

NEW HOPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
Student/Parent Handbook  
2022-2023

**MUSTANGS ON THE MOVE**  
**BLAZING TRAILS**  
**IN THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE**



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Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to the beginning of the 2022-2023 school year at New Hope Elementary School. Our teachers and staff are committed to helping your child reach his or her full potential!

To ensure an optimal school environment where students excel academically and behaviorally, we will be helping students develop strategies to foster their success individually and in learning teams. Clear expectations and consistent practice at school and home will help our children achieve at high levels.

Part of our commitment to having a great school year requires an understanding and support of some basic information, rules, and procedures. The cooperation of students, parents, and all staff will ensure the effectiveness of these guidelines and provide a safe environment for students to engage in learning.

Life has been different for all of us over the past two years and routines and expectations have been altered. As such, we all need to help students develop skills needed to be successful in the learning environment of school. Please take time to read the Student/Parent Handbook, sit down with your child to discuss the expectations, and then check his/her understanding of the role he or she will take in being a successful New Hope student.

You are encouraged to contact the school anytime you have questions or concerns. The school will make every effort to answer any questions relating to your child's education and will be happy to assist you in scheduling a conference, when needed. Email is probably the best way to communicate with our staff and emails can be found on our school website.

Our school has a very active PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) and becoming a member is a great way to get involved in supporting our students and teachers. Information about PTO events will be sent home and posted on the school and PTO Facebook pages.

Thank you in advance for supporting our school by actively partnering with New Hope Elementary School! We look forward to a great year.

Sincerely,

*Lynn B. Whiteside*

Lynn B. Whiteside, Principal

[lynnbwhiteside@gaston.k12.nc.us](mailto:lynnbwhiteside@gaston.k12.nc.us)

# The 's of New Hope Elementary School

## **Arrival**

The school day is from 7:30-2:15.

We encourage students to arrive by 7:15 so that they may get to class on time, unpack, and get ready for the day.

7:00- Building open for children

7:30- Tardy bell, students must be in class as instruction begins promptly at 7:30.

Breakfast will not be served after 7:30.

## **Asbestos Management Plan**

All Gaston County schools are required to file an Asbestos Management Plan. This plan outlines areas at school sites where asbestos is located. The Asbestos Management Plan for New Hope Elementary School is available for your inspection in the front office, should you wish to review it.

## **Attendance**

Going to school is a student's job. We feel that a day missed in school is comparable to a parent missing a day of work.

It is logical to assume that academic material covered in a school day would never again be re-taught in as much detail.

According to the Gaston County School Attendance Policy, after 12 absences, the student does not meet the 94% attendance requirement for promotion to the next grade level. Students must be in attendance at least 168 days. **Only 12 absences, including excused and unexcused absences, are permitted each school year.**

We will use the Parent Link calling program to contact parents when absences occur. Please contact the school as phone numbers change, so that we may contact you. Please observe the following procedures regarding necessary absences:

- All absences are coded unexcused until a note is brought to school.
- Bring a note to the teacher WITHIN 3 days of absence stating: child's name, date(s) & reason for absence.
- Excused absences : personal illness, family illness, death in the family, court, and doctor appointment and religious holidays.

Our School Social Worker will be in contact with families if student attendance declines.

## **Board Policy**

Information regarding specific school system policies can be found on the GCS website ([www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us)).

**Buses** (Questions?) please call Ken Loudon, Assistant Principal, @ 704.836.9112.

Please become familiar with your child's bus number and driver's name as it will be helpful should you need to contact the school about a bus matter.

Bus routes and student assignment to buses is based on consistent ridership. If your child wants to ride a different bus home with a friend, he/she must bring in a note from you and present it to the teacher first thing in the morning. Seating is often limited so students may not always be able to ride a bus to which they are not assigned.

To ensure that students are safe on the bus:

**Students must:**

Remain in their seats at all times. Refrain from putting their head or limbs out of the windows.

Always follow the directions of the driver. Refrain from eating and drinking on the bus.

Talk quietly on the bus. Stay off of the roadway while waiting for the bus.

Keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves. Refrain from behaviors that are disruptive.

