schools will use the 10-point grading scale below:

A = 90-100    B = 80-89    C = 70-79    D = 60-69    F = 59 and below

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

We welcome you to be a partner in your child's education! We ask that parents contact their child's teacher via phone call, email, ClassTag, or a note in the communication log so that all conferences can be scheduled ahead of time.

In order to encourage communication about each student's academic, social, and behavioral progress, we invite you to **Parent Conference Nights** on Thursday, October 12th, and Thursday, March 7th. A form will come home allowing you to sign up for a time slot between 12:30 and 7:00 p.m.

Other opportunities for parent involvement include Sherwood Family Engagement activities and Lunch & Learns. Fall Lunch & Learns will be held during the weeks of October 2nd-11th \*Please see

the list of Sherwood Parent Engagement Activities for the 2023-2024 school year at the end of this handbook.

## Title One Program

The Federal Title One program provides financial assistance to local educational agencies and schools with high percentages of children from low-income families. This helps ensure that all children meet the challenging state academic standards. Sherwood qualifies for this supplemental funding, which is spent on additional school personnel, instructional supplies, and professional development.

Under federal law, parents of students attending Title I schools have the right to know information on the professional qualifications of each child's teacher, including:

1. Whether the teacher meets the state qualifications and licensing criteria for the grades and subjects he/she teaches.
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or provisional status because of special circumstances.
3. Whether the teacher has an advanced degree and the field of discipline of the teacher's certification or degree.
4. Whether the child receives special services from a paraprofessional and the qualifications of the paraprofessional.

Should you have any questions regarding the qualifications of your child's teacher, please see an administrator. We are proud of our staff at Sherwood Elementary and we look forward to working with your student(s) this school year!

## Asbestos Treatment

Sherwood has been actively treating asbestos levels within the school to help maintain a healthy environment for students and staff. Parents also have the right to examine the Asbestos Notebook located in the school office. If you have any questions, please contact the principal.

## Student Cell Phone Policy

Cell phones are not encouraged to be brought to school. If a child needs to carry a cell phone, it should be turned OFF and kept in their backpack. Students who need to make a call during school hours will be allowed to do so through the use of school phones, not their cell phones. Students are not allowed to call, text, or email on their personal cell phones during the school day. Cell phones that ring or cause a distraction to school may be confiscated and held in the office for parent pick-up.

## Campus Safety

We welcome you to come and be involved in the many events we have planned for this school year! **All visitors are required to enter through the main entrance and sign in at the office.** In keeping with a safe and healthy environment, please note that all visitors are subject to metal detection. Sherwood Elementary is also a Tobacco-Free environment. To ensure the safety of students and staff, visitors are not permitted in areas other than the main lobby and office area without express permission, per NCGS 14.159.12 (a). This also applies to playground areas.

We are excited to have Officer Robinson as our full time school resource officer again this year.

To help prepare students and staff for the unexpected, monthly fire drills are held at Sherwood. We also conduct weather drills, evacuation drills, and lockdown drills at required intervals. Our goal in conducting these drills is to create an environment where students feel safe every day. Please note that administrators also conduct random metal detection of students and their belongings several times a month.

To achieve student safety and keep our focus on instruction, the following items are not allowed at school:

1. Knives, guns, or other sharp-pointed or dangerous objects, including fireworks.
2. Money that is not being used to pay for lunch, field trips, or school-sponsored events.
3. Live animals from home, except with an invitation from the child's teacher.
4. Chewing gum, candy, and sodas.
5. Toys, including trading cards of any kind.
6. Electronic devices such as iPads, iPods, or handheld gaming devices. Sherwood administration may hold these items until they are picked up by a parent.

### **Positive Behavior Intervention Support**

Sherwood is proud to be a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) school. This means we focus on clearly defined expectations, rewards for positive behaviors, and students making good choices. We strive for consistency in student expectations, procedures, and consequences so that our school environment is predictable and safe. Our school mantra is "Rams are Motivated to Succeed." Ask your student how RAMS promotes **R**esponsibility, positive **A**ttitude, **M**anners, and **S**afety in all areas of the building.

In addition to school-wide expectations, all students are expected to follow the Gaston County Code of Conduct (found on the GCS website). A copy will also be sent home with your student at the beginning of the year. Administrators use this document as a guideline for administering consequences when a student does not respond to classroom behavior interventions. The GCS Code of Conduct also applies to students when they are being transported on buses or attending school-sponsored events or trips.

### **Student Testing**

When state and local standardized tests are to be administered, testing information will be sent home with students in their homework folders. Parents may also visit the Gaston County Schools website at [www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us) for updated testing schedules.

### **Student Promotion**

We want all students to be prepared to succeed in the next grade level. Teachers will communicate with parents in order to accurately inform them about their child's academic performance. Throughout the year, you will also receive information regarding your child's academic progress.

