

BLYTHE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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IB WORLD SCHOOL



Parent/Student Handbook **2023 - 2024**



A Letter from Ms. Simpson



Welcome to the 2023 – 2024 School Year!

Blythe Elementary is a great place to be! In order to provide our scholars with the best education, it takes the combined team efforts from the total school community of students, parents and school staff. As parents – you are your child’s primary instructor! Home and school working together simultaneously ensures the best academic results.

Our student planner is designed to provide the opportunity for better communication between school and home. The primary purpose of the planner is to help our scholars to become more responsible and to improve their organization and study skills. Each 2 – 5 grade student should have a planner and will be expected to use it appropriately. We ask that parents check the planner daily for assignments, notes, grades, and other communications.

At Blythe Elementary, we believe that homework or long term projects are an extension of the learning that takes place in school. Homework can reinforce classroom learning and can provide opportunities for independent study, research and creative thinking. We hope this planner will be helpful to you as a parent. Use it as a guide to understanding Blythe’s procedures, rules and regulations. Being familiar with our school, along with participation and good attendance will help ensure success at Blythe Elementary for your scholar.

Additional ways to help your scholar achieve success:

- 1. Make sure your scholar attends school regularly. Attendance Matters!**
- 2. Make high academic achievement a priority in your family life.**
- 3. Make sure you review your scholar’s student planner and homework each night.**
- 4. Make sure that your child reads at least 30 minutes every night (independently and or with an adult).**
- 5. Have a special place at home where your child can work undisturbed.**
- 6. Communicate with the teacher if you have questions or concerns.**
- 7. Emphasize with your scholar on a daily basis that you expect him/her to do his/her best at school.**

I encourage all parents to be actively involved at school with your scholar. Parents are welcome at Blythe Elementary and volunteer service is encouraged. **New this year, we are rewarding parents for their active engagement here at Blythe. Please see the Parent Compact that is included in our Student/Parent Handbook.** I hope that you all will become an active participant within the Blythe Elementary school community.

Thank you for your ongoing support and I look forward to a very successful year!

Felisa A. Simpson

Principal

Blythe Vision Statement

Our vision is to empower all students to achieve high academic standards. Blythe students will realize the vitality in themselves, becoming confident, inquisitive, innovative citizens who respect all cultures of the world.



Blythe Mission Statement

Through Programs of Inquiry and along with the International Baccalaureate learner profiles, our mission is to ensure that each child has unique opportunities to be innovative problem solvers, working cooperatively, with mutual respect and appreciation for a more peaceful world.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.



Learner Profile Attribute

The goal of PYP and all IB programmes, according to the International Baccalaureate Organization, is to "develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world." Developing lifelong learners who are positive contributors to society is something many schools strive to achieve.

Learner Profile	Definition
Caring	Helpful to others, empathetic, thoughtful, considerate, recognizes that he/she is part of a group.
Open-Minded	Listens to other thoughts and ideas, accepts that there is more than one way of looking at things.
Balanced	Uses time wisely and participate in a variety of activities.
Risk-Taker	Willing to make mistakes, prepared to try something new, willing to try things in unfamiliar ways.
Principled	Honest, makes good decisions, responsible, has a sense of fairness and justice.
Inquirer	Ask questions, does not give up easily.
Thinker	Uses what he/she already knows and can build on his/her own ideas and the ideas of others.
Knowledgeable	Learning more about self, others and the world.
Communicator	Expresses feelings and thoughts across by speaking, drawing, and writing. They communicate through music, dance, and drama. Language is key to expressing themselves and they can communicate in more than one language.
Reflective	Thinks about his/her actions, learning and different ways to do things.

For more information, check out this site on the IB website: <https://www.ibo.org/benefits/learner-profile/>



You can check out this site for videos explaining the learner profile: <http://www.whatisib.com/what-is-the-learner-profile.html>



What are the PYP approaches to learning - ATL?

The PYP states that learning how to learn is a really important part of education. It attempts to help students develop a series of skills to become autonomous, interdisciplinary learners.

The approaches aim to help students learn how to effectively ask questions, set realistic goals and pursue these goals effectively and successfully. Having a good approach to learning is a vital way of helping students reach their potential and aid their development across the board.