**Consequences for Inappropriate Bus Behavior**

1. First Offense-a warning and phone call home by the assistant principal.
2. Second Offense-Loss of bus riding privileges for 1 day and a conference with the student, parent, and administrator.
3. Third Offense- Loss of bus riding privilege for 3 days.
4. Fourth Offense- Loss of bus riding privilege for 5 days or possibly for the remainder of the year.

For offenses that seriously hinder safety of self or the safety of others such as fighting and moving throughout the bus while it is in motion, an immediate bus suspension may be given without warning.

Riding a bus is a privilege. Improper behavior on the bus will result in loss of that privilege.

**Cafeteria**

Students will be eating in their classroom and following COVID protocol, to the extent possible. Students will wash their hands before and after eating.

**Meal Prices:**

Breakfast- \$1.40 students, \$0.00 students qualifying for free/reduced lunch meals, \$2.00 adults

Lunch- \$2.90 students, \$0.40 students qualifying for free/reduced lunch meals, \$4.00 adults

## **Student Lunch Accounts**

- Check, Cash, or Money Order can be accepted in the school cafeteria.
- Parents/Guardians may utilize **www.k12paymentcenter.com** to pay with their credit or debit card.
- Parents/Guardians may restrict or prohibit the purchase of meals or snacks by submitting a "Purchase Account Limits" form. (available on the GCS web page in the School Nutrition section, and must be renewed annually)

## **Snacks**

Only students in good financial standing (be free of charges) with the cafeteria may purchase snacks from the cafeteria on the following days:

Monday & Wednesday- Grades 1 & 2

Tuesday & Thursday- Grades 3, 4, & 5

## **Special Dietary Needs**

Students with medical conditions such as allergies and diabetes may request modifications 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 the School Nutrition page on the Gaston County Schools website ([www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us)).

## **Car Riders/Drop Off**

- Parents are asked to drop their children off after 7:00 A.M.
- There will not be staff on duty prior to 7:00 to supervise car riders & walkers.
- Please adhere to the instructions given by staff on duty.
- **For the safety of our students and staff, please do not text while your vehicle is moving through the car circle.**
- Please pull up as far as possible to allow as many cars as possible to get off of the main road and into the driveway.
- Staff are not available to conference with parents while on duty in the morning.
- Please make an appointment to speak with them after dismissal at 2:45pm or send them an email.
- **Staff members will help your child get to their class, please do not walk them to class.**

## **Drop Off Options:**

- 1. Front Circle-** parents may get in the drop off line & drop off their child at the front of the school.

**Please do not drop your child off at any other location as there will not be adult supervision.**

**Please be sure to K.I.S.S. (Keep it short and simple!)** Help your child be prepared to exit the car quickly- unbuckle before opening the door, have their book bag in hand and kiss mom or dad while waiting in line. **These few preparations really do help the car line move quickly!**

## **Cell Phones**

While students may have cell phones on campus at the elementary school, they must remain in their bookbag and turned off during the day. Cell phones will be confiscated and parents will be asked to pick up the phone if the policy is not followed.

## **Celebrations (no cakes, balloons, flowers, or deliveries)**

We announce birthdays during morning announcements and give each child a birthday surprise. If you wish to send in a small birthday treat that is **pre-wrapped**, it **MUST BE PRE ARRANGED** with the teacher.

Birthday invitations should be passed out at home or to ALL students in the class, not just a select few as it is upsetting to some children if they do not receive an invitation.

## **Changing Pick Up Routine**

**We will not take change requests over the phone. A written note, fax or an email to the teacher is required to change how your child goes home.** Please do not wait until the last minute to make these changes as your message may not be delivered. Thank you for understanding our need to maintain student safety.

**Please do not check your child out after 1:30 pm. While all minutes of instruction are important, teachers are summarizing learning, assigning homework, and getting students ready to finish their day. Adding early dismissals is disruptive to this procedure.**

## **Checks**

Your check is welcome (made payable to New Hope Elementary School). Gaston County Schools recognizes that occasionally parents may inadvertently overdraw a checking account and a check (NSF) may be returned by their bank. To recover these funds in a professional manner, the school system has contracted with a company to handle these instances.

## **Communication**

Both the Gaston County Schools web site [www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us), Facebook, and Time Warner Cable Channel 21 provide updated information about events happening in our school system. These are important resources for inclement weather reporting (weather delays).

