

**Discovery  
Elementary School**  
Parent-Student Handbook



Principal: Christopher Painter  
Assistant Principal: Deborah Ragan  
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44020 Grace Bridge Drive  
Ashburn, VA 20147  
571-252-2370

**Absentee Line: 571-252-2371**  
**Absentee Email: [DIS-Absentee@lcps.org](mailto:DIS-Absentee@lcps.org)**  
<http://www.lcps.org/ds>

On behalf of the staff and faculty of Discovery Elementary School, welcome to the 2021-2022 school year. With our 6th year behind us, we are eager to begin a new year of excellence at Discovery.

This handbook serves to provide our families and students with important information about the day-to-day operation of our school. I ask that you take the necessary time to review the information with your child before school begins and throughout the school year. We feel strongly that what is included in the handbook will enable your child to have a successful school year. If at any time you have questions, please feel free to call the school office between the hours of 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

We are looking forward to a productive partnership with you this year to ensure that our students maximize their highest potential. We recognize that to be successful in school children need support from both the home and school. We do not take our role lightly and we are genuine when we say that we value a strong home-school connection. We believe that trust is fundamental to our partnership; therefore, we will work hard each day to carry out our collective commitments to you and your child. We ask that you guide and support your child's learning by making sure that the/she arrives to school on time each day ready and prepared to apply their very best effort. If you have specific concerns about your child's academic or social progress, you are encouraged to speak with the teacher early and often to guarantee that lines of communication are open.

Thank you in advance for the wonderful support that you have and continue to demonstrate. The staff and I feel privileged to be part of this great learning community and we look forward to continuing our journey together!

Respectfully,  
Christopher Painter

“The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled.”

– [Plutarch](#)

## **Our Mission**

We believe all students deserve a responsive learning environment that is safe, caring, and inclusive. We cultivate a growth mindset that fosters resilience and intellectual risk-taking. We prioritize social-emotional and academic development as we encourage all learners to meet their maximum potential. We build authentic connections to establish a community where all students feel loved and excited about learning.

**Our Vision** We are important. We belong. We can learn. We do our best. We are Discovery Trailblazers!

## **DISCOVERY NEEDS YOU!!**

**This handbook is for YOU!**

If there is any way that we can improve this handbook to better serve you—  
please let us know.

Thank you for allowing us to teach your child! We take very seriously our role as educators and we strive to create a learning environment that encourages students to do their best. We also work hard to prepare students for the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead in their educational careers.

You can help us in several ways:

- Ensure that your child is in school daily and is prepared to learn.
- Be supportive of your child's efforts.
- Speak about the school and learning in a positive manner.
- Find a place in your home for your child to keep school materials, along with a quiet place in which to work and study.
- Write your child's name on his/her coat, backpack, and other belongings.
- Teach your child to accept responsibility for his/her actions and to respect the rights and belongings of others. Be supportive of the school's programs and the efforts of the PTO.



## 2021-22 SCHOOL CALENDAR for Students

August 26	FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS
September 3-6	Holiday (Labor Day)
September 16	Student/Staff Holiday
October 11	Holiday (Indigenous Peoples' Day)
October 28	End of First Grading Period
October 29	Student Holiday (County-Wide Staff Development)
November 1	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
November 2	Student/Staff Holiday
November 4	Student/Staff Holiday
November 24-26	Holiday (Thanksgiving)
December 20-31	WINTER BREAK (Classes Resume January 3, 2022)
January 17	Holiday (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)
January 28	End of Second Grading Period
January 31	<b>MOVEABLE STUDENT HOLIDAY**</b> <b>(Planning/Records/Conference Day)</b>
February 1	Student/Staff Holiday
February 21	Holiday (Presidents' Day)
March 7	Student Holiday (County-Wide Staff Development)
April 8	End of Third Grading Period
April 11-15	SPRING BREAK
April 18	Student Holiday (Planning/Records/Conference Day)
May 3	Student/Staff Holiday
May 30	Holiday (Memorial Day)
June 15	Last Day of School for Students/End of Fourth Grading Period

**\*\*Parents with childcare or other weekday scheduling concerns** – The date of this MOVEABLE Planning/Records/Conference Day between first and second semesters may change, if the school calendar must be changed due to school closings for inclement weather or other emergencies.

### 9 Week Grading Period Ending Dates

October 28, 2021  
January 28, 2022  
April 8, 2022  
June 15, 2022

Schedule subject to change based on possible school closing due to inclement weather.

# School Hours

## Morning Bell Schedule

7:30 a.m.	Arrival Begins
7:50 a.m.	School begins/Tardy Bell
7:55 a.m.	Morning Announcements
7:50 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.	ECSE – AM
10:35 a.m. to 2:35 p.m.	ECSE – PM

## Afternoon Bell Schedule

2:35 p.m.	Dismissal Bell rings
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## Absences

The school day begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 2:35 p.m. Students who are not in their classrooms by 7:50 a.m. will be considered tardy. They will need to be accompanied to the office by a parent/guardian for a tardy pass. The office will change the classroom attendance roster for the student from absent to tardy. Please do not drop students off prior to 7:30 a.m. Staff is required to arrive by 7:30 a.m. Students may go directly to their classrooms beginning at 7:30 a.m.

