



# **Family Handbook**

**2024-2025**

FORT BELVOIR PRIMARY SCHOOL

5980 Meeres Road

Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

## Welcome to Fort Belvoir Primary!

We are delighted to have you and your family join our vibrant community of learners. As Fairfax County Public School located on Fort Belvoir military base, we understand the unique experiences and challenges that military-connected families face, and we are dedicated to ensuring that your child feels welcomed and valued.

Our goal is to provide a nurturing environment where every student can thrive academically and socially, forging friendships that last a lifetime. We are excited to partner with you on this educational journey, and we look forward to supporting your child in discovering their full potential at Fort Belvoir Primary.

### Administration Team

LaZedrick Jemison, Principal - ldjemison1@fcps.edu

Mary Flint, Assistant Principal - mflint@fcps.edu

Norma Gordon, Assistant Principal - ncgordon1@fcps.edu

### Front Office Team

Main Office Email: [fbesprimaryofficestaff@fcps.edu](mailto:fbesprimaryofficestaff@fcps.edu)

**Office Hours:** 8:00AM-5:00PM

Soli Rose

Kirssie Ramirez

Melissa Rice

Shavon Walden

### School Information

Telephone: 703-781-2700

Attendance: 703-781-2750

Health Room (703) 781-2710

<http://www.fcps.edu/FtBelvoirES/>

### School Hours:

Doors Open - 9:00 a.m

School Begins - 9:20 am

Dismissal - 4:05 pm

Students arriving after 9:20 am, must be accompanied to the front office by a parent or guardian for check-in.

## Visiting the School:

We enjoy having families visit the school for lunch and/or volunteering in the classrooms! Please note for safety reasons, you must have a valid driver's license, DMV-issued identification or a valid passport in order to enter the building.

Individuals will be asked to show their identification via the video system at the entry of the building in order to gain access to the building. You will be asked to sign in once more with your ID using a computer system located in the front lobby. This system is used throughout the FCPS district and cross-references sex/violent offender databases across the country.

Families are welcome to walk their child to the classroom **during the first week of school** and do not need to check in the front office. After the first week of school, we ask that parents remain outside the building.

**Families are permitted to come to school to eat lunch with their child beginning October 1st.** During the first weeks of school, we are learning and practicing routines and procedures in the cafeteria while building independence in certain community spaces. For classroom support, parents may speak directly with their child's teacher to express interest in volunteering.

## Attendance

Attending school regularly helps students feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Starting in Kindergarten, missing 18 days (less than 2 days a month) can make it harder to learn to read and result in lower test scores.

We understand that children will miss school due to illness, appointments and family events. Please report all absences to the front office before 10:00 am each day. You can call 703.782.2750 or email [fbesprimaryofficestaff@fcps.edu](mailto:fbesprimaryofficestaff@fcps.edu)

## Behavior

Fort Belvoir Primary School actively protects a student's right to learn in an environment that allows them to acquire the best education available. Students have a responsibility to behave in such a manner that does not interfere with the safety and learning of others. This year we are using a positive behavior approach. Schoolwide expectations and routines were created for common areas across the school. You can view these expectations below. We are also incorporating Morning Meetings, Closing circles, and assemblies that focus on behavior and character traits.

Hallways	Cafeteria	Recess	Bathroom	Bus
Walk safely	Stay at table spot	Take turns with all equipment	Respect the privacy of others	Stay in your seat and face forward
Quiet voice	Eat your food	Stay in the designated area	Use the bathroom correctly	Keep a safe body
Take care of work displayed	Use kind words	Use equipment correctly	Wash your hands	Quiet voice
	Clean your area	Play safely	Keep common areas clean	Follow directions from the bus driver and bus patrols
	Talk quietly with people at your table		Take the shortest path	

## Bicycles

In an effort to promote physical fitness and develop a sense of independence, parents/guardians of our students may wish to have their child ride a bicycle to school. Primary school students will park their bikes in the Upper school bike rack.

