

# HICKORY CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ms. Bethany Groves, Principal  
Jim Roberts, Assistant Principal

*Living is Good  
At the Creek!*



*First We Love Them,  
Then We Teach Them.*

Our Mission:  
To inspire in all students a passion for lifelong learning,  
creating educated and caring contributors to the world

# STUDENT HANDBOOK 2015-2016

## Listed in alphabetical order you will find important information regarding school programs, policies and procedures.

Dear Parents and Students:

Our faculty and staff are dedicated to creating an exciting, challenging, and productive learning environment for each student. Our primary goal at Hickory Creek Elementary is to maximize the full potential of all students. To accomplish this, a partnership is formed among teachers, parents and students, each having a genuine commitment toward making this goal a reality. Please familiarize yourself with this booklet. Your cooperation regarding the following guidelines found in the student handbook will help us to maintain a positive place for learning. Together, we can make the 2015-2016 school year the best ever for your child.

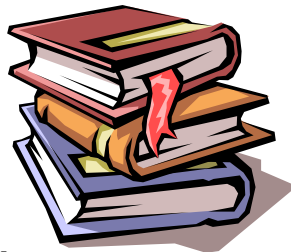
Sincerely,

Bethany Groves, Principal

### Academics

Hickory Creek Elementary continues to be one of the top performing elementary schools in the state of Florida. Our students achieve at the highest levels as measured by the FCAT.

Academics are an extremely important part of Hickory Creek. We seek to meet students where they are, and then take them as far as they can go. We utilize Gifted/Blended, Regular, and Inclusion classrooms, as well as technological support and regular progress monitoring to ensure the continuous academic progress of each student. Art, music, physical education and media are offered to enrich the curriculum. An emphasis on learning through the arts enhances the educational experience of our students.



### Accountability Report

The School Public Accountability Report, or SPAR Report, for the previous school year is sent home to parents in September via email. It is also made public on our school website. This report is compiled annually of data provided by the State of Florida to communicate the progress schools are making in the area of school improvement. A hard copy of the full report is available in the front office upon request.

### Alert Now Messages

A few times a month, you may receive a message from Ms. Groves or another member of the school or district staff via the Alert Now system. These messages are for time urgent information. We ask that you listen to the complete message for this timely information and that you maintain current phone numbers on file so we can make sure these messages are reaching our families in case of urgent or emergency situations.

### Attendance

**It is imperative that students be present and arrive to school on time. Students are expected to be in their classroom at the 8:30 a.m. bell. Students will be marked tardy accordingly.** Students arriving late miss important directions and messages that set the tone for the day's activities. **If late, please escort your child to the front office rather than dropping him/her off at the curb.**

Likewise, absences make it difficult for students to recapture instructions. Unless your child is ill, please make every effort to have him/her present at school. Valuable lessons are presented each day that directly affect your child's progress.

Please keep in mind that our students strive to achieve recognition for perfect attendance. Tardies and absences negate that possibility.

1. Perfect attendance medallions are given to students at the end of the year who arrive in class on time every day and were in attendance the full school day.
2. A student must be present 160 of the total 180 school days. **If a student is absent more than 15 days**, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide proof as to the legitimate causes of the absences including a doctor's verification for all absences due to illness. In cases of excessive absences, the principal contacts the Student Services Department. Students absent for 10 days or more during any grading period will be given grades for that period if the absences are proved to be justifiable and the class work is made up.
3. A note explaining an absence should be given to your child's teacher on the day of return.
4. A doctor's statement may be required for an extended illness.
5. If a student cannot go out for recess, he/she must bring a signed note stating the reason. Frequent or extended absences from recess or P.E. may require a doctor's statement.
6. Make-up work is required when a student is absent. The teacher should be given advance notice when make-up work is needed. One day for make up is granted for each day absent.
7. If a student leaves during the school day, parents must check him/her out in the office anytime prior to 2:00pm, 1:00pm on Wednesday. The student will be called to the office. **For safety reasons, all parents and visitors must report to the office rather than go directly to the classroom. Students will be called to the office when necessary.**
8. Parents are encouraged to make dental and medical appointments after school hours.