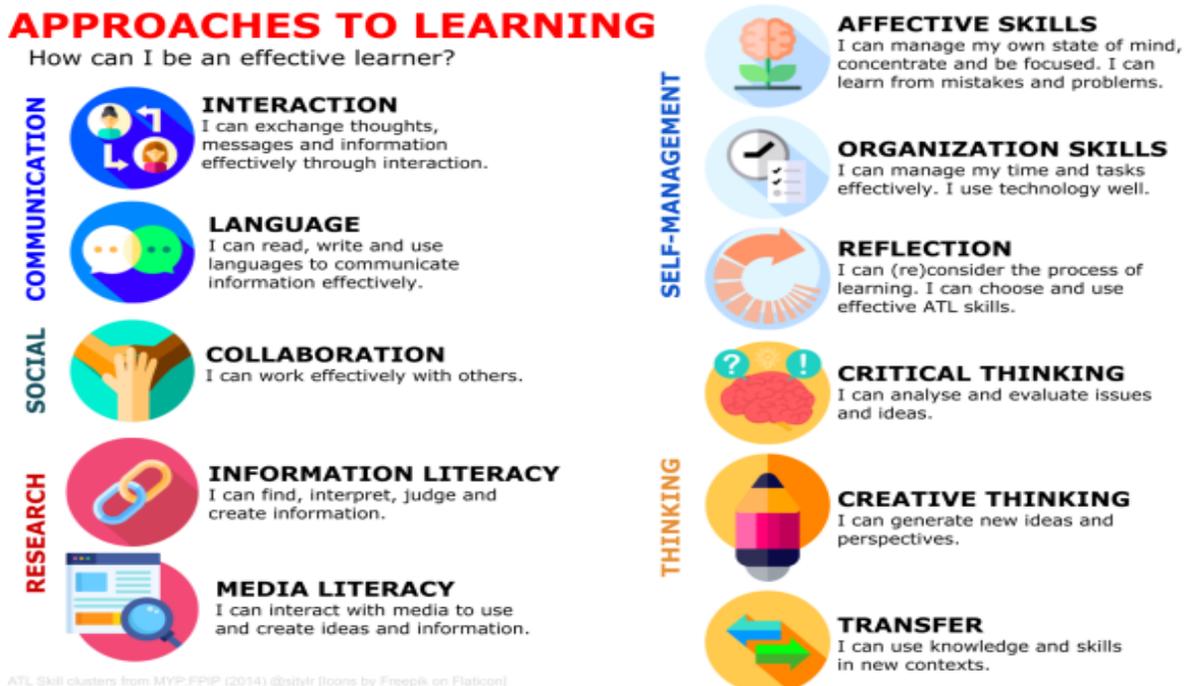
The approaches to learning encouraged by the PYP also help children develop a sense of independence and autonomy, where they can engage with learning as an active participant, as opposed to responding to teaching passively.

There are five skill categories to support students in the IB PYP. These categories apply to all IB programmes, and specific skills can be targeted to make them more relevant to specific topics being taught.

It's important to emphasize that each of the approaches is related to the others, and children should be encouraged to make appropriate links between them.

Similarly, as part of the PYP, children are encouraged to make interdisciplinary links between topics, subjects, and content they're studying. This is all part of the holistic approach to learning that the IB emphasizes.

<https://www.twinkl.com/teaching-wiki/pyp-approaches-to-learning>



ATL Skill clusters from MYP:FPIP (2014) @sjtylr [Icons by Freepik on Flaticon]

Blythe Elementary Policies and Procedures 2023 - 2024

The following list of policies and procedures is solely designed to ensure the safety of all students as well as provide a conducive environment for teaching and learning. Thank you in advance for helping support and contribute to another successful year for our Cardinal IB Scholars!