In grades K – 2, students should meet grade level criteria in reading, math, and writing before promotion to the next grade level is considered. Third grade students fall under the North Carolina Read to Achieve legislation, and they must pass one of several performance indicators before moving on to 4th grade. Sherwood will host a Read to Achieve Family Night to explain the following performance indicators: N.C. EOG tests, mClass, iReady, GCS Benchmarks, and other alternate assessments. Student promotion in grades fourth and fifth is based on two factors: the student’s performance on the N.C. End-of-Grade tests and their ability to meet grade level curriculum criteria.

### **Student Support Services**

**Counselor-** Our guidance program aims to help each student achieve his/her highest growth mentally, emotionally, and socially. We try to achieve these goals by:

1. Helping students feel at home in our school with new teachers and friends.
2. Conducting individual conferences when requested by a student, teacher, or parent/guardian.
3. Providing additional opportunities for leadership, growth, & citizenship development.
4. Serving as the liaison between the school and other counseling programs such as mental health agencies and day treatment facilities.

If you have questions concerning our counseling programs feel free to contact the school counselor at 704-866-6609.

**Social Worker-** Our social worker aims to help families overcome obstacles to education. She demonstrates the motto “compassion in action” by:

1. Helping families find needed resources within the community.
2. Working with families of students with poor attendance.

If you have questions or concerns in these areas, feel free to contact our school social worker.

### **Instructional Support**

Sherwood uses the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) process to provide interventions for students who are below grade level. Progress is documented and data is discussed with other professionals to find the best support for each student. Part of this process includes vision and hearing screenings. Your child’s teacher will contact you if he/she is going through this intervention process.

Other instructional supports include the Exceptional Children’s program, English as a Second Language, and Academically/Intellectually Gifted classes.

All students at Sherwood take enrichment classes (art, music, P.E., library, and Innovation Station) on a weekly basis to build upon their classroom instruction.



## Field Trips

Each grade level will take several field trips this year. The cost is carefully considered for entrance to the activity and travel on the bus. Parents who wish to chaperone field trips must be an approved GCS volunteer. You can sign up on the GCS homepage by clicking “Become a Volunteer.” Once approved, you will be contacted for volunteer orientation. Some field trip locations do not require parent chaperones. Please know that only school staff members are allowed to ride on buses with the students. Chaperoning parents can follow behind the school bus in their own cars.

## Technology

Technology plays an important part of preparing students for their future academic and career success. Each student at Sherwood is assigned a chromebook that is theirs to use each day at school and at home. This access allows our students to be actively engaged in integrated technology activities that enhance the curriculum. All students will sign an acceptable use policy the first time they log in to the school network. This outlines specific rules for students using the Gaston County Schools’ computer network and computer hardware. These policies will also be reviewed by teachers. *In the enrollment packet, parents are given the opportunity to opt their child out of access to the Internet.* We are pleased to be a one-to-one technology school!

## Student and Classroom Celebrations

Throughout the year, classrooms may have celebrations for students. Parents are invited to provide treats on these occasions; school and teacher guidelines will be shared with parents and guardians. For student birthdays, individual students will be recognized on the announcements and will receive a special treat from the school. Parents will be allowed to bring in items for their child’s class only if they fit one of these categories:

- Store-bought treat brought in to share **at lunch time ONLY**
- Treat bags sent in to send home at the end of the day

**\*\*In an effort to preserve instructional time, we will not host birthday parties in our classrooms. Please coordinate lunchtime treats or treat bags ahead of time with your child’s teacher. Remember, items MUST be store bought with ingredient labels.**

In addition, please know that large gifts such as flowers and balloons cannot be taken to classrooms/cafeteria, delivered by the office staff, or taken on the bus. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, please use the GCS website ([gaston.k12.nc.us](http://gaston.k12.nc.us)) or one of the following resources to obtain the most up-to-date information. Please do not call the school.

### Radio

WGNC Gastonia – 1450  
WGAS Gastonia – 1420  
WLTC Gastonia – 1370  
WCGC Belmont – 1420

### Television

WBTV – Channel 3  
WSOC – Channel 9  
WCCB – Channel 18  
GCS Station – Channel 21

\*Information regarding inclement weather will also be found on our website, and a Parentlink phone call will be made for all parents and guardians.

## [Download the App](#)

Gaston County Schools has a mobile app to enhance communication with parents, students, employees, and the community. The mobile app is available as a free download in the Apple iTunes and Google Play online stores by searching "Gaston County Schools."

## [Envision Payment Solutions- Check Payments to School](#)

Your check is welcome at Sherwood Elementary School. Gaston County Schools recognizes that occasionally a parent may inadvertently overdraw a checking account, and a check may be returned by your bank. In order to recover these funds in a private and professional manner, Gaston County Schools has contracted with Envision Payment Solutions for collection of returned checks.