If the student does ride a bicycle to school, they should consider the following guidelines:

- Students should ride their bicycle on the sidewalk when available. Stay to the right side of the sidewalk and watch for pedestrians.
- In the absence of sidewalks, ride as far to the right side of the road as possible, going with the flow of traffic.
- When traveling in groups, ride in single file.
- Wear a UL listed bicycle helmet. This is required by law for students 16 years of age and younger.
- Obey traffic laws. Bicyclists should stop at stop signs, red traffic signals, etc.
- Obey instructions of police officers, crossing guards, and safety patrols.

We ask that students not use skateboards, roller blades/skates, or Heelys on school grounds and that they not be kept at school during the day.

## Birthday/Parties

We love celebrating our Dolphins' birthdays! Every month we announce birthdays over the PA system. Students are excited to come to the office and get a token of appreciation. Due to allergies and dietary restrictions we ask that **no food items** are brought to school to celebrate. Instead, we welcome the celebration in other ways, such as having a family member come in and read to the class, or donating a book to the school or classroom. For parties outside of school teachers are not allowed to distribute class rosters or parent contact information. If you are asking for invitations to be handed out at school, include all students.

## Cafeteria

We welcome parents to come and join their child for lunch. Families are permitted to come to school to eat lunch with their child **beginning October 1st**. During the first weeks of school, we are learning and practicing routines and procedures in the cafeteria while building independence.

## Conferences

Parent/guardian/teacher communication is essential to maintaining an effective partnership for students. The teacher or parent/guardian can request conferences. To protect valuable instructional time, conferences should be scheduled in advance

and planned before (8:45am) or after the school day (4:20pm). Families may request a conference by sending a note or email to the teacher.

## Contacting Child's Teacher

Email and TalkingPoints are the best way to contact your child's teacher. At the start of the school year you will get a welcome email from your child's teacher. All grade levels will be sending home bi-weekly newsletters to share the learning that is happening within the classroom.

## Delayed Opening/Early Closing Weather Related

Inclement weather (snow, extreme heat, etc.), may result in school closing, delayed opening, or early dismissal. These decisions are made on a county-wide basis.

**The official FCPS Website is generally the first and fastest mode** of communication. Other communication channels will be updated as quickly as possible including email, text, website, other social media, and news stations.

Parents/guardians and students are urged not to call Fort Belvoir Primary for this information. Families are strongly encouraged to sign up for "News You Choose" [Please click this link for more information.](#)

- 2 Hour Delay: School starts at 11:20 (doors open at 11:00).
- 2 Hour Early Release: Dismissal begins at 2:00

## Dress Code

Fort Belvoir Primary follows the [FCPS dress code](#) policy.

## Drill Procedures

During the school year, fire drills are held weekly the first month of school and monthly thereafter. During a fire drill, all persons are to evacuate the building immediately. There will also be other drills such as Tornado and Lockdown. These preparedness activities provide essential proactive training for behavior during any emergency situation.

## Early Release Mondays

Please note the following dates and times on your calendar listed below.

Fort Belvoir Primary Elementary School will release students at 1:00 pm on the days noted below:

- September 16
- October 21
- November 18
- February 10
- March 10
- April 21
- May 12

Additional information can be found on the district's [website](#) about the early release Mondays. We encourage families to proactively arrange after school care for these days. One option is [Markham](#) located here on Fort Belvoir Military Base. Families selected for enrollment at Markham, will need to submit a request with [FCPS Department of Transportation](#). In order for students to ride the bus to Markham, you must have approval from transportation. Please contact Markham at (703) 781-9100.

Families are welcome to inquire about other after school care providers; however, transportation will not be provided by FCPS. Please note, some providers have limited slots available.

## Family Ambassador Program

The Family Ambassadors is a group of Primary staff, parents, and community members who come together monthly to focus on the school's SIIP. In particular, the Family Ambassadors work to provide guidance and recommendations regarding staffing allocations as it relates to the SIIP, school budget, and school program design, including consultation regarding adjustments that may be made due to pupil-count issues.