- **All parents need to register as a CMS volunteer in order to serve in your child's classroom, chaperone on field trips, eat lunch on a regular basis with your child, or interact with students in any way on campus. You must enroll and be approved through the CMS Volunteer Management Screening System: www.cmsvolunteers.com.**
- **School hours are 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.** Students are not permitted in the building before 7:30 a.m. Students are tardy if they arrive after 8:00 a.m. and must have a parent sign them in at the office.
- **Students will not be called for early dismissal after 2:15 p.m. unless prior written notification was sent to the teacher. Calling into classrooms during the last 45 minutes of the day can cause too much disruption and confusion.**
- All transportation changes must be communicated in writing (email, letter, fax etc.) or by phone (**emergencies only**), and all must be approved by our Dean of Students. **No changes can be made after 1:45 p.m.**
- **For the 2023 – 2024 school year, please make note of the car pool traffic pattern.** For your reference, we have provided a map identifying the entrance by the J.M. Alexander athletic field. Due to our traffic pattern, we are asking that students exit their car from the driver's side. **Finally, please note that our school entrance will serve only as an exit during car pool arrival and dismissal each day.**
- **For the safety of students and parents:** If your child is a car rider, parents need to wait in the car line until students are called to your car. Students will not be dismissed to parents who park and request students from the car rider area or at the front office.
- During the first weeks of school, we will be using yellow transportation cards to communicate your child's normal transportation. Please complete and attach this card to your child's back pack.
- **We have an "open door" policy for parents to visit classrooms and/or eat lunch with your child.** However, we do ask that you limit your visits to no more than 30 minutes unless you have a scheduled agreement with the teacher and or an administrator. We also ask that parents refrain from conference-type discussions with the teacher during our instructional day. Conferences need to be set up in advance at a convenient time for both parties.
- **Students must be picked up by 3:15 p.m.** After-school care will be necessary for students who cannot be picked up after this time. **Note: Chronic late pick up will be handled through CMS law enforcement.**
- Students arriving after 11:30 a.m. or leaving before 11:30 a.m. are considered absent for the entire day.
- **Parents are only permitted to bring in store bought cupcakes for birthdays (distribution will only take place in the cafeteria) during assigned lunch times (balloons, pizza, ice cream, etc. are not permitted). Please inform your teacher in advance if this is going to occur. Classroom birthday parties are not permitted.**
- **All Blythe Elementary students and parents will be required to sign a technology agreement in order to bring in and or use school technology devices. Students not adhering to expectations outlined in the agreement will have their technology privileges revoked.**



Absences

Students are expected to be in school each day unless ill or unable to attend due to an unavoidable circumstance. When a child is absent for any reason, the parent or guardian should notify the school of the reason for the absence via email, phone call, or note explaining the absence. In order to code an absence as excused, the school is required to have note from home within two days of the child's return to school.

The note should contain the following:

- Date(s) of absence(s)
- Specific reasons matching "lawful, excused absences" as determined by Public School Law
- Signature of the parent/guardian

PLEASE NOTE: A written note from a parent does not automatically result in an excused absence. The reason for the absence must be one of those determined by Public School Law.

Excused absences are: illness of student, death in the immediate family, quarantine, observance of a religious holiday, or court or administrative proceeding.

Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, missing the bus, oversleeping, car trouble, lack of water, heat, or electricity, inclement weather, babysitting, trips, etc.

Accidents

Parents will be notified of accidents needing medical or immediate attention. Parents must ensure that teachers and the office always have current emergency telephone numbers.

After-School Enrichment Program

The After/Before School Enrichment Program (ASEP) provides programming for kindergarten-fifth grade students before (6:45 a.m.) and after the regular school day (3-6 pm). ASEP offers a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment with a relaxed atmosphere and activity choices. Programming is designed to further the growth of children's social skills and to support academic achievement. Curriculum-correlated activities are planned daily to reinforce reading and math skills. There is time for talking with friends, playing games of strategy, physical and recreational activities, and reading. Homework sessions are supervised and a snack is provided. CMS does not provide transportation home from ASEP. You may enroll your child at an ASEP site different from the school site he/she attends, but school bus transportation from school to the ASEP site will be provided only within the Blythe's attendance boundary.

Arrival Procedures

Parents are strongly encouraged to use the school bus transportation provided by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. If you do provide transportation in the morning, please do not go to your

child's classroom. Please remain in your car and let your child out of the car at the designated site. The arrival procedure will keep the traffic flowing in the morning. To help ensure safety, please refrain from cell phone use in the morning and afternoon carpool line. Selected staff members will be on duty to assist with the arrival procedures to ensure the safety of all students. Please have your child to school by 7:50. Our school-wide morning show begins at that time. Please do not drop your student off at carpool prior to the 7:30 bell. We do not have staff on duty outside or in the building to supervise your children. Thank you for helping us keep your children safe!

