

McAllister Elementary School's

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024



MCALLISTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

224 Veterans Memorial Pkwy

Richmond Hill, GA 31324

912.851.4040

This handbook highlights MES procedures, but it is also important for parents and/or guardians to read and explain the [Bryan County Student Handbook](#) to their students.

McAllister Elementary School

224 Veterans Memorial Parkway
Richmond Hill, Georgia 31324
Telephone: 912.851.4040 Fax: 912.727.2071



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! We look forward to embarking on another year where we remain, “Dedicated to Excellence and Success in ALL We Do.”

As always, we are eager to create and maintain an environment that is welcoming, safe and encourages continual academic, social, and personal growth for all of our McAllister Elementary School Wildcats. We know that strong relationships between families and educators improve students’ success both inside and outside of the classroom. We want you to continue being an active participant in your child’s education. There is no substitute for a combined home-school effort in providing children educational excellence.

This handbook will help you and your student better understand our expectations at McAllister and provide basic information on how our school operates. Please keep it as a ready reference. Although we have attempted to cover an extensive amount of information, I realize information on specific situations may not be included.

Please feel free to contact me if you are unable to find an answer to a question in this handbook. I believe open communication is vital to the success of a school so my door will always be open. As partners, our students will continue to succeed.

Thank you for the opportunity you give us daily to work with you and your child!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather Tucker". The script is cursive and fluid.

Heather Tucker, Principal

Start of the School Day

MES students may be dropped off at 7:05 a.m. Our car line ends at 7:35. Car riders and walkers who are late must be signed-in by a parent in the front office. This procedure is to ensure the safety of all of our students.

Classes begin promptly at 7:40 AM, so students should be in their class by that time, or they will be considered tardy for the day.

Breakfast and Lunch

Children need healthy meals to learn, and Bryan County School System offers these each school day. Breakfast is served every morning from 7:05 AM to 7:35 AM in the cafeteria. Breakfast will be \$2.25 and lunch \$3.25 for students. Payments to your child's lunch account can be made using the MySchoolBucks website which can be accessed through McAllister Elementary School's website. We ask that all parents/guardians monitor their child's account balances throughout the year. Anytime a student's lunch balance is above \$20, an alternative lunch will be served. The school will send weekly balance notices to help you keep track.

Parents may join their students for lunch once a week during the specified lunch week each month. A schedule of "Lunch Guest Weeks" will be shared at the beginning of the year. Due to limited seating, students may have only 2 adult visitors at a time. Unfortunately, we do not have space to accommodate siblings. We encourage all diners to enjoy meals prepared by the school cafeteria as food from outside restaurants is not permitted to be brought inside of the school. The cost of lunch for visitors is \$3.85. We have designated *visitors' tables* in the cafeteria for parents and their students. Students' friends are not permitted at the *visitors' tables* unless their parents are also present.

Attendance

Student attendance is an important part of academic success and missing an excessive number of days can put a student in danger of retention. Due to the updated Bryan County Attendance Policy, only doctor's notes will excuse student absences. Please ensure hard copies of doctor's notes are sent into the child's teacher within 48 hours of your student returning to school. An attendance meeting will be called if a student has an excessive number of unexcused absences.

Any combination of 10 (early check-outs or late arrivals) will require the parent to provide proof of residency documentation. Students checked out prior to 11:10 AM are considered absent as they were present for less than half the school day at MES. Please see Bryan County's full attendance policy explained in the Bryan County Student Handbook.

Class Assignments When Absent

Teachers and paraprofessionals will assist the students with missed lessons and assignments when they return from an absence. When students are absent due to illness, we prefer that they use that time to rest and recover.

Student Health Care

The following procedures will be used to determine student illness and parent notification:

- **Fever** – Parents will be notified when a child has an elevated fever and the child will be sent home. Students can return to school when fever-free for 24 hours WITHOUT medication.
- **Rash** – Parents will be notified when a student has a suspicious rash that could possibly be contagious.
- **Nausea, vomiting, and related illness** – Parents will be notified and asked to make arrangements to have the student picked up at school. Students may return after a 24-hour period with no vomiting.
- **Lice**—Parents will be notified when their student is suspected of having head lice. Before the student can be admitted back to school, he or she must be checked by the school nurse. Parents should accompany their student to school for him/her to be rechecked by the school nurse. Unless proof of treatment is presented and all live lice are gone, students will not be readmitted to school nor allowed to ride the school bus until these procedures are followed.
- **The school nurse will determine when a child needs to be sent home due to illness. If a student is sent home by the nurse, it is considered an excused absence.**

Medicine

All medication—prescription and over the counter—must be taken to the clinic by a parent/guardian between 7:05 and 7:40 a.m. with a note that clearly explains the dosage. It is required that all medications remain in the original, labeled containers and prescriptions must be currently prescribed to the particular student. Prescription medication will be logged, and an inventory will be updated as medication is taken. While students are at school, medications including cough drops will be kept and administered in the clinic.