## **Parent Link**

We typically send a weekly call to our entire student body on Sunday/Monday evenings to communicate reminders about upcoming events.

Please furnish the office with a **current, working phone number & email** so that we may communicate with you. All school newsletters will be sent via email.

## **Website**

Please check out our website: [www.gaston.k12.nc.us](http://www.gaston.k12.nc.us) under our schools/New Hope. The best means of contacting our staff members is via email. Newsletters, calendars, and other announcements are communicated through email. Please make sure your email is up to date so that you receive important communication.

## **Computers**

Use of the Internet and computers is a privilege, not a right. Students must conduct themselves in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. Unauthorized or inappropriate use may result in the cancellation of this privilege. By choosing Option 1 on the Student Information Packet you are, in essence, **not** allowing your child to use a computer. Option 2 states that your child is not permitted to be assigned a Gaston County Schools email address. **Simply sign as the parent and your child will be allowed computer access.**

## **Custody**

Parents who have custody issues should inform the school. We ask that you send a copy of any court documents so that we may enforce any judgment. Sometimes court documents can be difficult to interpret, so we may ask local law enforcement agencies to help with this effort. **Only court documents with a judge's order can indicate child custody.**

**We will only discuss a child's educational matters with those who have legal custody or those deemed permissible by the legal guardian.**

We would remind parents that schools are for learning, and we will not tolerate parents using school as a forum for domestic issues. If these issues arise, we will call the police and have the parties removed from the school campus.

## **Discipline**

Gaston County Schools has developed a Student Code of Conduct to ensure that our schools are safe learning environments. Students will be furnished with a copy of these rules and are expected to abide by them. Teachers will model and revisit rules frequently so that students understand our expectations.

Teachers will make every effort to provide positive interventions to help students learn desired school behavior. Ensuring a classroom that is optimal for student learning is the main goal of the teacher. Parents will be notified of student behavioral issues using telephone calls, emails, notes, and conferences.

**Student Behaviors are classified into 2 categories:**

### **Above the Line Offenses (teacher handles within the classroom)**

- Disrespect to staff (minor)
- Horseplay
- Disruptive behavior
- Insubordination/non-compliance with directions of adults
- Theft (minor)
- Falsification of Information (dishonesty)
- Inappropriate language/disrespect
- Cell phone use

**Interventions may include:** Conference with student, parent phone call/note, time-out, conference w/ guidance counselor, change in seating, silent lunch, behavior reflection sheet

**Below the Line Offenses (student will be referred to administration)**

- Fighting/Affray- Code of Conduct Rule 10
- Aggressive Behavior (with intent to harm)- Code of Conduct Rule 10
- Bullying- Code of Conduct Rule 6
- Harassment- Code of Conduct Rule 17 and Rule 25
- Disrespect to faculty/staff (major)- Code of Conduct Rule 1 and Rule 12
- Communicating Threats- Code of Conduct Rule 3 and Rule 4
- Property Damage- Code of Conduct Rule 8
- Inappropriate Items on School Property (ie Weapons)- Code of Conduct Rule 13
- Theft- major (electronic device, purse/wallet)- Code of Conduct Rule 9