If you arrive to car pool after the 8:00 am bell, you need to park and walk your child into the office so you can sign them in tardy. There are no staff members on duty after 8:00 am, so this is a safety measure to keep your child supervised at all times.

Agenda/Student handbook

The purpose of the agenda is to build responsibility, self-reliance, and resourcefulness as students learn organizational techniques.

The agenda will be sent home every day and will contain homework assignments, notes, and other communications from the teacher. We ask that parents check and sign the agenda DAILY. The teacher will check the agenda each morning for parent signature and notes to the teacher.

Attendance

There is strong evidence of a direct correlation between good attendance and student achievement. Parents and guardians are responsible for seeing that their children attend school each day it is in session (GS-115C-378). Students are counted present if they remain in school until 11:30 a.m. or if they enter school by 11:30 a.m. and stay for the remainder of the day.



Beautification

To help preserve the school grounds and promote a positive school climate, students, parents, and staff work together to spruce up our school campus several times throughout the school year. Please contact the PTA for more information.

Birthday Celebrations

Only store bought cupcakes (with ingredient list) can be at school, so homemade birthday snacks or treats are not permitted in the classrooms or cafeteria. We realize that social occasions occur and students want to extend invitations to their friends; however, party invitations cannot be distributed during the school day. Teachers will only send home invitations if there is one for each child.

Bus Stops

School bus routes and stops are designated by the Superintendent, with the assistance of the Transportation Department, and will be no farther than 0.2 mile unless an exception is made because of safety factors. School buses will come to a complete stop at each bus stop; if no student is in sight, the bus will continue on its route immediately. Students should arrive at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. To allow for uncontrollable incidents, such as traffic delays, students should wait for the bus at least 15 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time before leaving the bus stop. Parents are responsible for student safety at bus stops. Parents are encouraged to work together at bus stops to establish a phone tree for communication and to ensure that students have appropriate supervision while waiting for the bus.



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Cafeteria Expectations

We expect our cafeteria to be a reflection of proper manners and courtesies taught and practiced at home. Because of the large number of students gathered together, students are expected to display polite manners, use quiet indoor voices, and follow all cafeteria rules. Lunch visitors must stop in the office and get a visitor's badge. **Remember that anyone coming to eat lunch with his/her child must have supervised volunteer status.**

Calendar

A parent calendar is published each month on our website to keep parents informed on all Blythe happenings and important events. This information and more can also be found in our School Monthly Newsletter – “**The Cardinals Monthly Newsletter**”

Care of School Property

Students are expected to take good care of school property and to use supplies appropriately.

Cell Phones

All cell phones should be turned off upon entering the school building or classrooms. To help ensure safety, please refrain from cell phone use in the morning and afternoon carpool line.

Change in Address or Phone

Please notify the office and your child's teacher if you move or change your telephone number during the year. Students who begin school at Blythe but move during the school year may have the opportunity to continue to attend Blythe Elementary for the remainder of the school year; however, transportation will not be provided if a child moves out of the Blythe's attendance area. Please promptly notify the school office of your new address and provide an updated proof of residence.

Change in Transportation

Parents are required to submit a transportation form (provided) to the school at the beginning of the year to indicate their child's morning and afternoon mode of transportation. Whatever method you choose, we ask that you keep it the same to avoid confusion for your child, teacher, and office staff. If you have a special circumstance that necessitates a change, please send a signed, dated, note with your child that day. **We cannot change a child's transportation without written notice from the parent.** An administrator must process all temporary changes to a student's mode of transportation. **We must have these written requests by 1:45 pm in order to have enough time to process the change.** Always inform the office **in writing** of any permanent change in your child's transportation.

Character Education

It is the commitment of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District that every member of our school community will display good character. This supports our philosophy as an IB World School. As part of the emphasis on citizenship, the *Pledge of Allegiance* is recited each morning in our school and a different **IB Learner Profile** trait will be highlighted each month.

Checking In and Out

It is very important that students remain in class for a full daily schedule. Tardiness and early dismissals interrupt the instruction of all of our students. A student is tardy after 8:00 a.m. At that time, a parent or guardian **MUST** accompany the child to the office to sign in for the day and obtain a tardy slip. If a student must check out during the day, a parent or guardian must come to the school office to sign out the child and present a valid I.D. Please do not call and ask that a child wait for you in the office. Office personnel will call for the student when you arrive. Continued early dismissals will be referred to the school administrators or the school counselor. Children will only be released to individuals who are listed on the emergency locator card. Please be sure to list the names of all relatives or friend who have permission to pick up your child.