It is very important that students attend school on a regular basis in order to be successful. We ask that students not miss school for trips or family vacations whenever possible. While written assignments can be made up, classroom activities and interactions cannot be replaced.

If your child will be absent from school, please call the **absentee hotline, 571-252-2371 or email: DIS-Absentee@lcps.org**. State law requires that schools contact parents when a child is absent from school if the parent has not notified the school of the absence. The purpose of this legislation is to insure the safety of your child. A call will be made to the parent/guardian of any student whose absence has not been accounted for by a call. Please make sure to contact the office if your work and/or emergency phone numbers change.

Whenever a student is absent from school, documentation is required to verify the reason for the absence. Parents are required to notify the school as to the reason for the absence. This may be done through the school's Absentee Phone-in line (571-252-2371) or email: [DISAbsentee@lcps.org](mailto:DISAbsentee@lcps.org). Any absence not confirmed by the parent will be considered unexcused. If the parent has not called the school to verify the absence, the school will make a reasonable effort to call the parent to verify the day's absence. Upon the student's return to school, a written

explanation from a parent or guardian is required for each absence. The note should include: date(s) of the absence, reason for the absence, and signature of the parent/guardian.

Students are excused for personal illness, a death in the family, medical or dental appointments, court appearances, religious holidays, illness in the immediate family, or emergencies that require the student to be absent. For planned absences, a parent should send in written notification to the teacher and the main office.

If a student is absent for more than **10 days or 10%** of the total number of days of membership, whichever is determined appropriate by the principal, the school will send a letter to the parents requiring a physician's note for all further absences. At the principal's discretion, contact may be made sooner or waived due to extenuating circumstances. At the point at which a student accumulates **5 unexcused absences**, a referral will be made to the Attendance Officer.

## **After School Activities**

Should students need to stay after school for make-up work or a scheduled activity, parents will be informed and permission sought beforehand. Parents will need to make arrangements to provide transportation. No student will be kept after school without written or phone permission.

## **After School Care (CASA)**

Extended day care is available through Loudoun County Parks and Recreation's CASA program. Day care programs are located in the school building but operate separately from the school. For information about these programs contact LCPR CASA at (703) 737-8042 or online at: [www.loudoun.gov](http://www.loudoun.gov).

## **Allergies**

If a child exhibits allergic reactions to bee or insect stings, foods, or other allergens, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform the clinic and maintain up to date health information and necessary medications. Health records will be maintained in the clinic by the Health Clinic Specialist. A Health Care Plan will be developed and communicated to the appropriate personnel. Required staff are trained annually.

## **Appointments**

If your child needs to leave school before the normal dismissal time for an appointment, please send a note to the teacher. If circumstances during the day arise which require your child to be dismissed early, please come into the school office and ask the secretary to call for your child. Please do not go directly to the classroom. Teachers are instructed not to dismiss a child unless the office calls for them.

## **Bike Riders**

When being transported to and from school, students must ride a bus or be driven in a car. Students may not use any other form of transportation (ie; bicycle, scooter, walking).

## **Birthdays**

A very special part of a young child's life is the celebration of his/her birthday. Each child will receive a birthday pencil and a happy birthday greeting during morning announcements. Party invitations will not be distributed at school unless all classmates are invited. In accordance with Loudoun County School policy, only non-food treats are allowed. Please refer to the guidelines listed below as an alternative means of recognizing your child's birthday.

Your child's teacher has a wish list of appropriate choices for each of the birthday options below:

- 1) Choose to donate a book for the classroom library.
- 2) Choose to donate a piece of recess equipment for the classroom recess box.
- 3) Choose to donate a table game to the classroom for those indoor recess days.

## **Book Clubs**

In order for you to purchase books at a reasonable cost for your child's personal library, some classes participate in commercial book clubs. The book clubs offer a selection of books at a reasonable cost. Student participation in these clubs is optional. The books selected by the commercial book clubs are written by established authors of children's literature. From time to time, however, students have purchased books that have contained language or content that parents found objectionable. Therefore, it is important for you to assist your child in the selection of books if you choose to participate, paying careful attention to the description of the books and the designated age or grade level given in the description.

## **Breakfast**

Breakfast is available from 7:30 – 7:50 a.m. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunch are also eligible for free or reduced breakfast (see lunch). Breakfast includes two servings of cereal or bread, one serving of milk, and one serving of fresh fruit or juice. Students need to report to their teachers prior to going down to the cafeteria so that they are not marked tardy.

Menus are posted each month online at <http://www.lcps.org> along with current prices. Student accounts may be accessed and replenished through <http://www.pay4lunch.com> or make checks payable to County of Loudoun.

1. Children may either bring cash or may debit their meal through the computerized system.
2. Children may occasionally charge a meal in emergencies. Desserts and snacks may not be charged.