Checks should be written on a commercially printed check with your name, address, and a contact telephone number. When a person writes a check to the school or the school system, he/she agrees that if the check is returned for any reason, it may be represented electronically on the same account and that the service fee for returned checks established by law may be debited from the same account. If the check and fees are not collected electronically, Envision Payment Solutions will contact the check writer by mail and or telephone to make payment arrangements.

## [School Lunch Information](#)

If your child brings lunch from home, please know that students are not allowed to operate a microwave to reheat food.

All questions about account balances, charges, and school meals should be directed to the cafeteria manager.

**The following information from the Gaston County School Nutrition Department is very important to know:**

### **School Nutrition Meal Offerings**

1. Breakfast and Lunch are offered daily in all schools.

**Breakfast** -A complete school breakfast consists of:

An entrée made with grain and /or protein.

Fat-free or 1% milk, and

Fruit and/or juice (limit of one juice per meal)

All students will be required to take at a **minimum** one serving of fruit or juice and an entree in order to receive a complete School Breakfast at established meal price (or no charge for a CEP school).

The maximum amount of food a student can select is one entrée, one milk, and one fruit and /or juice.

If student does not select a complete school breakfast as outlined above, they have to pay individually for the items they choose.

**Lunch** - A complete school Lunch consists of:

An entrée made with protein and/or grain

Fat free or 1% milk,

Vegetable, and

Fruit

All students will be required to take at a minimum one serving of vegetable or fruit and two additional items in order to receive a school lunch at established meal price (or no charge for CEP schools).

A lunch entrée may count as two items. At a minimum, a student must select an entrée and a fruit or vegetable OR they must select two fruits or vegetables and two additional items to have the meal count as a lunch.

The maximum amount of food a student can select is one entrée, one milk, two vegetables, and two fruits.

If a student does not select a complete school lunch, as outlined above, they will have to pay individually for the items they choose.

2. Proposed Meal Prices for the 2023-2024 school year:

Breakfast: **Free**

Lunch: **Free**

Sherwood is one of 40 schools within Gaston County who will participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which will provide free breakfast and lunch for all students for the next four years.

### **Special Nutritional Needs**

Students with unique meal time needs may request modification to school meals by completing a Diet Order form.

Diet Order forms may be obtained from the Cafeteria Manager, the School Nurse, the School Nutrition Center in Lowell, or on School Nutrition page on Gaston County School website ([www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us))

The Diet Order form must be signed by a recognized medical authority and returned to the school nurse, or Cafeteria Manager or School Nutrition Center.

***All students are encouraged to complete a new Diet Order form for each new school year. However Diet Orders will remain in effect perpetually until School Nutrition receives written notification from a recognized medical authority or parent/guardian to terminate the Diet Order.***

## Sherwood Elementary School Family Engagement Calendar of Events 2023-2024

- August 14 5:30-7:30 Orientation for students in 1st-fifth grades
- August 15 12:00-1:00 Kindergarten Parent Meeting
- September 19 Family Fun/Title I Night 5:30-7:30  
Science Fun with the Schiele Museum at Sherwood
- Sherwood BBQ Fundraiser Sept. 29, 2023 10:00-6:00
- Pictures: Fall                              Sept. 22, 2023  
                                Fall make-ups                      Nov 3, 2023  
                                Class groups & Clubs        January 2, 2024  
                                Spring                                        March 8, 2024
  
- October 2-11 Lunch & Learn Family Engagement Activity
- October 12 Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences  
\*11:30 a.m. early dismissal for students
- October 27, 2023 P.T.O. Halloween Dance
- Storybook Character Day & Parade Oct. 31
- Book Fair: Fall Nov. 7th-11th (in conjunction with Lunch & Learns throughout the week)  
                                Spring March 6-10 (in conjunction with Parent/Teacher Conferences on 3/9)
- Family Engagement Night: Holidays Around the World December 14, 2023 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- Family Engagement Night: Sherwood Night at the Schiele Museum Feb. 8, 2024 5:30-8:00  
\*\*This event is free for all Sherwood families.
- P.T.O. Sweetheart Dance Feb. 9th, 2024
- March 7 Parent/Teacher Conferences  
11:30 early dismissal for students
- Read Across America Week–February 26th-March 1st  
Oh the Places You'll Go!
- Field Day March 27 & 28
- PTO Movie Night April TBD
- Musical Performances & Art Show TBD
- Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week May 6-10, 2024
- End-of-Year Awards Day & Pre-K, Kindergarten, & 5th Grade Graduation: May 17-21st

**Sherwood Rams are Motivated to Succeed!**