

DEMOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Demorest Elementary School
3116 Demorest-Mt. Airy Highway
Demorest, GA 30535**

**School Office - (706) 778-4126
School Fax - (706) 776-6691
Office Hours 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM**

**Habersham County Board Policies are available online at
www.habershamschools.com**

On behalf of our teachers and staff, welcome to Demorest Elementary School. This student handbook will help students and parents know the expectations, procedures, and guidelines for our school. We ask that parents and students read this information and stay informed and up to date with our school policies. These policies are put into place in order to maintain order and safety for all our students, teachers, parents, and community. Feel free to contact me by phone or email if you should have any questions about our school.

We're expecting a great school year!

Dr. Connie Yearwood
Principal

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Demorest Elementary School is to create Caring and Responsible Learners (C.A.R.L.) by:
Developing Engaging Methods Of Reaching Every Student Today

We Believe:

Instruction should be

- Rigorous
- Differentiated
- Engaging
- Implemented with fidelity

Teachers should

- Implement best practices
- Manage classrooms effectively
- Provide a safe environment
- Use data to inform instruction

Relationships matter

A great school has high expectations of

- Staff
- Students
- Parents

C.A.R.L.'S (Caring And Responsible Learners) CODE OF CONDUCT

I will respect others

I will respect property

I will be safe

I will be prepared

I will be responsible

Demorest Elementary School prides itself as an orderly school with a high level of respect among staff and students. As a staff, we feel the need to continue this goal by helping children learn necessary skills for school success. We will work towards helping each child know he or she is capable, connected, and contributing (The 3 C's). To accomplish this goal, we have developed a school-wide plan called C.A.R.L.'s Code. With C.A.R.L. standing for Caring And Responsible Learners. Our school mascot is C.A.R.L. the Lion. Our plan makes use of effective preventive measures, positive reinforcement, teaching strategies, and appropriate consequences.

Throughout the school year the students will learn about C.A.R.L.'s Code. Please spend some time discussing this plan with your child. It is especially important that you talk to your child about the key concepts.

Each child has the opportunity to practice the code daily. Students who consistently make good behavioral choices have opportunities to participate in classroom celebrations as well as schoolwide 9 Week Celebrations held after each 9 weeks. Criteria for participation will be sent home after school begins. With your continued support and involvement, there is no question that Demorest Elementary will continue to be a school where students can learn and grow in a safe, respectful, and cooperative learning environment. If you have any questions, feel free to contact your child's classroom teacher or the principal at your school. We look forward to a great year!

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Class rules and consequences are up to the teacher. The classes will use C.A.R.L.'s Code to help generate classroom rules and/or procedures. Each classroom will have a behavior management system, and the teacher will ensure that parents and students understand the system.

COMPUTER LAB

Students should provide an inexpensive pair of headphones for their child's personal use.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to dress in a manner that is supportive of a positive learning environment free of distractions or disruptions. This determination is made at the discretion of teachers and administrators.

In an effort to maintain a proper atmosphere for learning, we ask our students to refrain from wearing clothing that might be offensive to others.

- Hats are only to be worn outdoors or on special occasions designated by the school.
- All tops worn by boys and girls must be long enough to cover the waist area. Halter tops or spaghetti strap shirts are not allowed.
- Mesh or net design shirts may only be worn with a shirt underneath them.
- Clothing that depicts or symbolizes offensive words or designs is not allowed.
- Any other attention getting apparel/appearance that disrupts the learning environment will not be allowed.

Consequence: Students will call parents and request that appropriate clothing be brought to school.

Please label all book bags, sweaters, coats, and other materials belonging to your child. Check lost and found hallway leading to cafeteria to retrieve lost items.

DISCIPLINE

The purpose of the school's code of conduct is to teach students what it means to be respectful, responsible and safe in a school environment. Because it is crucial that students receive a consistent message from parents and school personnel as to what is and what is not considered respectful, responsible and safe at school, we respectfully ask that parents support student discipline decisions.

Discipline will be progressive in nature. The degree of discipline will be specific to individual students and will take into account the student's discipline history, the age of the student and other relevant factors.