We are not allowed to let students carry a negative balance. If your child's account is running low, the cafeteria will put a stamp on your child's hand. Additionally, notes will be sent home to notify parents of negative balances, and accounts can also be checked online. Phone calls will be made if concerns arise. You may also receive a letter from the Principal. If there are extenuating circumstances preventing you from resolving your account, please contact the Principal.

## **Bus Information**

Bus routes, stops, and schedules are planned and established by LCPS Department of Transportation. Bus transportation is provided for the safety of all students. Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior while riding on a school bus. Riding the bus is a privilege and can be revoked due to improper behavior. All students receive appropriate instruction in bus safety rules during the first week of school and will practice bus evacuation two times during the year. See the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (under Permanent Links on the website).

In order for a child to ride a different bus home, classroom teachers MUST receive written permission signed by the parent. Your child's teacher will issue a bus pass. Students should be at their bus stop at least five, but not more than ten, minutes before their designated time.

Kindergarteners and first graders should wear a tag with their name and bus number the first week of school.

## **Cafeteria Rules**



The staff believes the lunch period should be a safe and enjoyable time for all students. In order to maintain a pleasant atmosphere for eating, several general cafeteria rules have been established and are posted in the cafeteria for easy reference by all. The rules are:

1. I eat my own food.
2. I remain seated.
3. I raise my hand for help.
4. I use my inside voice.
5. I keep my hands and feet to myself.
6. I use kind words.
7. I clean up my area.
8. I put trash in the proper place.

For safety reasons, we do not permit glass bottles in the cafeteria.

Parents and visitors are always welcome to have lunch with their child. Please be sure to sign in at the office for a visitor pass before going to the cafeteria.

## **Car Transportation**

Every student at Discovery Elementary is provided with transportation on a school bus. Riding the school bus provides students with independence, social time and the statistically safest way to school. If you choose to drive your child to school, please help us keep our children safe and traffic flowing smoothly by following the guidelines below:

In the morning, students may be dropped off at Kiss and Go between 7:30 a.m. and 7:50 a.m. Classes begin promptly at 7:50 a.m. Per LCPS policy, students arriving after 7:50 a.m. must be escorted to the office by a parent.

Please remember to pull as far forward as possible to keep the flow of traffic moving. For safety, children should exit from the passenger side of the vehicle onto the sidewalk. For the safety of our students, please **DO NOT PASS** other cars that are in front of you.

Students may **NOT** be dropped off in the parking lot. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** Discovery staff members are on duty each morning to welcome your child into the building, allowing you to remain in your car. If your child needs assistance with a child lock, heavy door, etc., please wave to a staff member and we'll be glad to help. Students should be ready to get out of the car as soon as you stop at the sidewalk.

If for some reason, you need to get out of your car in order to drop off your child, you should park in a parking space and walk your child across to the sidewalk.

In the afternoon, if you are picking up a child, please be in the Kiss and Go at 2:35pm. Students will wait in the building until we call for them. Students may not be picked up in the front office.

## Cell Phones

Students may carry cell phones to school but they must be turned off and stowed in the backpack during school hours. If there is a concern about a phone being on or disrupting class, it will be held in the office until a parent can come and retrieve it.

## Child Abuse & Neglect

Under Virginia Law, school employees are required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. This law, which was designed for the protection of children, provides immunity from civil or criminal liability in connection to reports, unless malicious intent is proven.

## Clinic

The clinic is staffed daily by a Health Clinic Specialist (HCS). The HCS, office staff, and classroom teachers are able to provide basic first aid when necessary. Additionally, the HCS may administer medication, take temperatures, and monitor the basic health of students. Parents will be contacted when a child has a fever, appears to have an infectious condition, or any other condition requiring parental attention.

Please keep your child home when he/she exhibits any of these symptoms:

- temperature of 100 degrees or above
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- has thick green or yellow discharge from the nose
- complains of a sore throat or earache accompanied by a temperature

In case of illness or injury, a student will be cared for temporarily by the HCS or a member of the school staff. Parents or authorized adults listed on the emergency card will be called to pick up any student who is ill. If a serious illness or injury occurs, 911 will be contacted immediately prior to parent notification. ***It is very important that information on the Emergency Card be current and updated as changes occur.***

## **Communication**

Effective communication is essential to the smooth operations at Discovery and helps ensure that each child gets the best we have to offer. We will utilize email as our easiest forum for initial communication. Please know that teachers will not put a great deal of specific information about a child in an email, but will then utilize the phones or ask for a personal conference. Teachers will notify you during Back to School Night in the fall as to the time of day that emails will be addressed so that you will have an idea when you might expect a reply.

We also utilize the Connect Ed system to share any updates you may need and give you information about upcoming events. The Connect Ed system is attached to our student database and therefore calls the phone number and the email that you have listed under the primary contact parent. If you are not getting either the phone call OR email, please contact us and we will see how we can remedy the situation.