### **Band**

Hickory Creek is the first elementary school in St. Johns County to offer students a band program. Students in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to participate in our band program. External and internal research has shown that students who participate in the band program achieve at higher levels on standardized achievement tests than their peers. Our band meets in the morning from 7:30 – 8:20 a.m. Students who are interested should contact our music teacher, Mrs. Rhonda Gauger at 547-7450.

### **Bicycles**

Students riding their bikes to school should follow all safety laws. Florida state law requires all children under age 16 to wear a helmet. Students who do not wear bike helmets will not be allowed to ride their bikes to school. Students must walk their bicycles on school grounds, especially on the sidewalks. Bicycles must be parked in the bicycle racks. Students must lock their bicycles. Bicycle riders and walkers will be dismissed following the release of all school buses.

### **Business Partners**

Our school actively seeks business partners each year. If you own a business or have suggestions, please contact the school PTO at (904) 547-7450.

### **Character Counts**



As educators we are committed to the development of good character traits within our students. Good character, coupled with sound academics, provide the framework for a positive and productive future.

Therefore, our school district along with the community of St. Johns County support and promote the following 6 pillars of character found in the Character Counts Program.

#### **Trustworthiness**

Be honest – don't deceive, cheat or steal – Be reliable – do what you say you'll do – Have the courage to do the right thing – Build a good reputation – Be loyal – stand by your family, friends and country.

#### **Respect**

Treat others with respect; follow the Golden Rule – Be tolerant of difference – use good manners, not bad language – Be considerate for the feelings of others – Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone – Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements.

#### **Responsibility**

Do what you are supposed to do – Persevere: keep on trying! – Always do your best – Use self-control – Be self-disciplined – Think before you act – consider the consequences – Be accountable for your choices.

### **Fairness**

Play by the rules – Take turns and share – Be open-minded; listen to others – don't take advantage of others – Don't blame others carelessly.

### **Caring**

Be kind – Be compassionate and show you care – Express gratitude – Forgive others – Help people in need.

### **Citizenship**

Do your share to make your school and community better – Cooperate – Stay informed, vote – Be a good neighbor – Obey laws and rules – Respect authority – Protect the environment.

### **Chorus**

Students in the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to participate in our chorus program. These students, along with the band, perform at school concerts and public performances throughout the year. Students who are interested in participating in chorus should contact Mrs. Rhonda Gauger at 547-7450.

### **Clubs**

Students are encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities. As sponsors, resources, and student interests are defined, clubs and/or activities will be made available. Please let us know of any talents that you would be willing to share as a volunteer. We are always looking for ways to maintain student interest in positive free time activities.

### **Conferences**

A minimum of two parent conferences is encouraged each year. These may be held after school, on Wednesday afternoons after 1:30 pm, on planning days, and on Conference Nights each marking period. Additional conferences may be mutually scheduled between you and your child's teacher ahead of time. The amount of parental/guardian participation directly affects student achievement and behavior.

### **Crossing Guards**

Crossing Guards are provided by the St. Johns County Sheriff's Department for your child's safety. The Crossing Guards are located at the intersection of Greenbriar and Hickory Creek Trail.

### **Discipline**



One of the most important lessons children can learn is self-discipline. Parents and school personnel must work together to make this happen for children. It is this training that develops self-control, character, orderliness and efficiency. Discipline is the key to good behavior and kindness for others. Good discipline is the result of praising good behavior and taking corrective action when necessary. Students are expected to always do

their best to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment. School/classroom rules and expected behavior are thoroughly explained to the children. **Assault, Harassment, Bullying, Threats, Acts of Violence, In-Appropriate Language, or Disrespect will not be tolerated in school, at any school function, or on school buses. Any infractions may result in suspension from the learning environment, school function or school bus.** We are always willing to work with parents to develop a plan when necessary to keep students on a productive course. However, it is the responsibility of the parent to prepare their child to receive the benefits of the school environment.