***NEW HOPE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS***

|  | <b>H</b>   | <b>O</b>  | <b>P</b>  | <b>E</b>  |
|--|--|---|---|---|
|  | <b>HAVING RESPECT</b>  | <b>OPERATING SAFELY</b>   | <b>PRACTICING RESPONSIBILITY</b>  | <b>ENSURING I AM READY TO LEARN</b>                                   |
| <b><i>MORNING TRANSITION</i></b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter the room quietly.</li> <li>• Respect your items &amp; others.</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk to class.</li> <li>• Eat, mask, clean up.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpack quickly.</li> <li>• Start morning work.</li> </ul>  | <b>Voice Level 1</b>  |
| <b><i>BATHROOM</i></b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect privacy.</li> <li>• Respect property.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect personal space.</li> <li>• Leave a clean space.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flush.</li> <li>• Wash hands.</li> <li>• Throw trash away.</li> </ul>                                      | <b>Voice Level 0</b>  |
| <b><i>CAFETERIA &amp; LINE</i></b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak clearly &amp; politely when ordering.</li> <li>• Wait your turn.</li> <li>• Be silent in line.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain distance.</li> <li>• Stay seated.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get materials before sitting down.</li> <li>• Clean up your area.</li> </ul>                               | <b>Voice Level 0 in line</b><br><br><b>Voice Level 1 after eating</b> |
| <b><i>CLASSROOM &amp; SPECIALS</i></b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise your hand.</li> <li>• Keep your area clean.</li> <li>• Use kind words.</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow directions.</li> <li>• Keep hands &amp; feet to self.</li> <li>• Report problems to the teacher.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have needed materials.</li> <li>• Keep up with supplies.</li> <li>• Do your best work.</li> </ul>          | <b>Voice Level 1 &amp; 2</b>  |
| <b><i>HALLWAY</i></b>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give personal space.</li> <li>• Silent greeting. (finger wave)</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk on the right side.</li> <li>• Face forward in a single-file line.</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move quietly &amp; quickly.</li> <li>• Hands by your side.</li> </ul>                                      | <b>Voice Level 0</b>  |
| <b><i>RECESS</i></b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share equipment &amp; space.</li> <li>• Use kind words &amp; include others.</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay in the assigned area.</li> <li>• Solve problems peacefully.</li> <li>• Take turns.</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Line up quickly.</li> <li>• Enter &amp; exit school quietly.</li> <li>• Take care of equipment.</li> </ul> | <b>Voice Level 3</b>  |

**Voice Level 0= silent**

**Voice Level 1= whisper**

**Voice Level 2= inside voice**

**Voice Level 3= outside voice**



## **Dismissal/Pick Up**

Make sure that we know how your child gets home every day. **We will not accept phone calls to change how your child goes home.** If there is a change in this procedure, written notice is required (note, email or fax )

We cannot accept a child's word about changes in how they are getting home.

2:15- **Bus Riders & Daycares dismissed**

2:20- **Walkers**

2:25- **Car Riders dismissed**

Students will be given name tags to attach to their bookbags. These will be used to ensure that the correct student is getting in the correct car outside.

**Car/Walker Tag**-Parents/guardians must show their Car/Walker Tag to pick up students. Hang from the rearview mirror so that it can be seen by school staff. Request extra tags from your child's teacher.

**Encourage your child to learn their pick up number, this identifier will be called in the classroom to dismiss your child to the pick up circle.**

### **Front Circle-**

- Parents may get in the pick up line (that winds around the back of the school) & proceed to pick up their child at the front of the school.
- School staff will look for your car rider tag and call your child or children's names to come out front.
- They will hold up a number (1-6) to indicate which post you will need to stop at to pick up your child. You can help this process by only stopping at the assigned post. If your child is not at the correct post, safety patrol members will help them move to the correct spot and get safely into your car.

## **Disruptive Items**

**We ask that the following items be left at home** as they may prove to be disruptive to the learning environment and may be "tempting items" for other students to take:

**Electronic devices, cell phones, game cards (like Pokemon), and toys (like fidget spinners).**

Individual teachers may allow these items under certain circumstances such as field trips, special game days, or other reward days.

## **Dress Code**

Students are expected to maintain an appearance that is neither distracting to other students nor disruptive to the educational environment or the safe and healthy climate of schools.

Students must wear **tennis shoes** to participate in **recess or P.E.**

Students shall **not** wear:

- Flip-flops or sandals during physical education
- Hats, bandannas, or other types of headgear or sunglasses in the building.

- Clothing with indecent language or pictures (sex, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, etc.)
- Clothing that exposes undergarments.
- Shirts that fail to cover the stomach completely.

### **Homework**

Work done at home is an opportunity to practice and extend that which has been taught or introduced in school. The amount and kind is determined by grade levels. As a parent you should expect the following:

- Independent reading
- Parent to child read aloud
- Reading/math assignments as needed

### **Immunizations**

Upon entry into public school, students must be fully immunized. All immunizations must be up to date by the 30<sup>th</sup> calendar day or students will be suspended from school until shots are current. State law requires students to be sent home until proof of immunization can be provided to the school.

### **Medication**

New Hope Elementary School strictly enforces the Gaston County School policy concerning medication.