## **Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences for all families are scheduled for the end of the first quarter. This is an important meeting to determine your child's academic strengths and areas needing improvement. It is also an opportunity for you to establish a line of communication with your child's teacher. The parents or teacher may request other conferences throughout the year as the need arises. Please do not just drop by for an impromptu conference with a staff member. Parents should contact the teacher ahead of time to schedule a conference.

## **Curriculum and Programs**

### **Instructional Programs**

The course of study in every grade, kindergarten through fifth, includes reading, language arts, science, mathematics, and social science and history. The curriculum also includes foreign language, art, music, health, and physical education.

The services of a school counselor, a reading teacher, a SEARCH teacher, and a technology specialist are also provided.

### **Special Education**

In special education, Discovery Elementary School uses inclusive practices based on each child's educational plan. A team of special educators, special education assistants, and classroom teachers work together to provide instruction for special education students.

### **The English Language Learner Program (ELL)**

ELL is a resource program designed to help non-English speaking children learn English and gain language skills and confidence to participate in the academic programs. ELL students spend the majority of their day in the appropriate grade level classroom. Interaction with peers provides language minority children with models for language and social development. Teachers use a variety of specialized, age appropriate, high interest materials to facilitate student learning. This combination of specialized language instruction and interactions with English dominant speakers is consistent with research in how a second language is best learned.

## **Daily Dismissal Plans**

Parents will be asked to fill out a “**Daily Dismissal Plan**” form for each child and return it to the child's homeroom teacher by the first day of school.

- If there are permanent changes to your child's “Daily Dismissal Plan”, please contact the teacher for a new form, pick one up in the office, or print one from our website. Return the new completed form to your child's homeroom teacher as soon as possible.
- Temporary changes should be made using the **Dismissal Change Form** that can be found on the school's website or [click here to access the form](#). We cannot make changes to your child's “Daily Dismissal Plan” without your verbal or written permission. We are not allowed to accept verbal changes from your child. Please understand that if we do not receive proper notification of the, your child will be going home by the method designated on their “Daily Dismissal Plan” which was completed by you prior to the first day of school.

## **Disabilities**

If, due to a disability, you need assistance to enable you to participate meaningfully in the activities of Discovery Elementary, please contact the PTO's Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) chairperson at 571-252-2370 at least five working days prior to the meeting or activity.

## **Discipline**

We expect students to:

1. Follow directions the first time.
2. Be respectful toward adults and fellow classmates.
3. Take directions from any staff member.
4. Follow LCPS expectations as outlined in the **Student Rights and Responsibilities**.
5. Participate in class through discussions, class-work and completion of homework.
6. Take their education seriously.

Students having problems meeting these expectations are handled individually with, we hope, full parent-school cooperation. Our goal is to teach children to be respectful and responsible for their education and behavior. We attempt to be fair in our dealings with students. Should corrective actions be necessary for students who violate rules and regulations, we will make every attempt to “get the facts” and to provide a fair hearing for the student(s) involved. Unless School Board policy directs a specific action for an offense, school administrators will determine the appropriate measure in each disciplinary case. The **Student Rights and Responsibilities** (under Permanent Links on the website) describes these and other measures in more detail.

## **Dress Code**

Students will be required to dress appropriately for school. Please help us observe the following rules:

1. Midriff shirts and blouses are not appropriate.
2. Hats and bandanas/scarves are not to be worn in the building.
3. Students may not wear shirts with inappropriate language or pictures.
4. Tube tops and spaghetti strap tops are not appropriate.
5. Shoes must be worn at all times.
6. Shorts should be a longer length. Short shorts are not appropriate.
7. On P. E. days, students should wear appropriate clothing and shoes. Only shoes, not clothing, may be changed for P.E. P.E. requires sneakers to be worn in P.E. class.
8. No Heelys or shoes with wheels of any kind may be worn in the building.

## **Early Dismissal Plan (in the event of school closing)**

Parents will be asked to fill out an “Early Dismissal Plan” form at the beginning of each year. If there are permanent changes to this form, please pick up a blank form or download the printable form, fill it out, and return it to the homeroom teacher. For your convenience, forms will also be sent home at the beginning of the year.

## **Early Release**

While we discourage students missing school for any reason, it is understandable that from time to time, you will need to pick your child up early from school. Parents may pick up their child during the day from the front office. Once a parent arrives, the child will be called for release.

Please allow enough time for staff to find your child and bring them to the office. No students will be dismissed early after 2:15 pm. Please plan accordingly.

## **Emergency Cards**

At the beginning of the school year, a card is sent home with each student to list phone numbers and persons to contact in case of an emergency. This emergency card is very important, so please return it as soon as possible. Emergency cards should always be kept up-to-date. If you move or change your phone number during the year, we ask that you inform us immediately. We must be able to reach you or an emergency contact if your child is sick or injured. You can update your information online at <http://www.lcps.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=915> (look for PIM under the Quick Links).

## **Emergency Drills**

Building evacuation plans are posted in each classroom and other areas of the school. An Emergency Response Plan that addresses procedures and responsibilities for staff is in place and communicated to staff during the teachers' first week of work.