White Card and Release of Students During the School Day

Every parent or guardian has access to the PowerSchool Parent Portal. Student's demographic information is stored within this system and is referred to when releasing students. In order to guard the safety of your child, our office staff is extremely cautious when releasing students to other adults. Please keep the information in the PowerSchool Parent Portal updated with current phone numbers, who to contact in case of an emergency, and the names of adults that have permission to check-out your child.

Custody documentation must be on file, and the office must be notified immediately when changes are made to custodial agreements.

If there is a need for a different adult other than those listed in PowerSchool to pick up your child, a signed and dated note from the parent/guardian is required. Phone calls and Remind messages are not accepted. When it is time to check out your child, our staff will require the adult to present a picture ID.

Students checked out prior to 11:10 AM are considered absent as they were present for less than half the school day. Early check-outs should occur prior to 2:00 p.m. except in the case of an emergency.

Visitors During the Day

Visitors are not allowed in the classroom during the regular instructional day. Special activities in which parents are invited to attend will be scheduled throughout the school year so that you can be a part of your child's learning experience.

Due to limited space and safety concerns, siblings not enrolled at MES and/or other visitors cannot accompany parents:

- when they are volunteering
- when they are attending scheduled activities in the classroom
- when a parent is here for lunch

Volunteers

The completion of Bryan County School's Volunteer Orientation is required each year for anyone wishing to volunteer. Information regarding the Volunteer Orientation process is shared out by our Volunteer Coordinator at the start of every school year. After completing the orientation, volunteers are permitted to start after the Labor Day holiday.

Snack Time

Every class enjoys a snack time during the school day—some in the morning and some in the afternoon. Please send a small, healthy snack with your child each day. Please do not send candy or sodas. Snacks will not be shared due to concerns for students with allergies.

Parties and Treats

Parents will be able to attend celebrations leading up to our winter holiday and the end of the school year. For other events like Halloween, Valentine's Day, and Spring Break, students will receive a special celebratory snack. Treats on such days are kept as simple as possible because instruction is the most important activity of the day. Teachers and paraprofessionals will supervise these special treats.

Birthdays

For birthdays, parents can choose to send in a special snack (mini cupcakes, cookies, fruit, etc.) that the teacher will pass out during the regular snack time. Students are not allowed to receive deliveries at school such as balloons, flowers, etc. Students may deliver party invitations at school, but the invitations cannot be addressed to specific students, and all students in the class are to be invited or the invitations will not be delivered.

Conferences

We encourage parent-teacher conferences as they provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to work together as a team to support the student. During the month of September, all teachers will be reaching out to communicate about the start of the school year and offer a conference. February 20th to March 15th will be our Spring Conference Window. We encourage all families to take part in our spring conference window either face to face or virtually. In addition to the pre-planned conference windows, your child's teacher will be happy to meet with you at any time throughout the school year. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule a time to meet.

Student Behavior at McAllister

McAllister is a Positive Behavioral and Intervention Supports or PBIS school. Our PBIS system, known as PAWS Principles, establishes a foundation of regular, proactive support for all our students while preventing unwanted behaviors. At McAllister Elementary School, Wildcats have a P-Positive Attitude, A-Act Respectfully, W-Work Responsibly, and S-Stay Safe. These four expectations are common throughout our school, and staff and students work together to create an environment that matches this. Our teachers and staff work with our students to motivate them to meet our PAWS expectations through a variety of individual and group incentives. This includes McTickets, which can be used to "buy" prizes from McTicket Mall and/or opportunities to be a part of a prize drawing.

However, we understand that our students will sometimes display undesired behaviors and potentially break rules. For this reason, we follow steps outlined in our PAWS Principles plan in which teachers work with students and their families to promote better future choices. Administration will become involved when a behavior becomes chronic. Further, if a student's actions jeopardize his or her personal safety or that of others, administration will intervene immediately.

Electronic Devices

Elementary Students shall not have cell phones or any other communication device turned on during school hours unless by a doctor's request. It is determined by a licensed physician or surgeon to be essential for the student's health. These students shall have a written plan including the doctor's written verification for cell phone use which has been approved by the school administrator and which is on file in the school office.

1st Offense-Students will have their cell phone/communication device taken away and returned at the end of the day.

