

**PIERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK
2020-2021
657 N. Center St. Pierson FL 32180
(386)740-0850**

ABSENCES AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE SCHOOL

All absences must be reported to the attendance clerk at the school either by a parent or a guardian. A voicemail can be left outside school hours, if needed. Clearly state your child's name, grade, classroom teacher, the date and reason of absence. All absences are recorded as excused or unexcused. Excused absences, as defined by Florida law, are limited to illness of the child, a doctor's appointment, religious observances, and illness or death of a family member. All other absences are recorded as unexcused. Students are able to make up any missed work following an absence. Students that need to be excused from PE for medical reasons need to submit a doctor's note. Please understand that teachers cannot receive telephone calls during the school day. The office staff will be glad to take a message, in order for your call to be returned.

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Children are expected to go directly home after school is dismissed. Only those children who are participating in school or county sponsored programs will be allowed to stay on campus.

ARRIVAL/DISMISSAL

Bell Schedule:

7:05 a.m. Gates Open

7:50 a.m. Tardy Bell

2:30 p.m. Dismissal

(Early Release Wednesdays 1:30 p.m.)

Students not permitted on campus prior to 7:05 a.m.

Children left outside the school without supervision, creates an unsafe situation. Due to safety concerns unaccompanied children prior to 7:05 will be referred to our school safety team for parent contact. Supervision by school personnel begins at 7:05 a.m. At that time, the parent loop gates will be opened and parents may begin dropping off students. The staff parking area and bus loop will be open prior to 7:05 a.m. However, parents should not enter the staff parking area. There are signs on the gates to assist with identification of the two separate areas. **Please Note:** Students are not allowed to go on campus, including the drop off area or

playground, without teacher supervision. It is essential for student safety that drop off procedures are followed at all times. When using the drive through loop area, we ask that students load/unload only on the passenger side of the vehicle, as entering/exiting the vehicle in the traffic area is very unsafe. Please contact school administration with questions or concerns.

BICYCLES

Students and visitors are required to walk bicycles at all times on the school campus. All bicycles should be locked while at school. The law requires students wear their bicycle helmets. In addition, skating of any kind is not permitted on campus.

BREAKFAST – School Way Café (Additional Café information located under “Lunch”)

A free complimentary breakfast will be offered to all students every day. Students should report to the cafeteria upon arrival to participate in the meal program. The cost for breakfast is as follows:

Breakfast

Adults /Students not enrolled VCSD	\$2.00
Student Breakfast –all schools	FREE
Ala carte milk	\$.50

BUS STUDENTS AND RULES

Due to the location of our school along a busy highway, almost all students enrolled at Pierson Elementary are eligible to ride the school bus. The VCS transportation department determines Bus students are assigned a specific bus to ride to and from school. School bus schedules, stops, routes, etc. are determined by the district's Department of Transportation. Riding the bus is a privilege and repeated disruptions may result in loss of riding privileges. Please review the bus rules with your student to ensure a safe environment on the bus for all students. Students exhibiting disruptive or unsafe behavior on the bus will be referred to school administration by transportation staff. Appropriate interventions, which may include temporary suspension from bus transportation, will be determined by school administration. Parents are encouraged to report any concerns to school administration.

CAR TRAFFIC (Parent Pick-Up Area) Teachers/school staff supervise student traffic before and after school. Please follow their directions.

***MORNING DROP OFF for Grades K to 5:** Children are to be dropped off and picked up in the designated parent loop. There are two lanes in the drop-off area.