- It is against School Board policy for students to carry medication, prescription or non-prescription at school. (EpiPen & asthma inhaler are exceptions)
- **All prescribed and over the counter medications (ex. Tylenol) must have a signed authorization by a physician and parent.**
- Controlled substances (certain ADHD medications) must be counted by a staff member in the presence of a parent.
- If your child needs to take medicine or medication please complete an "Authorization for Medication" form.

### **Parent Involvement**

There are many ways to get involved in your child's school. New Hope Elementary School PTO has been highly involved in improving our school. Take notice of classroom libraries, Scholastic magazines, computers, and document cameras. Each year our PTO sponsors a Carnival and Fun Run to raise money for our school. We hope that you will help support our school by taking part in these events.

All parents are urged to become members and to actively participate. The membership is free and every family is welcome!

Board meetings are held monthly (dates posted on our school website) and are open to parents.

### **Remote Learning Days**

If school is canceled for inclement weather or other reason students may be asked to participate in remote learning. **Student attendance will be reflected as student participation in learning activities on the remote learning day.** Below is the attendance process reminder for remote learning days from NC DPI:

Attendance in a remote instruction environment is designed to keep students engaged, ensure they are on

pace, and offer academic and emotional support. Daily attendance must be taken in PowerSchool on Remote Learning Days.

***A student is considered present for daily attendance during a remote learning day:***

- ***If a student completes their daily assignments, either online or offline;  
and/or***
- ***If a student has a daily check-in, a two-way communication, with the appropriate teacher(s):***
  - ***In grades K-5, homeroom teacher***
  - ***In all other grade levels, each course teacher as scheduled***

### **Report Cards/Interims**

As a means to measure your child's academic success, interim reports and report cards are sent home quarterly. Each 4½ weeks interim reports show areas of growth and areas for improvement. Report cards measure cumulative grades and behavior each 9 weeks. Parents in grades 3-5 should check their child's Power School account weekly for their student's most up to date progress.

### **Safety Drills**

As a part of the Gaston County Schools Safe Schools Initiative, random metal detection is conducted weekly. In addition, New Hope Elementary School holds safety drills: fire, tornado, and lockdown. These drills are practiced so that our students may know how to respond in the event of an emergency.

### **Support Services**

Our support services department is composed of our school guidance counselor, school nurse, and school social worker. Both the Nurse and Social Worker are at New Hope one day per week.

**School Nurse** provides basic care and education. (different than a doctor's office)

**School Social Worker** assists parents in improving student attendance and investigates residency matters.

**School Guidance Counselor** teaches guidance lessons, as well as meets with students/parents to develop appropriate strategies to increase student success.

### **Tardies**

**Students are expected to be in class and working at 7:30am.** A transition period from 7:00 until 7:30 will allow for students to get to class, unpack and begin working. Tardies will be coded unexcused unless a doctor's note is presented. Traffic can be particularly congested in the morning so please plan to leave home early enough so that your child can arrive to school on time. A student's job is school. **Let's help them develop good work ethic at a young age.** Appointments need to be scheduled so that students do not miss instruction.

### **Telephone**

Office staff will contact parents in the event that a child is hurt or sick. Please provide the school with current phone numbers so we can reach you. It is also good practice to teach your child his or her phone number and street address for safety purposes.

## **Tobacco Free Policy**

Tobacco is no longer permitted on any Gaston County Schools campus, including vehicles. Parents, students, and staff may not use any tobacco product at any time on school premises. Vaping is included in this rule. Rules are in effect at any function or school sponsored event both indoor and outdoor.

## **Visitors**

At this time no visitors are allowed inside of school buildings.

We all have a part to play in a successful school year- students, teachers, and parents. The New Hope Staff looks forward to working with you this year as a partner in helping your child succeed!



Dear Parents,

Please read and review the Student/Parent Handbook as well as the Gaston County Code of Student Conduct with your child and discuss it with him or her. All students, regardless of their age, should have some age appropriate knowledge of our school expectations after discussing the handbook content.

Please complete the following below and return it to your child's teacher tomorrow. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

*Lynn B. Whiteside*

Lynn B. Whiteside, Principal



**I have read and discussed the New Hope Student/Parent Handbook and the Gaston County Code of Student Conduct with my child.**

**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Name** \_\_\_\_\_