NOTE: Students will not be dismissed after 2:15 p.m.

Carpoolers must be picked up by 3:15p.m.

Child Custody

If there are special custody agreements for a child, the parent(s) should notify the child's teacher and principal by providing official court documentation. Otherwise, the school considers both parents to have equal access to children.

Common Core Standards and Essential Standards

At Blythe, students in kindergarten through fifth grade receive instruction in reading, writing, math, science/health, social studies, and the arts. The *Common Core Standards and Essential Standards* outline the competencies and objectives students should master at each grade level and is based on a philosophy of

teaching and learning that is consistent with current research and exemplary practices. It is a curriculum based on integrating subjects which has been adopted by most states. More information and the curriculum are available at www.corestandards.org.

Communication

Class Dojo is one of our school's primary modes of daily communication from classroom teachers. Our principal also sends out a weekly voice message to share important information for the upcoming week. Communication folders are sent home each Monday with important school information (student work samples, classroom newsletters, principal newsletters, PTA information, calendars, CMS communications, forms that may need your attention, etc.). Please take time to review these folders each Monday and return them promptly the following day with any required paperwork.

Concerns

If you have questions that are specific to your child's progress or a classroom issue, please approach your child's teacher or appropriate staff member directly before bringing the concern to school administration. It is important to keep open lines of communication between parents and teachers to ensure the best education for your child.

Conferences

All K-2 parents are expected to attend a pre-arranged parent-teacher conference at the end of the first quarter. These conferences provide a planned opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss a child's achievement and to plan cooperatively for continued student progress. Please contact your child's teacher to schedule additional conferences as needed. Protecting the instructional time for all of our students is a priority when scheduling conferences. As a professional courtesy, please schedule conferences in advance. In grades 3-5, students facilitate **student-led** conferences. Students will lead the conference with their parents and the teacher. They will share their work and discuss their goals for the next quarter, with the teacher available for support and to help answer questions. These will take place in October.



Delayed Opening, Early Dismissal, or Cancellation of School

The Superintendent of Schools and/or the Board of Education may suspend the operation of any school(s) for particular days or portions of days in the event of emergency, hazardous weather conditions, or other conditions requiring the cancellation of classes. Notification will be available by 5:30 a.m. via media announcements – television and radio stations, a Connect Ed phone message and

the CMS website www.cms.k12.nc.us. Parents are encouraged to listen to the television and radio reports if they anticipate the closing of school. In the event of cancellation, all CMS-sponsored activities for students will be cancelled. If weather conditions worsen during the day after children have arrived at school, local radio stations will make an announcement regarding early dismissal.

Discipline

The Blythe staff is committed to creating a positive school climate that is conducive to effective teaching and learning. Behavior and discipline are shared responsibilities of the home and the school. Our discipline model is aligned with the *CMS Students Rights, Responsibilities and Character Development Handbook*, a comprehensive document that covers expected behavior of students while they are on the bus, at school, and involved in school-sponsored activities. In addition, consequences for inappropriate behavior are clearly spelled out. **All students and parents should read this handbook, sign the pledge form found online agreeing to adhere to the guidelines established within, and return the form to the school.** The handbook and pledge are online at <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/parents/resources/Pages/HandbooksFormsandNotices.aspx> in both English and Spanish.

Dress Code

Students are expected to adhere to the standards of cleanliness and dress that are compatible with the requirements of a productive and safe school environment. A student's appearance, mode of dress, or condition of personal hygiene will not be permitted to disrupt the educational process or constitute a threat to the health or safety of others. Therefore, the following is included in our student dress policy:

- Clogs, flip-flops, and slip-on sandals are a safety hazard and are not appropriate for school.
- Tennis shoes/sneakers must be worn to participate in Physical Education class each week.
- The shoulder width of shirts or blouses must completely cover undergarments.
- Spaghetti strap tops and tube tops are not allowed.
- Net shirts, bare midriffs, or other revealing attire are not acceptable.
- Short dresses, short skirts, or short shorts will not be allowed. Shorts and skirts must be fingertip length.
- Pants or shorts must be worn at the waistline. No underwear shall be revealed.
- Headgear, hats, or sunglasses are not to be worn on campus except for medical and/or safety reasons.
- No clothing, jewelry, or buttons with letters, initials, symbols, or wording that is obscene, offensive, inflammatory, or detrimental to the instructional process are allowed.
- No gang-related clothing, accessories, or symbols as identified by local law enforcement agencies will be allowed.