In addition to school/classroom rules, the following rules apply to all students:

1. The use or possession of tobacco, alcohol and drugs is forbidden.
2. As a safety measure, the following are not permitted at school and carry severe consequences including suspension:
  - a. Guns (real or toys), B.B. shot, or other ammunition.
  - b. Firecrackers, matches, cigarette lighters.
  - c. Knives (real or toys), or other harmful devices.
3. Other safety rules include:
  - a. No glass containers of any kind
  - b. No hard balls (solid core)
  - c. No high heeled or cleated shoes
  - d. No skateboards or roller blades
  - e. No motorized bikes
4. Radios, walkmans and personal CD/cassette players are not permitted unless authorized by the administration for specific occasions. Toys, collectibles and other similar items are not allowed at school. Lost or stolen items of this nature will not be the responsibility of school personnel.
5. Cell phones for students must remain in their backpacks at all times. If cell phones are found out of book bags during the school day, they may be collected and held until a parent can come and collect the cell phone. Cell phones are only for communication with a parent to ensure a student's safety after the school day has ended.
6. Respect is expected at all times.

### Discipline Procedures (School-Wide)

Our school wide discipline procedures follow the steps described below:

1. Individual classroom established rules and appropriate consequences.
2. All attempts to be proactive in minimizing suspensions will be afforded our students through training and counseling services.
3. Out of school suspension – Students will be suspended from the school campus for continuous and/or severe misbehavior not to exceed ten consecutive days.

4. Disciplinary expectations and procedures will follow the District Student Code of Conduct.



### Dress Code

We strongly encourage parents to play an active role in determining how their children dress for school. The following guidelines provide a positive and safe emphasis.

1. Clothing of a distracting nature is unacceptable. Clothing with reference to cigarettes, alcohol, illegal drugs or violence is prohibited.
2. Tennis shoes are encouraged for safety on the playground. Shower shoes, rubber-sole thongs and cleated athletic shoes are not permitted. Shoes must cover the toes and have a strap on the back on the heel.
3. Clothes must not be intentionally torn or slashed.
4. Swim wear or biking shorts are prohibited.
5. Outfits must not expose the midriff while in normal activity.
6. Shirts are to remain buttoned; shirts with cutout sleeves are not permitted. Shirts should be tucked into trousers unless designed to be worn outside of the trousers. Shirts must also have straps that are at least 3 fingers wide.
7. Hats, caps or coats must not be worn in class or buildings.
8. Halter tops, tube tops, "muscle shirts", fishnet shirts and see through blouses are improper dress.
9. Boys pants/slacks must be worn at the waist; no sagging. Pants that have belt loops should be belted.
10. Extremely large jewelry, extreme makeup, and/or unusual hair color or styles that create a distraction to the normal routine of school will not be permitted.
11. Upper elementary grades especially; shirts or dresses without backs or straps; mini-skirts; and skirts with high slits are not permitted.
12. Shorts and skirts must be no shorter than four inches (4") above the top of the knee.

Although there is no school uniform, we expect students to come to school dressed in a manner that demonstrates respect for oneself and others. Parents will be contacted to bring a change of clothes if their child is wearing inappropriate clothing.



Please, no shoes with black soles

### Early Release (Wednesdays)

Each school day has been lengthened to accommodate our Wednesday early release of students at 1:45 pm. This time is set aside to further teacher/parent communication and to plan for continuous School Improvement efforts.

further information, please contact the Afterschool Day Care Coordinator, Cathy Bright at 547-7458.

**Emergency Cards**

An emergency card will be sent home with each student at the beginning of the school year to be completed by the parent or care giver. The emergency card remains on file for each student. **For the welfare and safety of your child, please make sure that the emergency card is complete with your phone number and email address and that of another trusted adult.**

**Emergency and Health**

Students who become ill will wait in the clinic until they are picked up by a parent or guardian. If a child runs a temperature or requires medical treatment, the parent or guardian will be called immediately to pick up the child. All children who are ill or who have a fever must stay home. The state of Florida requires the following immunizations for enrollment in school:



Diphtheria – Pertussis - Tetanus or Tetanus – Diphtheria – MMR – Polio – Hepatitis. Prior to entering Kindergarten a Varicela vaccine is required or a doctor’s verification that a child has had Chickenpox.