- Fire drills are conducted once each week during the first month of school, and monthly thereafter.
- School bus emergency exit drills are practiced twice yearly with the first drill occurring during the first thirty instructional days of school.
- Tornado and other emergency drills are held on a periodic basis.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are an important extension of the curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to take field trips to sites relevant to class studies. Parents are informed prior to the trip and are asked for written permission and a fee (when applicable). Please return these by the deadlines set by the teacher. Parents are often asked to act as chaperones on field trips. Please note that children not enrolled in the class taking the field trip cannot accompany anyone acting as a chaperone.

## **Food Policy**

**Food in Schools: Expectations for the Health and Safety of All Students**

Loudoun County Public School (LCPS) students have the right to a quality education in a supportive, safe, and healthy environment. As stated in the LCPS guidelines presented in 2010, *Caring for Students with Food Allergies in School*, healthy eating habits and proper nutrition are important for all students.

- The Individual Health Care Plans of students in the classroom must be followed. Parents/guardians will be notified so they can determine in advance whether a particular food item is safe for a child with life-threatening allergies.
- All students are encouraged to eat healthy snacks. Foods containing allergens should not be consumed in the classrooms of students with food allergies.
- Sharing or trading food in the classroom or cafeteria is not permissible and is a safety practice that has been in place in LCPS for several years.
- When student birthdays are recognized at school, only non-food treats are allowed.
- Non-food items will be used when classroom rewards are considered. Inclusion of all students in classroom rewards is essential.
- Foods containing allergens specific to a student are not to be used for class projects, parties, holidays and celebrations, arts, crafts, science experiments, cooking, or other purposes.
- Students are encouraged to assume increasing responsibility for healthy and safe food choices as they progress from elementary to middle and high school.

*Caring for Students with Food Allergies in School* is available on the LCPS website under Administration—Pupil Services—Keeping All Students Safe.

## Fund Raising

The PTO will sponsor fundraising activities in order to enhance the school's instructional program. Please be advised: **Virginia law prohibits elementary students from participating in an door-to-door solicitation or fundraising.**

## Get Connected

Get connected and follow Discovery Facebook @DIS.elem (Like us!) and Twitter feed @Discovery\_elem from the Discovery webpage.

## Gifted Programs

Gifted and Talented programs are available for gifted students at all grade levels in schools. Differentiated instructions is provided to gifted children grades K-5; the SEARCH classroom resource program is part of the K-4 gifted curriculum; a county-wide, center-based (FUTURA) program serves certain gifted students in grades 4 and 5.

## **Gum**

Chewing gum is not permitted at school or on school buses.

## **Health Screenings**

- The vision and hearing of all new students and third graders will be screened during the first few months of school.
- An optional dental screening will be conducted for those students who have returned the appropriate dental form. Parents will receive written notification of possible dental concerns discovered during these screenings.
- Fine and gross motor screening are done during the first 60 days of entrance to an LCPS school.

## **Homebound Instruction**

Instruction in the home is available for those students who must be absent from school for an extended period of time due to illness. A certified teacher provides this instruction at no cost to the family. Parents should contact the assistant principal to request this service.

## **Homework**

A child should be able to complete his or her work independently; however, we encourage parents to help their children by arranging a quiet, comfortable place for them to work and by taking some time to check over their child's work.

Please notify the teacher if your child is working longer than the suggested guidelines. LCPS guidelines for the amount of homework given each day are as follows:



- Students in grades 1-3 should not spend more than thirty (30) minutes daily doing homework; and
- Students in grades 4-5 should spend no more than sixty (60) minutes daily doing homework.

The scope and style of homework is defined by each teacher or grade level. All homework that is assigned will be based on one or more of the following purposes:

- to practice skills that have been introduced and developed in the class;
- to complete unfinished work or projects;
- to relate understandings and skills developed at school to everyday life;
- to enrich the school program by pursuing activities that can be shared with classmates the following day.

When a child is ill, requests for homework may be made to the classroom teacher to catch up on days missed. Homework will not be given in advance of instruction because of family vacations. In keeping with the above stated purposes, it is our policy to distribute homework after classroom instruction. If students miss instructional days for vacation or family business, class work may be obtained upon returning to class.

## **Insurance**

Information about optional dental and accident insurance is sent home at the beginning of each school year. LCPS does not carry medical or accident insurance to cover students injured at school. Please do not send applications or payment to the school. Completed applications and payment are mailed by the parent directly to the insurance company.

## **Interruptions to Instruction**

We appreciate your help in respecting our students' instructional time!

- If you are bringing your child to school at any time during the school day, please bring him/her to the office.
- If you are delivering an item to your child during the school day, please bring it to the office and we will see that it is delivered.
- If there are sudden changes to your child's after school plans, please call the front office.

## **Library/Media Center**

Library classes are held weekly for grades K-5. During classes, the librarian instructs students on how to use the library and to develop an enjoyment of the materials and books that are available. The librarian works closely with the classroom teacher to complement and enhance classroom instruction. The library collection is constantly updated and expanded. Books are chosen for either their educational or recreational value. There is no fine for overdue books;

although students will not be allowed to check out additional books until overdue books are returned. If a book is lost or damaged, the parent will be assessed a fee to cover the replacement cost of the book.