2nd Offense-Students will have their cell phone/communication device taken and locked up in the office until a parent can come to school to retrieve it.

3rd Offense-Students will no longer be allowed to bring a cell phone/communication device to school until a parent conference with the administration is held.

Subsequent Offense(s) - (defiance) - Additional parent contact and more severe disciplinary action -including but not limited to suspension.

Transportation

TRANSPORTATION CHANGES

How a child is dismissed is based on information provided by the parent/guardian. Teachers record how each student is dismissed on a daily basis, and we depend on parents/guardians to help keep transportation information up to date.

If there is a change in transportation:

- A parent/guardian must send in a signed and dated note detailing the transportation change. **Remind Text Messages are not accepted.**
- Routine transportation changes cannot be made over the phone or by email. Parents must send a request including the date and parent signature to the teacher.
- Young students often forget to give notes to the teacher, so it is strongly recommended that you follow-up with a call to the office (912-851-4040) prior to the end of the school day.

WALKERS

Students who walk to and from school must live in the Buckhead East Subdivision as it is within walking distance to the school. Please do not park your vehicle and walk your student(s) up to the school.

Dependent Walkers	Independent Walkers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● A Walker Permission Form must be on file.● All grade levels are allowed to be dependent walkers. Pre-K students are only allowed to be dependent walkers. (Students in grades K-2 can walk home with a sibling in grades 3-5.)● These students are picked up by an adult who is listed on the White Card.● The adult picking up the student(s) must have the Transportation Tag for each student being picked up that day. This will serve as identification.● If an adult does not have a student's Transportation Tag, the student should be picked up from the main office using a picture ID.● Dependent Walkers will be dismissed from the bike rack on the side of the road closest to Buckhead East.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● A Walker Permission Form must be on file.● Independent Walkers must be in grades 3-5.● Younger siblings (in grades K-2) are only allowed to walk home independently when accompanied by older sibling(s). This must be documented on the Walker Permission Form. Pre-K students are not allowed to be an Independent Walker.● If the older sibling is absent or not walking home at regular dismissal time, the younger sibling must be picked up as a Dependent Walker.● Independent Walkers will be escorted to the crosswalk near the bike rack by a staff member. Staff members on duty will release students from this area.● Multiple students from the same household must leave campus together.

Should a student who is not a walker need to walk home with your child, the other parent must:

1. Complete a Walker Consent Form.
2. Send in a signed note requesting a Walker Pass. The note should include both students' names, the address of where the student is walking, and the date.

Car line Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

- Car riders have an assigned number printed on a Transportation Tag. Parents must have a Transportation Tag for each student displayed on the dashboard. Each student receives two Transportation Tags from their teacher at Open House.
- If, for any reason, the Transportation Tag(s) is not displayed during afternoon pick-up, the driver will be required to check-out the student through the main office. A picture ID will also be required.
- Follow the established flows of traffic, which differ for drop-off and pick-up. See the detailed descriptions at the bottom of the page and on the attached map.
- Refrain from cell phone use while in car line.
- We use the entire sidewalk to unload and load students. Please be prepared to pull-up as far as possible and follow the directions of MES staff members.
- Students should enter and exit vehicles on the passenger side only.
- Vehicles must be stopped and in PARK before students will be permitted to step out toward the vehicle.
- Vehicles should not pass others at any point—even if your vehicle has completely unloaded or loaded.
- Please do not park your car in the parking lot in order to allow him or her to walk up to the building.

Morning Drop-Off

Student drop off starts at 7:05 and car rider lines will close at 7:35 a.m. If you arrive after 7:35 a.m., please bring your child to the front office to sign-in. Students will be marked tardy if they are not in their classrooms at 7:40 a.m.

MES has two routes for morning carline:

- **Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 1st Graders**—Utilize the road that goes around the back of MES. Staff members will open the car doors of these students.
- **2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th Graders**—Utilize the road at the front of the school and enter through the same lane where buses drop off students. Students should be prepared to exit the vehicle independently. MES Staff members will be there to assist.
- **Families with mixed age groups should use the back carline that is designated for our younger students.**

Afternoon Pick-Up

- **All students**—Utilize the road that goes around the back of MES. Staff members will open the car doors of these students.
- **The afternoon pick-up will split into two lanes:**
 - **Outside Lane** – For vehicles picking up students in grades 2-5 only, you must utilize the outside lane.
 - **Inside Lane** – For vehicles picking up any students that are in Pre-K-1st grade, you must utilize the inside lane.
- Please have the appropriate Transportation Tag(s) displayed during pick-up. These Transportation Tags are used to call students out to the loading area and ensure that students are being picked-up by the correct adult.
- Make sure that students know their car Transportation Tag number.
- If, for any reason, the Transportation Tag(s) is not displayed during afternoon pick-up, the driver will be required to check-out the student through the main office. A picture ID will be required.