If a student is to receive medication while at school the parent must obtain a form from the school office, and bring all medication in the original container. Aspirin, cough drops, etc. must be brought to school with a note of parental authorization as well. All medications must be distributed through the office. **Children are not permitted to keep medication of any kind while attending classes, or transport medication to and from school.**

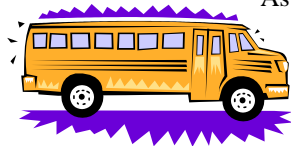
**If your child is ill at home before school, please do not send him/her to school with the understanding that he/she may call home. If a child is sick, he/she does not need to be in school. Not only might he/she be contagious, but also the ability to learn is also impaired.**

**Any student with a health problem should have a letter on file explaining that problem.**

**ESE Services**

Our ESE department provides special services for students in Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> grade. To maximize each student’s performance, students are evaluated and special needs are addressed through the following programs: Varying Exceptionalities, Gifted, Speech, and Language.

As deemed appropriate through an IEP (Individual Education Plan) students will be included into the regular classroom setting and regular school activities.



**Extended Day Program**



The Extended Day Program provides before and after school supervision for students enrolled at Hickory Creek in grades Kindergarten through five.

For a fee, children participate in closely supervised daily activities after school, Monday through Friday, until 6 p.m. For applications and

**Field Study Trips**

Field study trips are scheduled to provide children with a learning experience not readily available on campus. There will be a charge to cover expenses for the bus transportation. Some trips may require additional money for entrance fees or activities.

We must know that parents have been informed anytime students are off campus, therefore it is necessary to have permission slips completed and returned to school when requested by the classroom teacher. This process keeps parents informed and also serves to build responsibility in students.

**Golden School Award**

Since its inaugural year, Hickory Creek has received the Golden School award for its strong Parent Volunteer Program. Volunteer hours are recorded each year and sent to the State of Florida.

**Grading Scale K-2**

- M - Meeting Standards (at /above grade level expectations)
- P - Progressing toward standard
- I - Below grade level improvement needed
- Left blank – Not assessed at this time
- M - 85% or higher
- P - 84% - 70%
- I - Below 70 %

Second grade students will receive A, B, C, D, F grades in Reading and Math beginning in the second semester

**Grading Scale 3 - 5**

- 90 – 100 A – Outstanding
- 80 – 89 B – Above average
- 70 – 79 C – Average
- 60 – 69 D – Below Average
- 0 – 59 F – Failing

**Home Address/Telephone Numbers/ Photos/ Internet**

Throughout the year, we receive requests for student’s home addresses, and home telephone numbers. If you do not want this information released, you must inform our receptionist by Friday of the second week of school and we will honor your request. Just indicating “unlisted” next to your telephone number on the school registration form will not be sufficient. Also, children may be photographed or video taped and pictured on the internet for school promotions etc. **If you object to this image being viewed outside the school environment you must notify the front office.**

### Homeroom Mothers and Fathers

Early in the year, each teacher chooses 3-4 homeroom parents for volunteers. These parents assist the teacher and PTA with class parties, field study trips, and P.T.O. fund raising activities. **However, we need all of our parents to be volunteers and take an active role in the school life of their children.**

### Homework

**Reading is the most important homework activity parents can share with their child.** Children in grades K – 2 should spend no more than 30 minutes per evening practicing or preparing for the next day's lessons. Students in grades 3 – 5 may have an hour of review, practice and preparation for the next day's learning.