Please stay in the right lane and drive all the way forward to drop your child off. The left lane will be for moving traffic **only.** Students will be allowed to unload **only in the lane next to the sidewalk.** Parents and students **must use the crosswalk** during morning and afternoon drop offs. Please have the child leave the vehicle as quickly and safely as possible. When using the drive through loop area, we ask that students load/unload only on the passenger side of the vehicle, as entering/exiting the vehicle in the traffic area is very unsafe. To attend scheduled/essential activities in the office, please park in the designated parking area and sign in at the front office. **Parents/visitors may not access the campus without signing in at the front office. Safety protocols are in place. Please follow all directions given by staff regarding visitation and drop off. All visitors on campus are accompanied by staff when traveling beyond the cafeteria. All students are supervised when transitioning from the cafeteria to classrooms.**

***AFTERNOON PICK UP for Grades K to 5:** All car riding students will receive a backpack tag with their assigned number, as well as a hang tag for the parent's car with corresponding number. There are two incoming lanes in the parent pick up area. **Please stay in the right-hand lane and follow directions of staff as you approach the pick-up area.** The left lane will be for moving traffic **only. Students will only be permitted to enter vehicles from the sidewalk/passenger side of vehicles in the right-hand lane.** At dismissal, a staff member will be meeting the vehicles as they approach the designated pick up area. Staff will look for the number displayed on the car's hang tag, which should be displayed in the front window of the car. (As the vehicle proceeds through the loop, the identified student(s) will be readied for pick-up.) Safety is our primary concern. Only adults known to school staff and identified on the student's emergency card may be released in the Parent Pick-Up area. If needed, school staff will request the adult park and enter the school office. Appropriate identification will be required for release of the student.
*Parents of VPK students should see their child's teacher for pick-up procedures.

CLINIC

The school health technician will screen students referred by the teacher to determine whether they should be sent home or returned to the classroom. Parents will be notified if the student is injured or has a temperature of at least 100 degrees. It is necessary for the school to have emergency numbers to contact someone. Parents are responsible for notifying the office and their child's teacher of any change in address or telephone numbers.

Emergencies can occur at any time and the school must be able to contact the parent at all times. If you fail to keep us informed of any change, especially in telephone numbers, you may cause the loss of precious time in a real emergency. Please promptly update your student's information with any changes by contacting the front office.

The school should be notified if your child has a particular health problem, such as kidney or bladder problems, allergic reactions, seizures, etc. If a child becomes ill at school and needs to go home, every effort will be made to contact the parents. Please see the health technician regarding appropriate forms and management of any medications that should be administered during the school day. Students are not permitted to have any medications in their possession, including both over the counter and prescribed medications.

MAKE CERTAIN WE HAVE A CURRENT PHONE NUMBER WHERE PARENTS CAN BE REACHED IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES.

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

It is our policy to work with all children in a positive and nurturing way. We believe that all children should have positive experiences that encourage academic achievement as well as emotional and social development.

Children who are not responsive to teachers and support staff and those who consistently cause disruption in class or any place on the school grounds are referred to the office. All disciplinary action by school administration is intended to help the child accept his/her responsibility. Parents are expected to review the Volusia County School Code of Student Conduct and Discipline with their child(ren). Many school based rules and procedures are also included in this handbook for your reference. To minimize distractions and conduct concerns, students should not bring any toys, such as balls, trading cards, fidget spinners, etc., to school. The form, acknowledging review of the VCS Code of Student Conduct and Discipline must be signed and returned to the teacher within the first week of school.

Procedures are necessary for maintaining an orderly campus and classroom. It is the responsibility of each teacher to establish and communicate classroom procedures to students and parents. Parents are strongly encouraged to review the Code of Conduct, as well as information regarding classroom expectations provided by individual teachers, with their student(s). The Pierson Elementary team has developed school-wide

expectations and a system of positive reinforcement to be implemented throughout the school. The 4 B's are general, school-wide expectations for all students:

1. Be Responsible
2. Be Respectful
3. Be Safe
4. Be the Best Cub You Can Be

In the event a student is found responsible for vandalism or destruction of school property, appropriate school based consequences will be assigned by school administration. Parents are responsible for costs pertaining to repairs/replacement of equipment and school facilities vandalized or destroyed by students.