The committee is made up of a minimum of:

- Principal/Principal's designee
- One (1) teacher if possible

- School Family Liaison
- Three or more parents or guardians of a student enrolled in the school
- One or more community member at large
- One business or member of Fort Belvoir representative or community representative
- A chairperson and secretary will be appointed each year

Fort Belvoir Elementary Family Ambassadors are not elected individuals. They are volunteers that support the school's initiatives. Members must have students that attend either Upper or Primary.

## Food and Nutrition

FCPS provides a variety of nutritious meals for breakfast and lunch. It is important for families to note the Free and Reduced Meal (FRM) plan is only valid for (30) days of this school year. Each household will be required to submit a new application before **October 4, 2024**.

The online application is available [HERE](#).

Students approved for Free and Reduced-Price Meals may qualify for additional benefits such as waived or reduced fees for field trips, FCPS class fees, and [Parktakes](#) classes. Our school also benefits from additional funding opportunities based on the number of Free and Reduced Price Meal applications.

Learn more about the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Program online. If you have questions or need assistance with the application, please contact our school office.

Students are expected to access their individual meal plan using their personal identification number (PIN). Breakfast and lunch will be offered beginning the first day of school. This year, the Energy Zone team continues with the "All-Star Lunch" program, which teaches students about the five star components of a healthy lunch: protein, grains, milk, fruits, and vegetables. Elementary students having school lunch may select three, four, or all five of the stars. They will be required to select a serving of fruit or vegetables as part of their lunch.



**For the 2024-2025 school year, a full-priced breakfast is \$1.75 and full-priced lunch is \$3.25 for students. Milk can be purchased separately for \$.60. Students who qualify for free meals receive breakfast and lunch free.** Reduced price eligible students normally pay a lower price for breakfast and lunch.

For families purchasing meals, there are three options for payment:

- Online using [www.MySchoolBucks.com](http://www.MySchoolBucks.com) . This service is handy, private and secure. Once parents create an account, they are welcome to check their child's balance or meal plan history at any time.
- Paying with check - Please make checks payable to "Fort Belvoir Food Services." A local address and phone number are required to be either printed or handwritten on the check. The student name is required on the check memo line. Parents who want their checks for meals only (not for purchasing extra snacks) should also write "MEALS ONLY" on their check.
- Paying with cash - Cash may be brought to the food service manager's office for deposit on a student's account, or students may pay cash on a daily basis.
- Parents are encouraged to prepay for their child's meals so lunch money is always available. Much more information about breakfast and lunch, including links to forms and menus are linked [HERE](#).

Fort Belvoir Elementary Campus is "nut-free" in all classrooms, so please do not send in snacks that may contain nut products. In our cafeteria for lunch, students have the option of eating nut products, but we have designated "nut-free" zones which remain nut-free throughout all lunches. Please be mindful of lunches and snacks sent to school so that we may keep all of our Dolphins safe.

## Homework

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that elementary school students at Fort Belvoir Primary have the time and space to play, be creative, and relax after school. This policy is based on research that traditional homework has little benefit for students at the elementary age. We are encouraged to read for 15 minutes nightly.

An optional choice board will be developed by your child's grade level team and attached to the bi-weekly newsletter. This will include a variety of activities your child can do independently.

## **Interim Reports**

Communication with families is important. We want you to know how your child is doing academically. One way we do this is through interim reports. An interim report is a tool used to communicate with parents. An interim report may be sent home during the middle of the grading period. This is a resource that contains information regarding the academic performance and behavior of your child.

## **Internet Safety**

At Fort Belvoir, children are supervised when accessing the internet and are given specific web destinations which enhance the educational mission. FCPS has filters in place to limit exposure to advertisements and inappropriate material. As part of the Acceptable Use Policy, students agree to refrain from accessing personal accounts and web material unrelated to their learning. In order to best protect your children, we recommend the following steps be taken at home:

- Supervise all activity on the internet
- Be aware of, and monitor all personal accounts for your children. Keep track of passwords.
- Teach your children to refrain from providing personal information and from communicating with unknown persons.
- Review FCPS's [Shared Responsibility Program](#).