### Hygiene/Head Lice

Parents are urged to assist children in practicing good hygiene, especially as it relates to bathing and shampooing their hair. Children's hair should be examined frequently and thoroughly in order to stop the spread of head lice. Please notify the school if you discover your child has head lice. School wide head lice inspections are regularly conducted. **If head lice or nits (eggs) are discovered at any time, the child must be sent home for treatment in accordance with School Board Policy.**

### Immunization Requirements

All students K – 12 are required to have:

- DTAP series (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis)
- IPV series (Polio)
- Measles (2) (Preferably MMR-Measles, Mumps, Rubella)

Hepatitis B series

Also students K-4 are required to have :

Varicella (or chickenpox disease history)

Students Grades 7 – 12

Td booster within the past 5 years (Tetanus/diphtheria)

Preschool students are required to have:

- DTAP series
- IPV series
- HIB series (Haemophilus influenza)
- Measles (2) (MMR)
- Hepatitis B series
- Varicella ( or chicken pox disease)

### In Loco Parentis

School personnel are permitted to discuss progress and/or problems only with parents or legal guardians of a student. For any student not living with the natural parent(s) there must be evidence on file of legal guardianship. The form required is IN-LOCO PARENTIS. This form must be signed by parent(s) and guardian(s) and notarized. Guardians are to make the school aware of this situation.

### Insurance

The school does not insure students; however, school accident insurance is available for purchase by parents. There are two

basic plans. PLAN I covers the child against accidental injury at school or on the way to and from school. PLAN II covers the child for a 24-hour period. Insurance forms will be sent home at the beginning of the school year.



### Lost and Found

All personal belongings (jackets, hats, book bags, lunch boxes, etc.) should be permanently labeled with your child's name before being brought to school. Check our lost and found if an item is missing. Items not claimed from the lost and found will be given to charity at the end of each nine-week period.

### Lunch Program

Nutrition is an important ingredient for a successful school day. Therefore, breakfast and lunch is made available for all students. Both meals are prepared to meet all nutrition requirements through a variety of offerings.

Breakfast and Lunch Prices:

Breakfast	\$1.25	Lunch	\$2.55
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Free and reduced lunch applications are always available in the front office. If your child brings his/her lunch to school, for safety purposes please do not include glass materials.

To ensure that lunch money is not misplaced or lost, money or checks should be placed in an envelope with your child's full name written on the outside, along with the teacher's name, and the amount of money enclosed. Checks should be made payable to Hickory Creek Elementary school. Parents may choose to pay for student lunches via PayPams, a safe and convenient way to prepay for student lunches online. Visit the PayPAMS.com website to set up an account for your child.

We expect our students to view our cafeteria as they would any restaurant with respect to the following rules:

- Speak in soft, normal voices
- Eat with proper table manners
- Help to maintain a clean eating area (tables and floors)

We encourage parents to visit their child during breakfast and lunch. Please sign in at the front office before joining your child.

### Media Center

The Media Center is designed to give each child opportunities to experience the wonder and joys of reading books. Reference materials are also available for checkout on an overnight basis. Students who lose books will be asked to pay for them.



This will help them learn responsibility with property and will help maintain a well-equipped library for all children. Parents are welcome to visit our center during the following hours:

Monday - Friday  
8:10 am – 2:55 pm

### Money Payable to the School

All money paid by check to the school for items such as lost/damaged textbooks or library books, etc. should be made payable to Hickory Creek Elementary School. Returned checks will be processed through **Checkredi**, a private collection agency.

### Newsletters

Hickory Creek publishes a bi-monthly newsletter, The Hawks' Nest, which will be delivered to parents via email. This newsletter includes upcoming events, community issues, student entrees and recognitions. If you prefer or need a paper copy, please notify your child's teacher.



### Parent Drop Off/Pick-Up

Student safety is our number one concern. For that reason, the following procedure is in place:

#### Drop Off

1. Please drop your child off in front of the school following a single file line of cars.
2. Have your child exit the car from the passenger side (closest to the curb) to avoid traffic.
3. If you need to park your car, please use the middle section of the parking lot. Do not allow your child to walk across the parking lot unescorted.
4. If you arrive late, please escort your child to the front office to obtain a pass to class.
5. Please do NOT park in Swiss Point's lots, the bus loop, or across the access road from Hickory Creek's front for Drop Off or Pick Up.
6. Please do NOT skip other cars in line.
7. Please do NOT pull in to the parking lot and drop students off without parking and physically walking them into the building.