DISTRICT GRADE SCALE AND GRADE POINT VALUE

1. Grading/Quality Point Key

The following grade and quality point system shall be used to simplify the averaging of letter grades and determining honor rolls. To average grades for honor roll determination, quality points will be assigned each letter grade as shown below:

A Outstanding Progress	90-100	4.0
B Above Average Progress	80-89	3.0
C Average Progress	70-79	2.0
D Unacceptable Progress	60-69	1.0
F or U Non-Completion of Important Components of Tasks	0-59	0
I In Progress/Improvement Needed		

Other Report Card Coding:

- NG** No Grade Assigned
- NA** Not Applicable
- LEP** Limited English Proficiency

To determine the letter grade average, add the number of equivalent quality points, and then divide the number of letter grades represented.

2. Subject/Grade Identification

The progress of students in grade levels kindergarten through five will be evaluated in each subject area as aligned to the Florida Standards.

Kindergarten and grade level one will use the Progress Indicators:

“Demonstrates Consistently, Learning/Developing, Area of Concern,” for all subject areas.

Grade level two will use letter grades of A, B, C, D, U for the subject areas of Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. All other subject areas will use the Progress Indicators:

Demonstrates Consistently, Learning/Developing, and Area of Concern.”

Grade level three, four and five will use letter grades of A, B, C, D, F for subject area achievement and 1, 2, or 3 for effort in all subject areas. The effort grade shall be assigned based on the following numerical designation:

Effort is satisfactory	1
Effort needs improvement	2
Effort is unsatisfactory	3

3. District Honor Roll Identification

- a. District honor roll students will be identified in grades four and five using the following criteria:

An average of 3.0 or above quality

No letter grade below C; All subject area effort grades of 1; and all personal development grades of S.

- b. A variety of school based activities will be held to celebrate student achievement.

DRESS CODE

Proper dress is essential to positive self-esteem and proper behavior. Appropriate, modest dress is requested. For the overall comfort and safety of your child, **we highly recommend sneakers for footwear**. Please adhere to the following:

1. Bare midriffs are not allowed.
2. Wearing high-heeled shoes, backless shoes, flip-flops, or shoes with wheels is not allowed. **Sneakers are required for PE.**
3. Wearing clothes with inappropriate language or message connotations are prohibited.
4. Lower garments must be appropriate length. A child should be able to drop their hands down by their sides and the clothing (shorts, dresses or skirts) must be at least a minimum of fingertip length.
5. Hats may not be worn indoors (except during school spirit day activities).
6. No hair style or hair ornaments that obscure vision or otherwise distract are allowed. **Only hair colors which occur naturally in humans are acceptable. Subtle highlights (in other colors) are permitted. Please contact school administration for information if needed.**

7. **Students are not permitted to bring makeup, nail polish, cologne /perfume, body spray, etc. to school.**
8. It is expected that students will at all times be dressed in compliance with the district uniform policy. **School uniform information is available on the school webpage and in the front office. Shirt/Polo colors are: White, Black, Gray, Navy Blue, Lime Green or “School Spirit” T-shirt. “School Spirit” T-shirts are available for purchase in the main office.**

*School administration will review any concerns regarding dress code. In the event a student is determined to be in violation of the dress code, parents will be contacted to provide alternate clothing to reduce the loss of instructional time.

DRUG POLICY

Possession, distribution and/or sales of illegal drugs or alcohol, as defined in Florida Statutes, CH. 893, by any student on school property, or in attendance at a school function is grounds for expulsion. *If a student needs medication during the school day, appropriate forms must be completed by the parent with the school’s health technician prior to the medication being brought to school.

EARLY CHECKOUT

Parents needing to pick up children before normal dismissal time must report to the school office. The office staff will call the student’s classroom and request for the student to meet parents in the office. Students may be dismissed early only for medical, legal or religious reasons or emergencies. We ask that parents do not check students out following assemblies and events. Due to transition times and dismissal procedures, parents should not request checkout during the last 30 minutes of the school day. (*revision December 2019 – planned checkouts should occur no later than 1:30PM.)