Morning Drop-Off Map



Morning Drop-Off Procedures

• • • • • **PK-1st**

Families with (PK-1st) students will utilize the **Dotted Line** Traffic Pattern. McAllister staff will open the doors of the cars for these students. If you have a mixed group of students, please utilize this line if there is a PK-1st grader in the car.



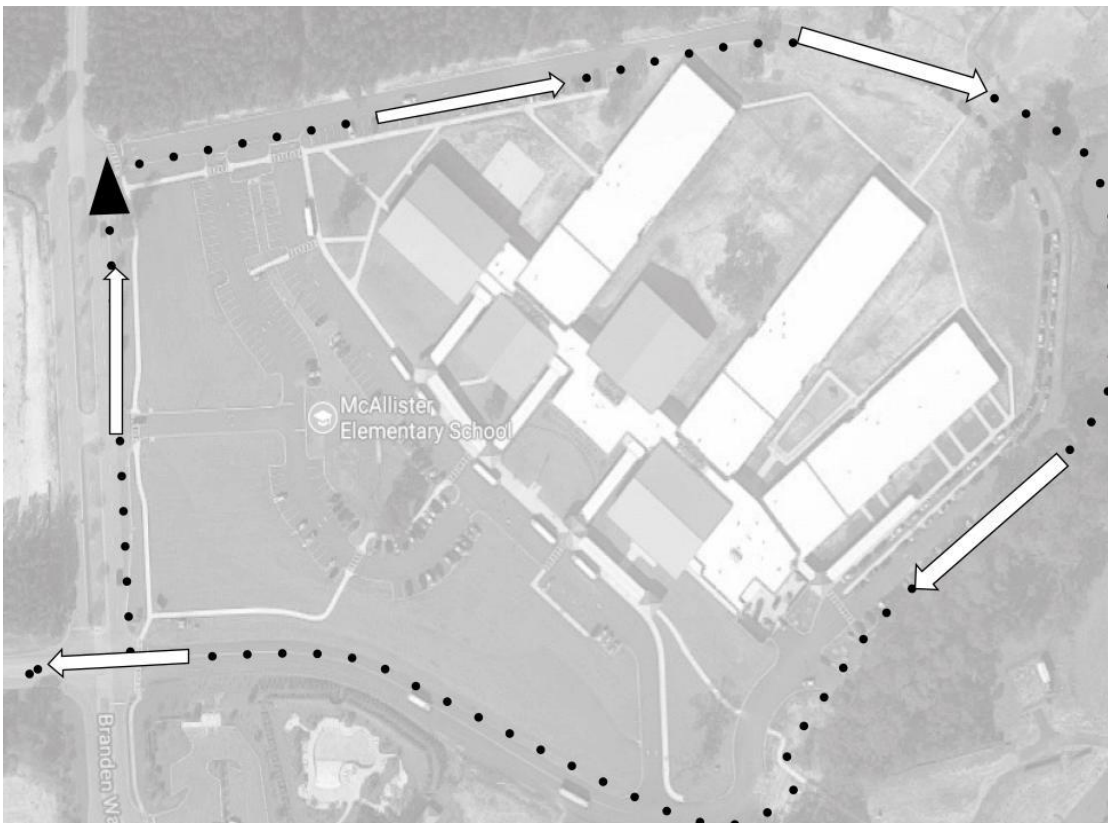
2nd – 5th

Families with only (2nd - 5th) students will utilize the **Dashed Line** Traffic Pattern. You will enter through the same lane where buses drop off students. Students should be prepared to exit from the vehicle on their own. McAllister staff will be out to assist as needed.

 Car rider Drop Off

 Bus Rider Drop Off

Afternoon Pick-Up Map



Afternoon Pick-Up Procedures



All Car Riders

For all students, utilize the road that goes around the back of MES. After you pass the gate, traffic can sort into two lines. If you are picking up any students in grades PK-1, you must utilize the inside lane. If you are only picking up students in grades 2-5, please utilize the outside lane.

Please have the appropriate Transportation Tag(s) displayed during pick-up. These Transportation Tags are what is used to call students out to the loading area and ensure that students are being picked-up by the correct adult.

Make sure that students know their Transportation Tag number. If, for any reason, the Transportation Tag(s) is not displayed during afternoon pick-up, the driver will be required to check-out the student through the main office. A picture ID will be required.