#### Pick Up

1. To avoid accidents it is necessary that a single file line of cars be maintained for student pick up. We will make every effort to have students ready for pick up. If a student is not waiting, a parent should:
  - a. Move forward along the curb paralleling the bus circle and wait inside the car.
  - b. Go to the back of the parking lot and park if there is a need to enter the building.
2. The teacher or school personnel will identify parents who are picking up children.
3. Please do not call for your child to cross the parking lot unescorted.

We will make every effort to keep your child safe by ensuring that At no time will your child be permitted to walk across the parking lot without adult accompaniment.

Thank you for your support and cooperation in these matters. The close attention to these procedures allows us to maintain a safer, quicker, and smoother process for all.

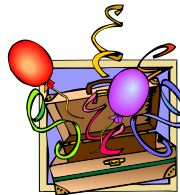
### Parent Teacher Organization P.T.O

We cordially invite you to join Hickory Creek Parent Teacher Organization. The P.T.O. supports children both in school and in the community. The P.T.O. is a child advocacy association. Its mission is to promote a cooperative and effective partnership between schools, home and community that positively affect the academic, social and character development of our students. We encourage you to become a member of the Hickory Creek P.T.O. Information may be found on our school website, which includes a link to the Hickory Creek P.T.O website.

If you would like to join the P.T.O. Board, please contact your child's teacher or the school office. A list of P.T.O. officers and regularly scheduled meetings are available on the website.

**Research indicates a direct link between student achievement and parent participation. We encourage you to become involved at Hickory Creek Elementary.**

### Parties



Celebrations are an important part of life. Each classroom may schedule a minimum of two formal parties (Winter Break and End of the Year) during the school year. The homeroom parents customarily plan these parties with the assistance of the teachers. The homeroom parents may call

upon other parents to furnish certain refreshments or specific amounts of money to meet the expenses. Teachers may give student telephone numbers to the homeroom parent unless specifically requested not to do so. Mini celebrations will be held to include such things as student accomplishments, etc., related to the school academic program.

### Phone Numbers for Your Information

Hickory Creek Elementary	547-7451
Hickory Creek Elementary Fax Number	547-7465
Hickory Creek Elementary Address	
235 Hickory Creek Trail	
St. Johns, FL 32259	
Ms. Bethany Groves	
Principal	547-7453
Jim Roberts,	
Assistant Principal	547-7452
Ms. Cathy Bright,	
Extended Day	547-7458
Mrs. Loretta Palmer,	
Guidance Counselor	547-7457
Hickory Creek Clinic	547-7462
School District Transportation	547-7810
School Board Office	547-7500

### Release of Students

**Please do not pick up up your child early, except in extreme emergency situations.** The final few minutes of the day are very important and should not be interrupted. **If you must pick up your child before dismissal or bring him/her late, please report to the front office.** Children arriving late must be issued a tardy slip and children leaving school early

must be signed out by the parent/guardian. **Please contact the school well in advance prior to any transportation or destination changes involving your child. Verbal or written confirmation is required from the parent/guardian. Students will not be allowed to alter their normal transportation procedure on their own accord.**

### Report Cards/Interim Reports

To inform parents of student progress, Report Cards and Interim Reports are issued on the following dates:

<u>Interim</u>	<u>Report Cards</u>
September 11	October 26
November 13	January 11
February 12	April 4
April 28	May 26

### Safety Patrol

The Safety Patrol students are selected on the basis of recognized leadership, personality, courteous manner and dependability. Failure to exhibit these qualities may result in removal from the patrol at any time. Specific duties are assigned by the Teacher sponsor. All school students are instructed to give attention and respect to the directions of the Safety Patrol for student safety.

### School Advisory Council

We invite any interested parents to become members of our School Advisory Council. Our SAC is made up of administration, teachers, community members and parents who research, design, implement and monitor activities developed to enhance the continuous improvement of student academic performance at Hickory Creek Elementary. Parents play an important role on the council and must make up at least 51% of its membership. If you are interested, in serving on the SAC, please contact the principal.

### School Health Card



The health card parents complete authorizes the school to call the County Rescue unit in the case of an emergency.

**It is therefore essential that parents provide the name and telephone number of someone who may be contacted locally**

**in case we are unable to locate the parent/guardian.**

The office does not provide medication **including aspirin**. Cough drops and aspirins are only permitted at school when a parent note is received or parental contact is made.