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

School devices, such as iPads and laptops are available to students within the school day. Students are financially responsible for damage to devices due to horseplay or misuse of equipment. Individual classroom teachers may encourage the use of personal devices if implementing “Bring Your Own Technology”. Please discuss classroom expectations and rules regarding electronic devices with your child’s teacher. Devices are not permitted for use on campus without approval of the

supervising teacher. Please be aware data usage, through the school’s wi-fi signal, may result in financial charges to the user’s personal account/device - phone plan. Discipline consequences may occur for any students

Electronic devices are NOT permitted on testing days. If a student has an electronic device on his/her person during any part of a test, the test will be invalidated. Students are provided an opportunity to store electronic devices appropriately prior to assessments. To minimize distraction and possibility of invalidations, **we ask parents to keep all electronic devices home on test days.**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire Drills: A minimum of ten fire drills are required for the school year. Each area of the school has a posted evacuation route. The teacher must account for all students during the drill. Each teacher is given a Grab and Go envelope that includes a class roster and a missing student sign. Teachers are required to bring the envelope to every fire drill.

Tornado Drills: Annual tornado drills are conducted with teachers and students proceeding to designated shelter areas. Students are taught safety measures, such as assuming protective posture with face down and hands over head.

Bomb Threat: Staff report the situation to the principal immediately and evacuate students to designated areas. The teacher must account for all students, take roll, and report attendance to Security Team Zone Agent.

Lockdown/Hostage/Weapons: Teachers are required to report the situation to the principal immediately and move children away from the crisis situation. In addition, teachers must lock and secure all doors and windows and move all children from view if possible. No one exits until all clear is announced.

HAZMAT (Hazardous Materials): Teachers are required to report the situation to the principal immediately and move children away from situation. Teachers and students are required to clear all sidewalks, stop all outside movement, stay in rooms and turn off heat/AC . No one exits until all clear is announced. If an evacuation is required, teachers must evacuate children to outside gates, take roll, and provide attendance report to Security Team Zone Agent.

Severe Weather/Tornado:

Watch: Conditions are right to produce severe weather conditions. All students and teachers must prepare to follow school-based safety protocols.

Warning: A tornado or severe thunderstorm has been detected. Students/teachers should crouch under desk, away from windows and cover their head until the all clear is announced.

It is important that parents ensure emergency contact information is updated as needed. In the event of a real emergency, automated phone calls will be delivered to the emergency numbers on file for students. Information, such as evacuation site, alternate parent pick-up location, etc. will be communicated via an automated call. Emergency procedures can also be accessed by visiting the school's website.

FIELD STUDIES

Parents must sign permission slips for pupils to go on field studies, and return in a timely fashion, prior to the trip. All field studies must have the approval of the Volusia County School Board. Only monies specified by the teacher should be taken on field studies. **All parents wishing to serve as a Volusia County School chaperone must have clearance as an approved volunteer at least one week prior to the field study. Parent chaperones may *not* bring siblings of participating students on the trip. It is not permitted for any adults or family members not designated and approved as chaperones to join participating students at the public venue where the field study is taking place.** In the event this occurs, the student will have to be officially signed out by the parent from the supervising teacher and will not be able to rejoin the group. Participation in future field trips may be impacted.

GUIDANCE

Pierson Elementary has a full-time Guidance Counselor. The counselor works with children individually, in small groups and in classroom guidance sessions. Students may request guidance services, or be referred to the counselor by teachers and/or parents. Ideally, students should be referred to guidance for assistance before a minor problem becomes a major problem.

Types of problems which may be referred to guidance are:

- Inability to adjust to the classroom environment, socially or academically.
- Personal concerns.
- Withdrawn/very shy children.
- Bullying.

--Home problems that may affect school work.