## **Items Brought to School- toys, games etc.**

Please assist in making sure students do not bring balls or toys, including electronic games and game cards, to school due to the disruption they cause. The school cannot be responsible for the safety and security of items brought from home. There are occasions when classrooms earn a reward and students are permitted to bring toys, stuffies, etc. These are the only times these items should be brought to school and should be vetted at home. If your child uses a fidget or other comfort item, it should be discussed with the classroom teacher.

## Lost and Found

The teacher may temporarily hold lost articles found within the classrooms until claimed by the owner. After a reasonable amount of time, these articles are turned over to the "Lost and Found". When parents are in the building, they are encouraged to check for lost articles near the cafeteria. If a child has lost glasses, keys, or jewelry, check with the front office. Articles remaining at the **end of each quarter will be donated to a local charity.**

## Medication

Forms authorizing the school to administer medication are available in the school office or online. With a physician's and parent or guardian's signature, prescription and over-the-counter medication may be stored in the clinic and given as prescribed throughout the school year.

Over-the-counter pain relievers for muscle aches, orthodontics and headaches may be stored in the clinic and administered at school with a parent or guardian's signature.

Any other over-the-counter medications may be given for up to ten consecutive school days with the parent or guardian's signature. Beyond ten days, a physician's signature is required.

Students may take some over-the-counter medications at school, including throat lozenges and nasal spray, under strict adult supervision and in accordance with [School Board Regulation 2102.17](#).

### Medication Guidelines

- Parents and guardians must transport medications to and from the school.
- Your child must have the first dose of any new medication at home.
- A parent or guardian must personally collect any unused portion of the medication. Medications not claimed will be destroyed.
- A parent or guardian is responsible for submitting a new form to the school each time the dosage or the time at which the medication is to be taken is changed.

Any questions about the medication policy should be directed to the health room aide.

[Additional Health Information](#)

[Epinephrine Authorization](#) (SS/SE-64)

[Medication Authorization](#) (SS/SE-63)

[Inhaler Authorization](#) (SS/SE-65)

## **Moving/Transfers**

Parents should notify the school in writing or in person at least one week prior to the child's transfer or withdrawal date. Notification should include the date of the child's last day and the location of the new school.

If the move is outside school boundaries, you must enroll your student in their new school in a timely fashion. Please call our Student Information Assistant (SIA) for more information.

## **Parent Liaison**

Family liaisons work in the schools and community to help families get the information and assistance they need to support their children and to ensure their academic success. The family liaisons represent a variety of cultures, languages, and races. Family liaisons will welcome and orient families who are new to the school and community and help them understand the school's culture, policies, procedures, and practices. They can also help connect families to resources in the community. Family liaisons might also assist a family in transitioning to a new school and encourage family-school partnerships to help ensure their student's success and healthy development.

If you have questions regarding school, need assistance finding resources and services to support your family, please contact the school for assistance.

## **Parents' Rights in FCPS**

Divorcing parents and legal guardians often have questions about their rights to information, decision-making and access in the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS). Summary of those rights, which apply to all parents including legal guardians and parents who are married, separated, divorced, or have never been married.

For more information, consult FCPS [Regulation 2240](#) , the principal of your child's school, or the school's web page. If you believe an employee of your child's school is improperly denying you the rights summarized here or detailed in FCPS Regulation 2240 (which is the official policy), please provide a copy of this summary to that employee and ask him or her to contact the school principal. Principals with questions should contact the Regional Assistant Superintendent. More information on this topic can be found by clicking [here](#).

## **Progress Reports**

The Elementary Progress Reports will be sent home approximately one week after the end of each marking period. The purpose of the Progress Report is to communicate student progress with regard to grade level expectations and to help parents and pupils identify the pupil's strengths and weaknesses. A parent/teacher conference can be held at any time by contacting your child's teacher.

## **PTO**

We are highly appreciative of the support we continue to receive from our PTO. Every family is encouraged to join the PTO and/or volunteer as well as attend events/meetings sponsored by our amazing PTO.