### School Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday  
8:30 am – 2:50 pm  
Wednesday  
8:30 am – 1:50 pm

Supervision is provided from 8:10 am – 3:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and 8:10 am – 2:00 pm on Wednesdays.

The school phone is answered between 7:30 am and 3:30 pm. (547-7450) Monday through Friday.

**Students may not be dropped off at school prior to 8:10 am as there is no supervision provided.**



### School Pictures

School pictures are purchased on a pre-pay basis. Checks for school pictures should be made payable to the picture studio handling the pictures and not made payable to the school.

### School Visitation

Parents are encouraged to visit school frequently and actively participate in the education of their child. Parents should avoid conferences with the teacher during such visits, but rather schedule a conference for a mutually acceptable time.

**For the protection of the students, all non-students are to report to the office upon entering the building. Do not go directly to the classroom. To ensure student safety parents and visitors must wear a visitor badge while on campus. Visitors are allowed a one-time only pass. Your second visit to the school will require that you have cleared volunteer status.**

If parents need to give a message, medication, homework, lunch money, supplies, etc., they should go to the front office. Interrupting class hampers valuable instruction time. Also, parents standing in the hall waiting on a child or the teacher may be disruptive to the learning environment.

Students from other schools are not permitted to visit class.

**School Guidance Counselor** – One primary responsibility of the guidance counselor is counseling with students. Students may meet with the counselor either on an individual basis or as a participant in one of the many small group guidance activities.

Another means by which a student meets with the counselor is through individual or group testing. The purpose of this testing is to evaluate the needs of students. It is the responsibility of the counselor to coordinate the testing programs. Testing procedures are designed to assure that every individual has the best opportunity to perform well. It is the guidance counselors' responsibility to distribute and interpret test results to teachers and parents. The guidance counselor coordinates the process for referrals to the exceptional student education program.

The guidance counselor will periodically conduct lessons in the classroom that support the Character Counts programs, as well as lessons that may deal with anti-bullying, healthy self-image, and friendships.

The guidance counselor is always available to parents and/or faculty to discuss concerns. Please feel free to contact the counselor to address any needs you may have.



## Supplies



Supply Lists for each grade level have been posted on the website. Every effort has been made to trim these lists down to the essentials needed at that grade level. The fees listed cover technology, learning workbooks and periodicals, and enrichment activities. The only other money collected will be for a class field study t-shirt and field study fees. Teachers may list other items on a wish list. These items are optional and donated to the class as you are able.

## Telephone

Students are permitted to use the classroom telephone under the discretion and supervision of the classroom teacher.

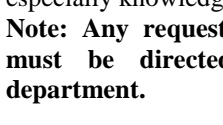
## Testing/Assessment

Hickory Creek uses a variety of assessment tools to help assess progress and to determine next steps for students. Some of these tests are mandated by the state, some by the district and a few are locally driven. Each grade level's testing schedule for the year will be sent home towards the beginning of the year. Our first Principal's Chat will also cover the testing schedule including purpose and use of each test. The Principal is also available to answer questions concerning testing at any time as well.

## Transportation

Transportation by school bus to and from school each day for St. Johns County students residing beyond two miles from the school is provided by the St. Johns County School system. Bus routes and schedules are carefully studied and arranged at the county level by designated personnel who are especially knowledgeable in that area.

**Note: Any requests for changes in bus stops must be directed to the transportation department.**



All pre-registered students who are eligible to ride a bus may check the posted route schedule prior to school opening for location and bus time. Every effort is made to serve students who are eligible for free transportation. **STRICT ADHERENCE TO RULES AND REGULATIONS IS REQUIRED.** Parent's request or complaints regarding bus service should be called in to the St. Johns County School Board, Department of Transportation 547-7810. Bus routes are available on the St. Johns County School District website: [www.sjcsd.com](http://www.sjcsd.com).

School Bus Safety rules: Each year all students and their parents are provided with school bus rules. Parents are asked to discuss the rules with their child, and then sign a form acknowledging they have read them and return a copy to the school office.

