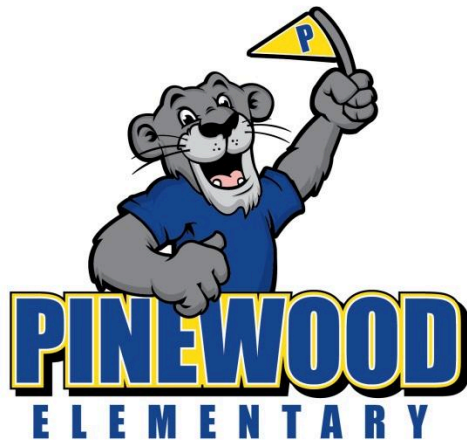


Pinewood Elementary School

2025-2026

Parent-Student Handbook



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Welcome to Pinewood Elementary School! We look forward to partnering with you in educating your child during the most crucial beginning stages of their school career. We encourage our families to get involved with the [PTA](#) and our [School Improvement Team](#). Both of these are opportunities to work together to strengthen our school community. The information provided in this handbook outlines the frequently asked questions that parents may have throughout the school year. Please note that this is not an exhaustive compilation of all rules and regulations for our school. If you ever have additional questions that you would like addressed that are not answered here, please feel free to contact the school office at (980) 343-5825.

Absences

Please review the expectations for [Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools](#) and student attendance located on the CMS website. To be marked present, a student must attend school for 50% of the instructional day. Parents and guardians should make their best effort to schedule any and all appointments outside of school hours.

- Student success is contingent upon students attending school. Students should be in school on time. Our arrival time is **7:45 a.m.** and dismissal is 3:15 p.m. All students must be seated by **8:15 a.m.**
Students with excessive absences, tardies will be asked to resubmit proof of address. If this is not their home school they will be required to attend their home school.
- Absences are excused for illness, medical appointments, religious holidays, or death of an immediate family member.
 - **A written note, email, or ParentSquare message must be given to the teacher explaining the reason for the absence in order for the absence to be excused. Absences can also be excused through the [online link](#) on our school website.**
- If your child is absent for more than one day of school, please send a doctor's note upon return.
- Truancy notes will be sent home to inform parents when students have accumulated excessive unexcused absences (ie. 3, 6 and 10 day accumulations). Please note that excessive absences will result in referral to truancy court.

Tardies

Please make every effort to get your students to school on time every single day. Building consistent attendance habits from the beginning of the school year is imperative. **Arrival after 8:15 will be considered tardy.** Please remember that our car rider line backs up as it gets close to 8:15 a.m. If your child is a car rider, plan to be in the car line early to ensure your child is not tardy.

- If your student arrives after 8:15, **a parent must escort them up to the front door and fill out the Late Arrival Sign-in using the QR Code before ringing the bell.** All students that arrive tardy must take a tardy slip and give it to their classroom teacher.
- Parents of students with excessive tardies will be asked to do the following:
 - Provide proof of address if consistent tardiness continues after initial meeting/notification letter.
 - Mandatory meeting with school personnel
 - Utilize CMS bus transportation (if this is the child's home school)
 - The request will be to return to the student's home school if the student lives out of zone

Birthdays

Birthdays are special and important days in the lives of our students. Although there are no parties held during the instructional day, cupcakes or party bags (of individually pre-wrapped, store bought goodies) can be shared with the class to celebrate your student. Please do not send full cakes, pizza etc. Please ask the teacher prior to sending so as not to disrupt instructional time. Balloons are not permitted in the building at any time.

Cafeteria

Breakfast and lunch are both completely free for Pinewood students. Students are welcome to bring a packed lunch from home or receive a cafeteria lunch during their scheduled lunch time. **Please note that due to severe allergies, peanuts are not allowed at Pinewood Elementary.**

- Breakfast service begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 8:15 a.m. to ensure that all students are able to report to class on time.
- Students arriving after 8:15 should eat breakfast at home.

- Students will go to the cafeteria during their assigned grade-level lunch time.

Car Rider Expectations

Please do not come in the exit entrance of the parking lot and make U-turns. It is not safe. Repeat offenders will be reported and possibly banned from school property.

- **Students are not permitted to be left outside before the bell rings at 7:45.**
- Morning car rider students should be ready to exit the car quickly when their car gets to the front of the line.
- Between 7:45 and 8:15 AM, all adults must remain in their vehicles and follow the traffic pattern to drop off students. Please do not exit your vehicle and walk your student up to the door.
- Instruction begins promptly at 8:15 AM and students are expected to be sitting in their classrooms at that time. The front doors will open at 7:45 and close at 8:15, even if there is a line of cars.
- After 8:15 AM, **all** students will need to be walked to the front door or designated arrival door by an adult and signed in as tardy using the QR code posted on the door.

Communication with Teachers (conferences, phone calls, ParentSquare, emails etc.)

Pinewood uses an app called ParentSquare to communicate with families. Please be sure to [sign up](#) at the very beginning of the school year to receive any pertinent information and to communicate with your child's classroom teacher. You can find more information about ParentSquare on our school website. If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's teacher or call the front office. Teachers will schedule conferences with all parents at the end of first quarter in October and on an as-needed basis throughout the year.