The PTO's efforts ensure our students have access to additional instructional materials; technology, field trips, and cultural arts events. Additionally, they host several family events for our school community such as BINGO, Movie Night, etc. If you are interested in volunteering or in taking on a leadership role, small or large, please follow the Fort Belvoir Elementary School PTO's page on Facebook, read email fanout messages to all families and attend PTO meetings to get involved!

## **Release of Students- appointments**

For the safety of the students, the following are the procedures for students leaving early from school:

If a student needs to leave school during the day for an appointment or any other reason, please send a note to the office 24 hours in advance of the appointment.

There is no need to call ahead. When you come to the office to pick up your child, please sign the child out and the office staff will call for your child. Students will not be called to the office until you arrive. Students will not be released to anyone except the parent/guardian unless other arrangements have been given in writing by the parent/guardian. This permission slip should state who is picking up the child. Photo identification will be required. Students may be released to either parent/guardian provided there is no contrary court order on file.

## Report Cards

The Elementary Progress Reports will be sent home approximately one week after the end of each marking period. The purpose of the Progress Report is to communicate student progress with regard to grade level expectations and to help parents and pupils identify the pupil's strengths and weaknesses. A parent/teacher conference can be held at any time by contacting your child's teacher.

## School Communication

FCPS wants to keep you well informed and uses a variety of modalities to contact families depending on the urgency. Fort Belvoir Primary Uses three modalities:

- **News You Choose:** This is a subscription-based, email communication tool used for non-emergency communications. Dr. Jemison uses this to send out to the FBP community newsletter weekly.
- **eNotify**-This is used to communicate very important or urgent messages. You cannot opt out of receiving these messages.
- **Talking Points**-Fort Belvoir uses this often and allows the school to send short messages in text form. Families can receive messages in the language of their choosing. It is a great way to communicate with your child's teacher.

## SIS and ParentVue

The Student Information System (SIS) ParentVUE Account is the FCPS secure solution for accessing information about your child's attendance, class performance, demographic data, and link to Schoology. It provides an additional conduit for communication with your child's school. Customized for Elementary, Middle, and High School students, your SIS ParentVUE Account login credentials can also be used to access Schoology.

Your SIS ParentVue account also provides parents with a means to manage Emergency Care Information online. Contact information provided automatically enrolls parents to receive eNotify communications.

[SIS ParentVue Account Registration](#)

[SIS ParentVue Account Login](#)

[SIS ParentVue Account Overview](#)

For assistance obtaining a new or replacement activation key, please contact the school office.

## Smart Devices/ Watches

In accordance with updated [Students Rights & Responsibilities \(SR&R\)](#), students in grades K-6 are only allowed to use cell phones before and after school. During the school day, cell phones will be turned off and left in the student's backpack. Watches that serve a dual purpose, and may have a phone or text feature, may be worn, however, **the phone features (text, internet) must be disabled** or off during the school day. If this is not possible, the dual purpose watch should not be worn to school.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Fort Belvoir Primary actively protects a student's right to learn in an environment that allows them to acquire the best education available. Students have a responsibility to behave in such a manner that does not interfere with the safety and learning of others. Serious discipline issues will be handled immediately. Parents will be informed of issues and are expected to be involved in problem solving strategies.

The [Student Rights and Responsibilities document](#) explains expectations for student behavior and adult responses to enhance school safety and to create a fair, equitable and supportive school environment. We ask that you use this document as a framework for discussing these expectations with your child. You will also find that this publication includes information that you may need throughout the school year, including contact numbers and other resources.

The document is distributed to all students at the beginning of each school year. Parents and students acknowledge receipt and review of this booklet by returning the signature sheet located on the first page of the booklet or signing virtually in Parent Vue.

Our school commitment to valued character qualities forms the basis of our proactive behavioral expectations and problem solving strategies.