## **Lost and Found**

Please label all personal belongings with your child's name for ease in identifying the owners of lost items. We strongly discourage students from bringing any valuable items to school and all toys should be left at home. We keep a "Lost and Found" near the cafeteria. You can look for large articles (such as clothing, lunch boxes, water bottles, umbrellas) in the "Lost and Found". We keep smaller items and valuables in the school office. Please have your child check promptly and periodically for lost items. Unclaimed items will be donated during winter, spring and summer breaks to a charity group in Loudoun County.

## **Lunch**

Students are encouraged to purchase lunches in advance. Pre-paid lunches may be purchased before school each morning in the cafeteria. If you send in money, please put it in an envelope with your child's first and last name and their 6-digit lunch number.

Milk is provided with the school lunch. Milk is also sold daily for those who pack their lunch. Additional snacks, such as cheese sticks, yogurt, chips, water bottles, and juice, are all available for an additional price. If you notice your child's account is being depleted faster than you had anticipated, you may want to see if your child is purchasing these additional items.

Students are entitled to free or reduced priced lunches if their family qualifies because of low income. Forms are available in the office for parents wishing to apply for free or reduced price lunches. Every family will receive one of these forms at the beginning of the school year. Parents are encouraged to review these forms carefully to determine eligibility for free or reduced price lunches.

Menus are posted each month online at <http://lcpshhealthycafe.org/index.php?sid=2407151445268563> . Student accounts may be accessed and replenished through <http://www.pay4lunch.com/> or make checks payable to *County of Loudoun*.

1. Children may either bring cash or may debit their meal through the computerized system.
2. Children may occasionally charge a meal in emergencies. Desserts and snacks may not be charged.

## **Medication**

All medications should be administered to students at home when possible. If your child needs to take medication while (s)he is at school, a Medication Form needs to be completed, signed by the parent, and kept on file in the clinic. Forms can be found online at <http://www.lcps.org/page/2014>. Forms for prescription medications must also be signed by the physician. Any medication dispensed to students at school must be in the original container, labeled with the student's name, and carried to school by a parent or guardian. Medication cannot be transported to or from school by students, and must be kept in the school clinic. Cough drops also fall into this category. All medications must be taken by students only under the supervision of the principal, assistant principal, health clinic assistant, secretary, or principal's designee.

## **Minute of Silence**

Code of Virginia requires a "Minute of Silence" to be held at the opening of each school day during morning announcements.

The law states:

*"In order that the right of every pupil to the free exercise of religion be guaranteed within the schools and that the freedom of each individual pupil be subject to the least possible pressure from the commonwealth, either to engage in, or to refrain from religious observances on school grounds, the school board of each school division shall establish the daily observance of one minute of silence in each classroom of the division. During such one-minute period of silence, the teacher responsible for each classroom shall take care that all students remain seated and silent and make no distracting display to the end that each pupil may exercise his or her individual choice, meditate, pray, or engage in any other silent activity which does not interfere with, distract or impede other pupils in the like exercise of individual choice."*

## **Moving Out of School Boundaries**

If you should move out of Discovery and/or Loudoun County's boundaries during the school year and wish to stay at Discovery, please contact the school office. We will give you the appropriate forms or direct you to the county website so that you can request permission to remain at Discovery. Obtaining permission is not usually a problem; however, you will need to transport your child to and from school.

## **Music**

All students in grades one through five attend two thirty minute periods of music instruction with a specialist each week. The elementary music curriculum is a vocal program. In addition to the primary emphasis on singing, instruction on instruments which may include, ukulele, bells, and rhythm instruments is incorporated at all five grade levels. Instruction on the autoharp is given in second through fifth grades, and recorder instruction begins in the fourth grade. Instruction on these instruments is provided to enhance and diversify the program, teach the reading of music, and accompany singing. In kindergarten, the teacher incorporates music into the total curriculum.

## **Parent Liaison**

The role of the parent liaison is to facilitate parent-school communications. Parents may reach him/her by calling the school or emailing him/her by visiting our website at <http://www.lcps.org/des> for current contact information.

## **Parking**

Please be sure you do not park in the bus lane at any time. Please park in legal, marked parking spaces and respect all signage posted with regards to parking.

## **Parties**

The classroom teacher, in consultation with the grade level team, the administration, and room parents, will determine dates and appropriate activities for three parties during the year. Student birthdays are not celebrated in the classroom (see "Birthdays").

## **Personal Items Brought to School**

The school encourages children to bring items for sharing to school that are connected to learning, if permitted by the teacher. Extremely valuable items should not be brought to school, and the school will not be responsible for the safety of such items.

No live animals should be brought to school. ALL toys and games should be left home. Weapons, firecrackers, and other items as identified in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook (under Permanent Links on the website) are strictly prohibited. Any items brought to school will be confiscated from the student.