Students Not Arriving at Bus Stop on Time in the Afternoon

On rare occasions a child will not ride the correct bus home in the afternoon, resulting in an understandable frantic response on the part of a parent. The following procedure should be followed:

1. Begin by calling the School (547-7450) then the district Transportation Department (547-7810) or the County Sheriff's Office (824-8304)

In an effort to assure safety for all, students are required to conduct themselves in a courteous and orderly manner while aboard a bus. Misconduct may lead to the student being excluded from bus riding privileges. This includes misconduct that might occur at bus stops and during the time of boarding and un-boarding the bus. Students must board and leave only at their designated stop. Requests to get on/off at a different stop or to ride a different bus must be requested in writing by the parent/guardian for school approval. A written notice is always required when your child changes the method of transportation home.

## Bus conduct

The following rules must be observed on the bus:

1. Follow the driver's direction the first time they are given.
2. Respect for the bus driver is mandatory.
3. Loud talking, shouting, singing, swearing, hitting, rude or obscene language or gestures are not permitted in or outside the bus.
4. Keep all parts of the body (head, arms, etc.) **and** all objects inside the bus and out of the aisle.
5. Keep your hands and feet to yourself.
6. Remain seated while the bus is in motion, facing the front of the bus.
7. Eating, drinking, chewing of gum, or use of any tobacco products is not permitted.
8. Absolute silence is necessary at railroad crossings.
9. All school rules of conduct apply while on the bus.

**NOTE:** A violation of any of these rules may result in disciplinary action, including the suspension of bus riding privileges.

Consequences for students violating bus rules will be as follows:

- |                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Offense - | Principal judgment and parent notification (viewed as a warning).   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Offense - | May suspend for 1-2 days from the bus and parent notification.  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense - | May suspend for 2-5 days from the bus and parent notification.  |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Offense - | May suspend for 5-10 days from the bus and parent notification.   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> Offense - | May result in a long-term suspension from the bus including withdrawal of bus privileges for a period between 11 days and the balance of the school year upon recommendation of the School Board. |

**Note: Riding the bus is a privilege and not the right of the student.**

### **Voice Mail and Email**

All teachers have voice mail boxes and email addresses, which they check before 8:30 am and after 3:00 pm daily. Please feel free to leave a message for your child's teacher at any time. We ask teachers to return calls and messages received within 24 hours. Simply call the school, 547-7450, and ask the receptionist to connect you to the mailbox you need. After hours, the mailboxes may be reached by entering the extension at the prompt. A list of the voice mail numbers and email addresses may be found on the last page of the handbook for your convenience.

Note: We ask that you leave a message with the office in regard to dismissal changes. This assures the student and teacher, receive the message.

### **Volunteer Program**

Parents are encouraged to consider being a school volunteer. Parents, senior citizens, and other stakeholders generously donate their time and talents to assist teachers and students with educational programs as members of the HCES Volunteer program.

Areas of service include: tutoring, assisting in the Media Center, health clinic or lunchroom, making classroom teaching aids, clerical duties, such as typing or duplicating materials, or providing supervision for field trips, parties, socials and other extra curricular activities.

If you are interested, and able to give your time, please contact our School P.T.O Volunteer Coordinator (547-7450).

### **Web Sites**

The St. Johns County School District we page has lots of information which may be helpful. You can access this at [www.stjohns.k12.fl.us](http://www.stjohns.k12.fl.us) for information about Hickory Creek as well as the other schools in the county. Our Hickory Creek School website has been updated to contain a wider variety of information. It can be accessed at <http://www-hce.stjohns.k12.fl.us> and is intended to be updated with the most timely and current information about events at Hickory creek. Our suggestion is to check the website on a regular basis.

### **Withdrawal Procedure**

Parents withdrawing their children must notify the front office by letter or by phone. The information needed is as follows:

1. Date of withdrawal
2. City and state where student will reside.

A withdrawal form will indicate if the student has a lost or damaged textbook or library book.

A student who does not follow the withdrawal procedure will be withdrawn from Hickory once records are requested from the student's new receiving school.