To achieve the goal of providing education of the highest quality, the Fairfax County School Board and the state of Virginia have defined the rights and responsibilities of students in elementary schools. Regulation 2601P covers discipline procedures/policies. Fairfax County has a policy, which requires a disciplinary response to aggressive or threatening actions and behavior. If you ever have concerns regarding your child's safety during school or on the way to or from school, call the school immediately at 703.781.2700

## **Thursday Folder**

Good communication between home and school is vital to a successful school experience for each child. Thursday is designated as take-home day when announcements, newsletters, menus, student folders, progress reports (four times during the year) and any handouts will be sent to parents. This does not preclude sending communications home on other days if it becomes necessary.

## **Visitors**

We enjoy having families visit the school for lunch and/or volunteering in the classrooms! Please note safety and security of our students and our staff are of the



utmost importance. For these reasons, you must have a valid driver's license, DMV-issued identification or a valid passport in order to enter the building.

Individuals will be asked to show their identification via the video system at the entry of the building in order to gain access to the building. You will be asked to sign in once more with your ID using a Visitor Management System (VMS) computer system located in the front lobby. **This system is used throughout the FCPS district and cross-references sex/violent offender databases across the country.** The VMS will issue each visitor a sticker that should always be worn when in the building.

## Volunteer

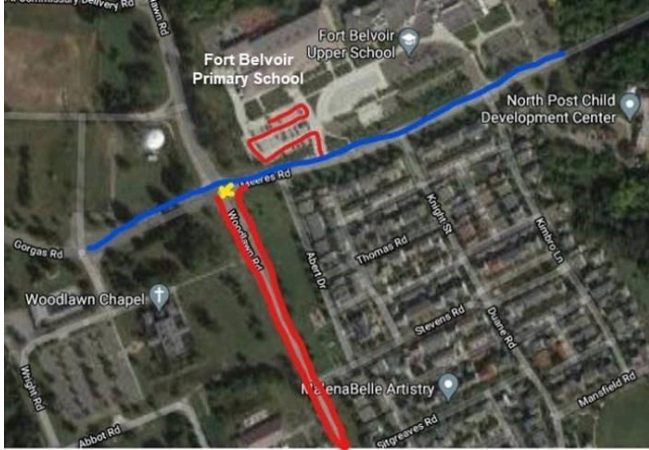
Parents are encouraged to volunteer at Fort Belvoir Primary School. To get involved, contact your child's teacher or FBES PTO at [belvoirPTO@gmail.com](mailto:belvoirPTO@gmail.com).

## Transportation

The Primary School uses Pick Up Patrol (PUP) during dismissal. This program allows us to know when a student has been released from the classroom and has arrived at their appropriate dismissal location. Each student is confirmed when they get on the bus, into the car at kiss & ride or released as a walker.

All students are either assigned a bus or designated as a walker. Additionally, some parents choose to transport their children using kiss & ride.

- **Bus Riders** - Students should ride their assigned bus and adhere to acceptable rules of conduct (stay in your seat, face forward, hands and feet to self, quiet voice). Primary will implement assigned seats on all buses within the first two weeks of school.
- **Kiss & Ride** - All vehicles will stage on Woodlawn Road next to Lewis Village (red line) to wait for kiss & ride to open for arrival and dismissal. Once a staff member approaches your car, students should exit the car on the passenger's side. Parents must remain in their cars at all times.



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- **Walkers** - All walkers enter through Door #1. At dismissal, kindergarten students will be picked up next to Door #8, through the library. First and Second grade students will exit through Door #1. It is the responsibility of families to watch for their students or identify a meeting spot. If families prefer, walkers can be released as "must be met." Those students will be supervised in the Family Liaison room and will be dismissed to an adult at the door adjacent to the main entrance. Signs will be posted during the first week of school.

Multiple staff members will be stationed along the bus loop, kiss & ride lane and throughout the school to assist students in a safe and orderly arrival and dismissal.

## Transportation Changes

All transportation changes must be submitted in writing to the school via email ([fbesprimaryofficestaff@fcps.edu](mailto:fbesprimaryofficestaff@fcps.edu)). Emergencies happen and parents are encouraged to make arrangements and plan for this with friends and neighbors. Changes to a student's dismissal procedures need to be made **prior to 3:30 p.m.** For your child's safety, the person authorized to pick up the student will need to present a valid photo ID in person for verification purposes.