EMERGENCY / SAFETY PLAN

Our school has an emergency / safety plan in place that covers various emergencies including bomb threats, chemical accidents/hazardous materials, civil disturbances, earthquakes, explosives, fires, floods, injuries/illnesses, loss of utilities, nuclear attack, severe storms / tornadoes/ hurricanes, terrorist acts, and winter storms.

In the event of an emergency, we ask that parents listen to WCON 99.3FM for further instructions and/or check the county website: www.habershamschools.com, as it may be impossible to get a phone call through to the school.

EXTRA CHANGE OF CLOTHING

Kindergarten and first grade students need an extra change of clothing in their backpacks at all times. This practice is highly recommended for 2nd grade students, too. An extra change of clothes will prevent parents from being called to bring a change of clothing in the event of a spill or bathroom accident.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are taken at the discretion of the teacher in conjunction with the curriculum and upon approval of the principal. PTO or other contributors sponsor some field trips and others require students to provide a minimum fee. An office referral with a consequence from administration may result in loss of field trip opportunity.

FINE ARTS

Students at Demorest Elementary participate in Fine Arts education through our art and music programs. Through these programs students have an opportunity to develop their own talents and skills while learning to appreciate and critically think about the artistic and musical contributions of others.

GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Demorest Elementary offers guidance and counseling services. The door is open to all students and parents. The purpose of the guidance program is to be of assistance to students, families, and teachers and to assist in making the educational process as effective as possible. Guidance/counseling services include classroom guidance, individual/group counseling, parent/teacher consultation, and referrals/coordination with agencies/professionals outside the school setting. Please feel free to contact the guidance counselor at any time.

INAPPROPRIATE ITEMS

Items not necessary to the instructional program should be left at home. Inappropriate items will be confiscated and returned only to a parent or guardian. Students may not trade, buy, or sell items at school. Students are not allowed to have cell phones at school. If a child must bring a cell phone for an after school event, it should be turned in to the office for safe keeping upon arrival and retrieved at the end of the day.

LIBRARY / MEDIA CENTER

The Library Media Center (LMC) is accessible to students from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily. Scheduling is flexible to allow for optimum use and access to materials and resources. Many teachers prefer to allow students to visit the library media center independently or in small groups for book return and check out. Some teachers also bring their

classes as a whole group periodically for this purpose. Teachers also sign up for time slots that are flexibly scheduled depending upon the skills being taught and classroom research assignments.

Student Check Out :

Students in grades 1-5 may have two library books checked out at a time, and students in Kindergarten may have one.

- Books may be checked out for a period of one week
- Books may be renewed up to two additional times
- By written consent, parents may request that their child not be allowed to check out certain books. When these requests are received at the school, they will be entered in the media automation system that will block this student from checking this book out.

Overdue & Damaged and Lost Book Policies

We do not charge a fine for overdue books. If a student has books overdue we reserve the right to suspend borrowing privileges or limit the number of books out at any time until the overdue items are returned.

Students who have chronic overdues may have borrowing privileges revoked or limited, or they may have books they need for assignments signed out to their teacher so they may complete an assignment. They will receive a bill for lost books if the items are not returned.

If a book page accidentally rips, please do not attempt to repair it at home. We use special book tapes and glue. Return the book with a note and we will repair it. If a book becomes damaged beyond repair, the student will be billed for the replacement cost. Borrowing privileges will be withheld until the book has been paid for.

Students who transfer to another school within the district without clearing their media account will have check out privileges suspended in the new school until the account is cleared. This is a countywide procedure.

LUNCHROOM PROCEDURES

1. I will use good manners.
2. I will talk in a quiet voice.
3. I will stay seated.

Teachers will seat their classes and pick them up at the lunchroom door at the allotted time. In the event of any misbehavior, logical consequences will be used when possible. For example, if a student throws food, he/she will clean it up. Parents will be contacted if chronic misbehaviors in lunchroom occur.

Parents are welcome to have lunch with their children. Guidelines that regulate the school lunch program prohibit food from outside restaurants being brought into the cafeteria. If parents bring food from a restaurant for lunch, we will provide a place outside the cafeteria so they can have lunch with their child. Please do not invite other students to eat with you unless their parents have given written permission. Sack lunches from home will be allowed in the lunchroom, or parents may purchase a meal from the cafeteria.