--Educational planning, such as study skills, time management, and organization.

--Behavioral/emotional problems which may require a referral to the school psychologist for educational assessment.

--Referral to community agencies.

--Suspected drug/substance abuse.

--Concerns which require special parenting skills.

The Guidance Counselor not only works with students with problems, but is also very involved in developing positive attitudes, character and leadership potential.

HOMEWORK

In our continuing effort to provide an atmosphere of cooperation and support between the student's school life and home life, we have developed a homework policy that will be manageable for all students.

We believe that homework should:

1. Reinforce skills and concepts taught daily at school.
2. Develop a stronger sense of responsibility in students.

The following guidelines are intended to help teachers and parents in making homework meaningful:

1. Homework should require no more than 30 minutes to complete for primary students (grades K-3) and no more than 45 minutes for intermediate students (4-5).
2. Assignments should be limited to 2-3 subjects per night and may be assigned for Monday through Thursday evenings except where make-up work is necessary on the weekend.
3. Assignments should focus on math and reading reinforcement and practice.
4. Occasionally, there will be long range assignments such as social studies or science projects or reading reports which are intended to encourage planning and organization.
5. Homework or writing assignments will not be assigned as a punishment.
6. Students will be held accountable for daily homework assignments. Completion of homework will be reflected in the student's effort grade on the report card and the academic achievement grade.

INVITATIONS

If your child is going to bring invitations to school for a party outside school, please make sure all children in the class are invited. Otherwise, make arrangements to distribute invitations outside of school. Student addresses or phone numbers may not be released. Likewise, if special snacks or other treats are brought to school for sharing, there should be enough for all students in the class.

LOST AND FOUND

All articles found on the school grounds are to be brought to the front office. To ensure the return of lost articles, have your child’s first and last name clearly marked on inside labels of clothing or inside covers/lids.

LUNCH – School Way Cafe

During the first week of school, we ask that all families complete the online application for free and reduced lunch. A computer is available in the front office for this task if needed and a limited number of paper copies are available upon request. We ask that ALL families complete an application, as special program funding is based on our percentage of students receiving free/reduced lunch. Please keep in mind; we are required to provide every parent with the opportunity to apply and additional services are provided to our school as a result of total applications submitted, even if every student does not utilize the benefit.

When students lose lunch money, they may charge lunch for that day. A notice is sent home with the student and the cafeteria appreciates payment the next day.

If at all possible, parents should buy their child’s lunches at least one week at a time. Lunches should be purchased in the mornings before school starts. **FREE AND REDUCED LUNCHES ARE AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO QUALIFY. THE FORM CAN BE ACCESSED ONLINE. PLEASE CONTACT THE SCHOOL OFFICE FOR ASSISTANCE IF NEEDED.**

Lunch

Elementary Lunch	\$2.00
Reduced Price Lunch	\$.40
Students not enrolled in VCS	\$3.50
Adult Lunch	\$3.50
Ala carte milk	\$.50

Breakfast

Adults /Students not enrolled VCSD	\$2.00
Student Breakfast –all schools	FREE

DURING TIMES WHEN VISITORS ARE PERMITTED. Please check with the main office prior

to your visit to see if visitors are permitted: If visiting campus to have lunch with your student, picnic tables just outside the cafeteria are available for your use. However, only the student(s) of the visiting parent may leave the cafeteria. Parents are welcome to eat inside the cafeteria with their student as well, in the designated parent/visitor area. Parents/visitors are not permitted to sit at classroom tables,.

MEDICATION

Teachers are forbidden by law to administer any kind of medication. **If a child must take medication during school hours, a doctor must complete a request for medication to be administered by school personnel and it must be on file in the School Office.** This form is available in the office and at the doctor’s office. **Parents must bring the medication to school. Medication cannot be transported on the bus or sent to school with the student.** A child with a communicable disease or fever is not to attend school.