## **Pets**

Pets are prohibited in school, on the grounds, or on the bus for the safety of students. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## **Physical Education**

Physical education is an important part of the educational experience. The development and maintenance of a healthy body is essential for physical well-being and good mental health. We also believe that attitude development is an important part of education. We attempt to create an atmosphere for the development of leadership, sportsmanship, and congeniality through our physical education program. In grades KG-5, students have three 30-minute Physical Education (P.E.) lessons with a P.E. teacher each week. Students that are unable to participate in P.E. or recess due to a medical problem should bring a note to the teacher. Students are expected to wear proper shoes for P.E. class and recess.

## **Pictures**

A professional photographer will take individual school pictures in the fall and these pictures will be available to purchase at that time. These pictures will appear in the school yearbook, which will be offered for sale in the spring. Delivery of the yearbook will be before the last week of school. We will also take class pictures in the spring, and individual student pictures with a choice of backgrounds will be offered at that time. Purchasing any of the picture packages offered is OPTIONAL. Please note that the spring pictures will be sent home for you to view, but MUST be sent back with payment and/or any unpurchased photographs.

## Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

Effective classroom management and preventive school discipline are essential for supporting teaching and learning. PBIS is a decision-making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students. PBIS is NOT a curriculum, intervention, or practice. It is about ensuring that all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible.

PBIS goes further by emphasizing that classroom management and preventive school discipline must be integrated and working together with effective academic instruction in a positive and safe school climate to maximize success for all students. The emphasis is on the use of the most effective and most positive approach to addressing even the most severe problem behaviors. Most students will succeed when a positive school culture is promoted, informative corrective feedback is provided, academic success is maximized, and use of pro-social skills is acknowledged.

## PTO

We have a strong and active PTO and they are an integral partner with our school organization. The PTO organizes events for the students and their families. Fundraising campaigns generate monies that are used to enhance the school's instructional program by purchasing books, equipment, and classroom materials. Please be sure to show your support by joining the PTO and considering becoming an active member in this magnificent organization. The PTO accepts all volunteers to help with their many programs during the year. Meetings are held once per month and all parents are invited to attend. Times and locations can be found on the PTO website.

## Recess

**Kindergarten:** No less than forty (40) minutes of recess for students in Kindergarten. The forty (40) minutes will be divided between two periods with one occurring in the morning and one occurring in the afternoon, whenever possible.

**Grades 1-5:** No less than thirty (30) minutes of recess for students in grades 1-5. The thirty (30) minutes will be divided between two periods, whenever possible.

**Weather Guidelines for Outdoor Recess:** Recess shall be scheduled outdoors, whenever possible. When weather conditions are questionable, principals shall refer to Regulation §5011 to determine the appropriateness of outdoor recess.

## **Report Cards**

Report cards are sent home through ParentVUE at the end of each nine-week period to inform parents of their child's academic and social progress. Through ParentVUE, the parent will acknowledge their child's report card.

## **Responsive Instruction**

We are committed to meeting the unique needs of all of our learners; therefore, we have adopted the RI framework to reinforce that commitment. Responsive Instruction is a comprehensive assessment and intervention process that uses learning rate over time and level of performance to inform educational decisions. It provides a framework by which all students are provided high quality instruction and assessment. Parents will be informed if their child will be receiving focused interventions that are matched to their individual needs during a thirty-minute period called "Power Up".

## **Spirit Day**

Every Friday will be set aside as spirit days. Students and staff will have the option of wearing school colors (navy, khaki, light blue) or spirit wear (school clothing items sold by the PTO). Other specific days may be designated as "Crazy Hair Day," "Hat Day," "Sports Jersey Day," etc.

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

This handbook is found online in the "Quick Links" section of our website. Please read this information thoroughly with your child and return the signed form to your child's homeroom teacher as soon as possible

## Technology

Loudoun County Public Schools is connecting our students with the world by providing Chromebook laptops to students in Grades 3-12. Over the next two school years, LCPS will deploy nearly 64,000 Chromebooks to ensure that students have access to the information, tools, and resources they need to make meaningful contributions to the world. Students in Grades 3-5 at Discovery will be assigned a Chromebook for the 2019-2020 school year. To learn more information about the deployment of student individual learning devices, [click here](#). The site includes a link to a comprehensive handbook that outlines everything that parents and students need to know about their responsibilities when using their school-issued device. The Telecommunications Responsible Use Policy is intended to assure appropriate and responsible use of the Internet by all students. Students and parents will be informed of acceptable use in the Student's Rights and Responsibilities online handbook, and must acknowledge an electronic signage through Parent VUE.

On a case by case basis, lost/damaged Chromebooks and/or chargers will be the responsibility of the student for replacement. More information may be found [here](#) for a replacement.

All LCPS staff members have a professional e-mail address to support their responsibilities as employees with LCPS. Please allow school personnel 48 hours to respond to your e-mails.

## Telephone

In order to protect instructional time, students are not permitted to use the office phone during the school day. If there is an emergency, we can get a message to your child.