MEDICINES

Every effort is made to assist parents by administering any medications needed by children. Before medication can be administered, the parent/guardian must obtain and sign a form from the school requesting that the School System administer medication to their child. Conditions requiring long-term medication (for a period of time exceeding two weeks) will require a physician's signature.

All medication must upon student's entry into the school, be presented to the school office in a labeled prescription bottle which will include the student's name, date, instructions for administering, name of drug, and name of issuing physician. This includes inhalers & epi pens; however, the child may keep the inhaler or epi pen with him/her during the school day.

This practice is governed by Habersham County Board of Education Policy JGCD. A copy is available at school for your review. Contact the school nurse, Angela Payne at 706-778-4126 if you have any questions.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

The faculty and staff at Demorest Elementary believe that communication between the school and families is important to building community and this communication helps to foster high expectations. Please notify your child's teacher promptly with address and/or phone number changes. We employ a variety of methods to provide parents with timely information about opportunities at Demorest Elementary along with keeping parents updated about the academic and behavioral performances of their children.

PARENT CONFERENCES

A conference with your child's teacher may be scheduled during the teacher's planning time or before/after school by calling the teacher or sending the teacher a note and/or email requesting a conference. Every attempt will be made to meet at a time convenient for all involved.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Please show your support by joining our P.T.O. this year! The Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.) is an organization of parents and teachers at Demorest Elementary. Membership is on a voluntary basis, but all parents and teachers are encouraged to participate. P.T.O. participation helps enrich the education of our students and is a rewarding experience for the parents.

The P.T.O. assists the school in many ways during the school year much to our school's appreciation. The Demorest P.T.O. assists the school by using resources of time, talents, and finances throughout the year.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Demorest Elementary School Council is comprised of parents and community members. The council meets four times a year. Dates and times of these meetings are posted at the entrance to the school. Meetings are open to the public. Parents are encouraged to attend.

SNACKS

Students may purchase nutritious snacks from the vending machine after their designated lunchtime. No purchases may be made prior to student's lunchtime. Purchasing snacks is a privilege and up to the discretion of the school staff. Ice cream will also be available for students to purchase as snack. Students may purchase an ice cream ticket for .50 from 7:35-7:55. The tickets will be redeemed before recess. No tickets may be redeemed prior to student's lunchtime. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with the ticket. No refunds will be given for lost tickets.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The Habersham County School System offers a comprehensive program for all areas of exceptionality through its special-education program. Programs included are those for mildly to profoundly handicapped, speech impaired, hearing impaired, vision impaired, health impaired, and the intellectually gifted. Support services are provided in the areas of physical and occupational therapy.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS

Students with outstanding accounts in the lunchroom or media center will be prohibited from:

- Purchasing items from the book fair

- **Attending field trips**

Parents will be required to pick up report cards in the office and resolve outstanding student accounts.

STUDENT AGENDAS

Important information is included in the front of the agenda for parents' reference. Students will use their agendas for recording assignments. Teachers will use the agendas for communicating with parents about student behavior, upcoming events, etc. Please check the agenda nightly and sign or initial. Parents are encouraged to use the agenda for communicating with teachers.

STUDENT INFORMATION UPDATES

Please promptly report any change of address, transportation information, or telephone numbers to your child's teacher. This will allow us to contact you should an emergency occur. Please include at least 2 additional emergency contacts on enrollment forms and update as needed.

If you are transferring to another school, please come by the school office and complete the proper form. Your child's records will then be sent directly to your new school once a request for records has been received.

STUDENT PROGRESS and REPORTS

PowerSchool is our Student Information System for Habersham County. This system will allow you to access your child's grades or attendance at anytime via the internet. Because PowerSchool offers many excellent features which offer you updated and quick feedback regarding your child's progress and status, please email parentaccess@habersham.k12.ga.us to obtain a user name and password.

Parents will be notified of deficiencies in academic progress by the middle of the report period. A formal notice will be presented to the parents by mid-year informing them of unsatisfactory progress that could prevent the student from meeting the promotion criteria. A parent conference will be requested whenever a deficiency notice is required.

Report cards will be sent home with students on the fifth school day for students after the end of each nine weeks. If that day is a Friday or just before a holiday for students, the report cards will be sent home on the next day students attend school.

Take-home folders will be issued to each student. Folders will be sent home each Monday (unless a holiday).