PROBLEM SOLVING TEAM (PST)

Pierson Elementary School has a Problem Solving process, which is a data driven process that assists students, families, and teachers in seeking positive solutions for all students. The primary goal of the PST is to support teachers and parents by generating effective research-based academic and behavioral strategies for individual targeted students. In addition, Problem Solving Teams can use school-wide and class-wide data to monitor the success and difficulties of groups of students and can offer academic and behavioral interventions to be applied to class or school-wide issues.

PROMOTION

Pupil promotion is based upon an evaluation of each pupil’s achievement of proper instructional objectives. The teacher recommends promotion based on the following: grade level Sunshine State standards, district-wide assessments, progress tests, classroom work, observations, tests, and other relevant achievement data. Student promotion is also based upon an evaluation of the student’s acceptable progress toward grade level Sunshine State Standards and levels of performance on statewide assessments in Reading, Writing, Science, and Mathematics. The classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for determining each student’s level of performance and readiness for the next grade level, subject to review by the principal.

P.T.A.

Our Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.) is very active at Pierson Elementary. The P.T.A. assists students and staff in many ways. We encourage your support. "Don't wait, Participate!"

RAINY DAY PLANS

Students should stay inside or under canopy of covered sidewalks on rainy days until taken home. Plan ahead with your children for rainy days. **Will they be picked up at the bus stop? If they are walkers or bike riders, will they be picked up on campus?** If these arrangements are made ahead of time, our telephone lines will be left open for emergency calls.

RELEASING STUDENTS

Students will be released **only** to parents/guardians or others who are pre-approved by the parents/guardians **and once they are signed out in the office.** These persons must be ready to show picture identification. For the safety and security of our students, these policies and procedures are steadfast. Students will be called from class when parent/guardian is present in the main office and has signed for the student to be released.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

School volunteers include parents, students, and community members who wish to help by giving their time to our children. If interested, please call the Main Office. **All interested parties will need to complete a School Volunteer Application.** Younger siblings not attending school, or school age children from other schools, are not permitted to accompany parents when volunteering in a classroom or event during the school day.

SMOKING POLICY

It is the policy of the Volusia County School Board that there is **NO SMOKING** (or tobacco products) on any school board property by anyone.

SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

School social work services are available to help students attain maximum benefits from their school program. The school social worker is an important link between the student's school, home and community by coordinating parents, teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, school psychologists and other professionals to address

the problems and needs of the student. As a skilled professional, the school social worker will help handle social, cultural, physical and economic issues which affect students in their educational experiences.

TEXTBOOKS /MEDIA CHECK-OUT

Textbooks and books checked out from the John H. Smiley Media Center are loaned without charge to students. Students must keep the books in good condition and return them on the due date. Students or their parents/guardians are required to pay for any lost or damaged textbooks or media books which are assigned to the students.

TRANSFERS /WITHDRAWALS

All parents/guardians are required to contact the school in advance when a child is transferred to another school. Time is needed to complete the necessary procedures for transfer. All textbooks and library books are to be returned and all monies paid before a child's records are released. Advance notice allows for a smooth and timely transition.

TOYS AND TRADING CARDS

To minimize distractions and conduct concerns, students should not bring toys or trading cards to school. This includes balls, Pokemon or Yugioh cards, fidget spinners, skateboards, etc. Items not permitted at school will be removed from students and returned to parents upon request.

VISITORS

We appreciate the support of our parents and volunteers. However, there are times when visitors are limited to essential need only, such as testing times or community concerns, such as COVID-19. At times when visitors are permitted, Parents, volunteers and visitors are required to sign-in and wear a badge at all times while on campus. (Also see Breakfast/Lunch sections regarding visitor information).

Permission from the principal is required to visit classrooms while classes are in session. **No school age children from other schools will be allowed to visit, or accompany adult volunteers, during the school day.**

**Please contact the school office at
386-740-0850 or stop by
if additional information or
clarification is needed.**