## Testing

Virginia and LCPS require that we give certain standardized tests to students during the course of a school year. These are given to monitor the effectiveness of the instructional program and to evaluate the achievement of students. Watch our school newsletter for test dates.

## Textbooks

All textbooks are loaned to students free of charge. The parent, however, assumes the responsibility of compensating the school for book loss and/or unreasonable damage. A book contract is brought home early in the school year for both parent and student signatures (grades 2-5).



## Visitors

We try to maintain a friendly and welcoming environment, while at the same time striving to maintain high standards of safety for your children. Please always be prepared to show ID at the door. **Visitors are always welcome! To ensure the safety of students and staff, parents or other visitors must go directly to the office before visiting any other area of the building. All visitors entering the school must sign in and wear a "Visitor Badge" while in the building.** Please remember to sign out when you exit the building.

In order to protect instructional time, interruptions to the classrooms are kept to a minimum.

- Office personnel will forward any items such as forgotten books, homework, lunches, etc., and any messages to the students.
- If you are picking up your child for an early dismissal, please wait for your child in the office. Teachers may not release students from the classroom without authorization from the office.
- If you are dropping off a tardy student, please say goodbye in the office.
- All classroom visits/conferences should be prearranged with the teacher. This includes arrival and dismissal times because the teacher needs to be focused on the students. Instead, please call or email to arrange a time with the teacher, so you can have his or her full attention.

**If a staff member observes a visitor who is not wearing a Visitor Badge, he/she will ask the visitor to report to the office and get a badge. Your understanding and cooperation with this LCPS policy is greatly appreciated!**

## Volunteers

Volunteers play an extremely important role in the educational process and are vital to our success. Your volunteer help is always appreciated.

Please note:

- As always, we ask that you sign in at the office and wear a Visitor badge while in the building.
- For the health and safety of everyone, volunteers who are in the building on a regular basis need to have either a TB test or a TB Screening and have the results on file in the school office. You do not need to have this done every year; if you are unsure if we have your results on file, stop by the office to check.
- We appreciate parents making other arrangements for younger siblings during their volunteer time. The work room contains equipment that could be dangerous to children, (i.e., the hot laminator, a paper cutter, etc.). Bringing younger children into the classroom while you are volunteering can also be disruptive to instruction.

**While volunteering, there may be times that you see or hear things that are considered confidential. We thank you for using discretion and maintaining confidentiality regarding anything you see or hear while volunteering in the building.**

**Thank you for all your time and support!**

## **Weapons**

Students are not permitted to possess any weapon for any reason on school property, on school buses, or while under school control or supervision. Suspension is mandatory. The term “weapon” is intended to be construed broadly to cover and include any instrument that could injure, harm or endanger the physical well being of another person. School Board policy specifically lists types of weapons in the Student’s Rights and Responsibilities booklet. Included is any student who displays or brandishes an artificial or toy weapon in such a fashion so as to threaten or induce fear in another person. Any student in violation of the policy will be reported to the Principal and may be subject to expulsion from Loudoun County Public Schools by the School Board. Please refer to LCPS policy 8-32 if you have any questions.

## **Weather Policy**

In the event of bad weather or other hazards, school may be delayed, closed early, or canceled. The central office, not individual schools, makes these decisions. Announcements are made using the Connect Ed system and over the following stations:

- Loudoun County Public Schools website (The information on the LCPS Web Page is updated regularly. You can register for a notification service which can send an email, or a text message to your cell. )
- TV: Channels 4, 5, 7, 9
- Radio: WPGC 1580AM and WTOP 1500AM

### **Emergency Early School Closing**

Every parent will receive an “**Emergency Early Dismissal Form**” to be completed and returned to school as soon as possible. It is extremely important that you state clearly what your child is to do in the case of any early dismissal and inform the homeroom teacher immediately if there

are any changes to your plan. **Please discuss this emergency plan with your child.** Be sure (s)he knows what to do and where to go (for example, go to a certain neighbor's house to be supervised until you get home) in case of early closing. **Please do not call the school when you suspect an early closing.** The school phone lines must remain open to receive instruction from the School Board Office and for emergencies.

**1 Hour Delay**

Grades K-5: 8:50 - 2:35 p.m.

ECSE – AM: 8:50 – 11:50 a.m.

ECSE – PM: 10:35 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.

**2 Hour Delay**

Grades K-5: 9:50 a.m. - 2:35 p.m.

ECSE – AM: 9:50 – 12:50 a.m.

ECSE – PM: 11:35 a.m. – 2:35 p.m.

**1 Hour Early Closing**

Students are dismissed at 1:35 p.m. Lunch is served, and all after school activities (including CASA) are canceled.

ECSE is dismissed at 10:50 a.m.

**2 Hour Early Closing**

Students are dismissed at 12:35 p.m. Lunch is served early, and all afternoon activities (including CASA) are canceled.

ECSE – AM: Dismissed at 12:35 p.m.

ECSE – PM: Canceled

**We are so glad you are part of the  
Discovery Elementary Community.**