Progress reports and report cards should be signed and returned the following day. Test papers and other significant work by students will be sent home periodically. Students are expected to return these papers signed by the parent. Since we view this as a part of teaching students to be responsible, students who consistently "forget" signed papers or other documentation may have consequences. Please help your child by asking for important school notes, agenda books, and papers each day.

Grading

Kindergarten Grade Scale E = Emerging

P = Progressing

M = Meets

EX = Exceeds

NYD = Not Yet Demonstrated NYA = Not Yet Assessed

1st and 2nd Grade Scale

S+ = Outstanding (Exceeds Expectations) S = Satisfactory (Meets Expectations)

I = Improving
E = Emerging

3rd through 5th Grade Scale A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 75 – 79

D = 70 – 74

F = Below 70 – Not Passing

TECHNOLOGY

Students use computers, ipads, and chromebooks as part of daily instruction. If a student willfully or maliciously damages a device, parents will be billed for repair or replacement cost (Board of Education Policy IFBG-R).

TELEPHONE USE

Students are not allowed to use the phone during the school day. In cases of sickness/emergency, the nurse or a school secretary will contact a parent. Students will not be called out of class to come to the phone except in extreme emergencies. If parents need to get in touch with their child, a message may be left with the secretary, and we will see that the child receives the message.

TEXTBOOKS / PRINT RESOURCES

Textbooks are free to all school children and are the property of the State of Georgia. The student is responsible for paying for such loss or damage as determined by a schedule supplied by the State Board of Education (Board of Education Policy IFA).

TRANSPORTATION

Bus transportation is provided for your convenience. Rules for riding the school bus have been established at the system level in an effort to provide safe transportation for all riders. Please discuss the importance of obeying these rules with your child. (Board of Education Policy JCDAD or EDCB).

Pre-K through 3rd grade students must be met at the afternoon bus stop by an adult or accompanied by a middle school or high school aged sibling.

Fourth and fifth grade parents may request that the bus driver not let fourth and fifth graders off the bus without an adult or middle school/high school aged sibling at the bus stop. In this case, a parent needs to submit a written request to the principal.

Parent Drop-Off & Pick-Up

Students should only be dropped off and picked up at the school's main entrance. The entrance will be unlocked at 7:15 a.m. For students' safety, please do not drop students off before 7:15 a.m. Please remember that any child arriving after 8:00 a.m. will be counted tardy, and a parent must sign him/her in at the office. Please help us keep all students safe remaining in the traffic line during student drop off and pick up. Please don't pass or go around cars who are dropping off or picking up students. Please allow students to exit and enter cars only on the passenger side. This will eliminate any possibility of them being hit by a car passing in the traffic line.

Changes in After School Plans

Write a note in your child's agenda to inform the teacher of changes in transportation.

In the event an emergency change needs to be made in mode of transportation, parents must call the office before 1:00 p.m. We cannot guarantee that request for changes to transportation made after 1:00 p.m. will be met.

Changes in transportation will not be made without prior written or verbal parental consent.

Dismissal time for car riders is 2:45 p.m. Actual loading of cars will begin at 2:50 p.m. Teachers and staff will be there to help children get to the appropriate car. All parents should wait in cars until students are released for parent pick up. Students will not be called to the office for parent pick up.

Those who will be riding in parent pickup will be issued 2 name/number hangtags that must be used for verification when coming through the parent pick up line. For additional hangtags, you may purchase each for \$1.

Anyone without a hangtag will need to show identification and wait for verification that he/she has permission to pick up the child.

Students picked up prior to 2:50 p.m. will be counted as tardy (leave early). When unavoidable circumstances require early pick up, please notify the school. Those students not picked up by 3:15 p.m. will report to Homework Center. A fee will be charged.

VISITORS

In the interest of safety for all our students we do require that ALL parents and visitors check-in at the office upon entering the building. Parents and visitors are then given a hall pass that notifies the Faculty and Staff that the office is aware of your presence in the building. Thank you for your cooperation in this as we try to make our school safe as well as inviting (Board of Education Policy KM).

In order to protect instructional time, we ask that all class/teacher visits be scheduled in advance. Teachers will not be able to visit with parents during instructional time. Please call or email your child's teacher or leave a message with the secretaries to schedule a meeting or speak with your child's teacher.