

Policies and Procedures

We strive to provide a safe environment for all students and staff. The following procedures have been put in place to safeguard our learning environment.

Attendance

Flu Concern:

Students with a fever of 100 degrees or more must remain home and be fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before they may return to school.

Regular attendance is the key to scholastic success. Students with strong attendance records perform better academically and socially. Parents, students, and school personnel are responsible for promoting positive attendance attitudes.

Tardiness is a serious problem since students miss valuable instructional time. The Holly Tree staff wants every child to come to school every day and is committed to helping both students and parents achieve this.

If a student is absent:

* An absence note is required for the student's return to school. The note should state the child's name, date(s) of absence, and *specific* reason for absence. The principal or he designee may request verification of illness.

* If a note is not provided by the third (3rd) day of attendance, the child's absence will be marked ***unexcused***.

*Excessive absences may result in referral to the school social worker for possible legal action.

According to New Hanover County policy, the following are reasons for an **excused absence**:

*illness of the child

*death in the immediately family

*court proceedings

- *quarantine
- *religious observations

Under the new federal legislation, No Child Left Behind, attendance is a major focus. Therefore, trips taken while school is in session are unexcused absences. Parents are requested to plan vacations and trips during school holidays, spring break, and summer vacation.

If a student is tardy:

- *School begins promptly at 8 am. Students are tardy after 8 am.
- *When a student is tardy, a parent or guardian must accompany the child to the school office and be checked in. The office staff will provide the student with a tardy slip that the parent or guardian must sign before the child is admitted to class.
- *If appointments must be made during school hours, a **doctor's note is required for the tardiness to be counted as excused.**

*According to county policy, traffic, car trouble, oversleeping, etc. are **not** excused reasons for tardiness. If a school bus is late, the students are not counted as tardy.*

If a student must be dismissed early:

Dismissal time is 2:30 pm. If a student needs to be dismissed early, please notify your child's teacher in advance if at all possible. Students will **not** be sent to the office to wait for a parent to pick them up. The parent or guardian must come into the office to check the student out.

There will be no checkouts after 2:10pm.

Change of transportation:

All transportation changes must be made by 1:50 by a phone call to the front office or a note written to the teacher. Please do not leave transportation changes on a teacher's voicemail. They may not be able to check their messages in time for the change to occur. If a child tells a teacher they need to go home a different way, without a note the child will be sent home as usual.

Perfect Attendance:

Outstanding attendance will be recognized by the Holly Tree staff at appropriate celebrations at the end of each grading period and at the end of the school year. To qualify for a Perfect Attendance certificate, a student must be present for the entire grading period with no unexcused tardies. A New Hanover County Perfect Attendance certificate is awarded to students who have perfect attendance for all 180 school days.

Parent Visitation

Our staff asks that parents respect the students' instructional time and not go to the classrooms during arrival time or during the school day. Office personnel will relay messages to students during the school day. Office personnel will also handle items that may need to be delivered during the school day. These items may include lunches, money, homework, and books.

Court orders regarding child custody must be in the child's educational file. Only court orders signed by a judge may be honored. Notarized forms or letters from parents are not acceptable. Please notify the office prior to the first day of school if there are child custody guidelines that state procedures for parent pick-up or visitation.

Safety

*All side doors to Holly Tree will be locked at 8:00 am. Please use the front entrance to enter our school.

*To provide the best instruction for all students, we ask our parents to schedule parent conferences. We ask that you not visit the classrooms during the day to have an unscheduled conference.

*Whenever visiting Holly Tree, whether for a conference, to join your child for lunch, or to volunteer, please stop by the office and sign in and put on a visitor's sticker. We also request that you sign out in the office when you leave.

*To protect our students, you may be asked to show ID when checking your child(ren) out of school. We do this because we care about your child's safety.

*Current emergency phone numbers are a must. Please advise the office and your child's teacher when an emergency notification number changes. This includes your cell phone numbers, work numbers, and those of anyone we may call if you cannot be reached.

*Please follow the procedures for parent pick-up and drop-off as outlined on the next page. They are in place for the protection of our children and Holly Tree families.

Student Arrival and Departure

Student safety is our most important concern. Your cooperation will help ensure that all our students arrive and depart safely each day. Students may not enter the school building before 7:30 am. Dismissal is at 2:30 pm. Last time to check out a student is 2:10pm each day.

Car students:

*All car students will arrive and depart from the parking circle at the North end (K-2 hall) of the building.

*Pull your vehicle as far forward as possible for drop-off and pick-up. Staff members and/or parent volunteers will assist the students in/out of the vehicle.

*All parent pick-up students will exit the building using the K-2 wing. Students will wait in the hall until they are called.

*In order to help make parent pick-up work quickly and safely, please remain in your vehicle and display a sign with the students' name.

Walkers:

Students who live behind Holly tree choosing to walk to school will enter the school by the back door near the bike racks. When walking between houses to get to Holly Tree, please use the city property easement that is near the multipurpose room. We also

ask that our students be respectful of our neighbor's property as they walk to school.

Bicycles:

Students may ride bikes to and from school. Bikes should be parked in the bike racks provided. Please be respectful of neighboring property and use approved city easements if necessary.

Parent, Volunteer & Guest Parking:

Parents and visitors may park in the staff lot in front of the building and in the parking area near the K-2 wing. Please do not park in the circle in front of either wing so we may keep these areas free for school buses and emergency vehicles.

Student Discipline

Our children have the right to feel safe and secure at school. Every Holly Tree staff member helps develop a school climate in which each student can experience success. Rules are established to help students learn and to prevent harm and injury. They should be practiced both in school and at home. With your help, we can create a nurturing climate that fosters success and allows every student to feel safe and welcome.

School Wide Expectations:

Students, parents, and teachers will work together to help each child learn in a safe, secure environment. Classroom rules are to be a visible part of the classroom setting. Each child will receive appropriate attention to correct inappropriate behavior. Teachers and teacher assistants will address student discipline. If student behavior warrants additional attention, action will be taken by the principal or assistant principal.

Referral Procedure:

A student sent to the office for discipline will receive the following at the discretion of the principal or assistant principal. Due to the

serious nature of some behaviors, a parent conference or additional action may be taken immediately.

First offense: Verbal warning

Second offense: Phone call to parent or guardian

Third offense: Parent conference and additional appropriate actions including, but not limited to school suspension.

Fourth offense and other offenses: County policy states that student with multiple short-term suspensions during a school year may be suspended for a long term.

Suspension:

Students who continually disrupt class or exhibit other unacceptable behavior may be suspended from school for up to ten days. Every effort will be made to enlist parent assistance before a student is suspended.

Student Code of Conduct:

Each student is expected to respect the rights, freedoms, and needs of their fellow students. The following is a list of expectations that reflect the beliefs of the staff, students and parents at Holly Tree.

- *Treat others with respect.
- *Treat others the way that you would like to be treated.
- *Respect the rights and property of others.
- *Talk appropriately at all times.
- *Conduct yourself in a safe and responsible manner.
- *Be prepared to work and do your best.

The New Hanover County Board of Education believes that the maintenance of high citizenship standards provides a school climate conducive to effective teaching and learning. The following are examples of unacceptable student conduct:

- *Disruption of learning environment
- *Verbal or physical abuse of peers or staff
- *Destruction of school property or the property of others
- *Possession of any dangerous object or weapon.