- Parents are also encouraged to request conferences with teachers. Please contact your child's teacher through ParentSquare, email, or by calling the school (980-343-5825) to set up a conference.
 - Conferences with teachers should be scheduled in advance. During the school day, teachers are instructing and supervising students. They are unavailable to take phone calls, respond to ParentSquare messages and have unscheduled conferences.

- Teachers will return phone calls and respond to ParentSquare messages from parents within 24 hours. If an emergency and change of dismissal is needed you must call the school office at 980-343-5825.
- All students will receive communication folders at the beginning of the year. It is important to check your students' folders every day.

Dress Code

- Student and parent dress when on school grounds should promote a respectful education environment. This includes (but is not limited to):
 - Undergarments and midriffs should not be exposed (ie. no nightgowns, lingerie) on campus.
 - T-Shirt messages should be appropriate for an elementary school environment.
 - Clothing should not be see-through
 - Students should wear appropriate shoes for PE days
- Please refer to the [CMS handbook](#) for more information concerning student dress code.

Early Dismissals

Please remember that each time your child is picked up early, they are missing valuable instruction which can result in students not meeting grade level standards. Early dismissals, absences, and tardies will be considered at the end of the year decisions for promotion or retention.

- If you are picking your child up for early dismissal, please follow the early dismissal procedure posted on the door:
 - The QR code posted on the door will take you to a Google form. Please fill out the Google Form before ringing the bell and you must be prepared to present ID.
 - The person picking the student up must be on the approved pick-up list for each student that they are picking up.
 - Students will not be called from their classroom until they have been completely signed out.
- **Students will not be dismissed after 2:15 p.m.**

Emergency Contacts

Please make sure to update emergency contact information by notifying the teacher or school office directly any time a phone number or address change has occurred.

Health and Immunizations

All students attending school in North Carolina must provide proof of up to date immunizations and students entering Kindergarten must provide proof of a well-child physical on or after 8/28/2023. North Carolina law requires all principals to exclude children from school who have not completed this series within 30 days of enrollment. If your child requires daily medication or has a medical condition that the school needs to be aware of, please call the school to speak with the school nurse.

- In order for your child to take medication during the school day you must have a CMS Medication Authorization form signed by a doctor and the parents/guardian.
- If your child has specialized medical needs, please alert the school nurse, teacher, and principal to ensure that your child's personal medical concerns are met.
- Please remember that all medication must be picked up by the last day of school or it will be discarded.

Homework

Students will have reading and math homework every night during the week. Please ensure that they are completing it with accuracy and that they are spending at least 20-30 minutes reading each night (pending grade level age of student). If you have any questions about your student's homework or if your student is not receiving take-home homework, the first place to reach out is to your child's teacher via ParentSquare . If you need to be connected on ParentSquare, please call the office.

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

Parents are encouraged to join the Pinewood PTA in order to be involved in the decision making process for the school.

- PTA meetings are held once a month. Time and Day TBD
- PTA membership dues are \$5 per person.
- Please contact: Alexandra Evans (alexandratatianaevans@gmail.com) if you are interested in joining Pinewood's PTA or fill out the [Google Form](#) on our school website.

Safety and Security

Student safety and security is always our number one priority. For this reason we are unable to leave students unsupervised during the day to make phone calls or have conferences with parents.

- All visitors on campus are required to sign in at the office upon entering the school. All visitors must have a pre-scheduled appointment (if permitted based on Covid restrictions) and they must sign-in through the LobbyGuard system in the front office.
- Students will only be released to persons listed on their emergency contact card.
- Any student dismissed early must be signed out/cleared in the office.
- All school volunteers must register on the CMS volunteer website: www.cmsvolunteers.com
- Parents may not accompany their child to the classrooms or to recess at any time.

* Failure to comply with school procedures may result in banning from school property.

School Hours

7:45 – First bell rings and students are admitted into the building

8:15 – Tardy bell rings, instruction begins, any student arriving after this time will be marked late.

3:15 – Dismissal bell rings

Transportation

Any changes to regular transportation must be submitted to the classroom teacher in writing or called in to the front office by phone.

- We cannot accept transportation changes after 1:45. Please note that transportation changes made through the office do disrupt class time so it is always best to communicate directly with the teacher via ParentSquare or a note at least a day prior to scheduled changes.
- Any student not picked up by 3:30 will have to be signed out by a parent or legal guardian in the front office.

Volunteers and Field Trips

- We love for parents and family members to volunteer at our school! Volunteer opportunities are available to assist during book fairs, family involvement events, on field trips, or in the media center. Please note:

You **MUST be a registered volunteer** in order to accompany your child to assist for any of the items listed above.

- All volunteers must register on the CMS volunteer website and be cleared (www.cmsvolunteers.com) prior to volunteering. **This is a required annual registration.** (Please note that the background check may take more than 24 hours to be approved so please do not wait until the last minute to register.)