Emergency Drills

Fire Drill: Fire evacuation drills are conducted once a month to provide building evacuation practice. Students are expected to follow their teachers' directions and quietly exit the building.

Detailed exit directions are posted in every classroom.

Lockdown Drill: Lockdown drills are held several times throughout the year as practice for emergency conditions. Children are instructed to maintain an orderly environment in the event of a security threat.

Tornado Drill: Tornado drills are held in the spring. During the tornado drill, all students housed in mobile units are brought to a pre-designated area inside the building.

Emergency Locator Cards

The school annually updates all contact information on the blue Emergency Locator Cards. It is important that the information be accurate since in medical emergencies, time and accuracy are essential. Please be sure to complete all information on the front and back of the blue card. **The school can only release a student to individuals authorized by the parent/guardian on the emergency card.** Please list multiple names so that in the event of an emergency, you have choices as to who can pick up your child.

End-of-Grade (EOG) Tests

EOGs are state standardized tests administered to third, fourth, and fifth graders in May. The tests provide information on students' progress in meeting the *Common Core Standards*, the curriculum which we teach in North Carolina.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

ESSA is the new federal legislation which updated the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act. It was enacted into law in December, 2015. It requires our school to meet the certain standards for accountability. Our End-of-Grade Tests administered to third, fourth, and fifth grade students are used to determine our school's performance.

Exceptional Children's (EC) Services

The primary purpose of the EC program is to ensure that students with disabilities develop academically, mentally, physically, and emotionally through the provision of an appropriate and individualized education in the least restrictive environment. Students with disabilities receive specially designed instruction from

certified special education teachers and related services based on educational needs. Services are provided in varying amounts of time and may range from consultative to full-time services. The need for special education is determined through a comprehensive evaluation process.



Facebook

Please sign up and visit the Blythe PTA on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BlytheElementary>. The direct link to the Facebook page is available on our website.

Field Trips

Field trips are a direct outgrowth of the instructional program. Written parental permission is required for students participating in each field trip. Telephone calls are **not** acceptable. A fee may be charged for non-required trips to offset the cost of buses and drivers. An admittance fee may also be charged at certain locations. *Students will not be excluded from a field trip because of the inability to pay these fees.* All students are required to travel and remain with their class on field trips. Personal cars are not to be used for field trips unless prearranged by the school. Appropriate arrangements for instruction will be made for students whose parents choose for them not to attend the field trip. The classroom teacher will notify parents when chaperones are needed for field trips. Younger siblings may not accompany parent chaperones on field trips.

Food Policy

Recent changes in society and our environment necessitate that we use foods in the classroom with a measure of caution. Increases in food-borne pathogens that can cause severe illness and a great increase in the number of children with potentially lethal food allergies dictate that care be taken with foods brought from home and eaten in school. The following cautions are to be followed in all schools in order to protect the health and safety of children and staff:

- Any food shared in the classrooms during the administration scheduled parties **must be from an inspected commercial facility** and must be labeled with its contents (Ex: Harris Teeter cupcakes, with a printed list of ingredients from the HT bakery).
- Fresh fruit and vegetables may be shared, but must be thoroughly washed.
- Avoid using a knife that has been used to cut sandwiches with peanut butter, cheese, or meat, to cut anything else. Cross contamination could lead to allergic reactions or food poisoning.
- Products such as milk, cheese or fruit juice, which have not been pasteurized, may not be shared in the classroom or at school activities.

Under no circumstances should the following foods be brought in from homes:

- ground beef products – hamburgers, casseroles, dishes containing ground beef

- venison (deer meat) in any form
- food products made from peanuts and/or tree nuts

It is the parents' responsibility to provide information regarding food allergies to the teacher.



Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run is a non-profit prevention program that encourages preteen girls to develop self-respect and healthy lifestyles through running. The 12 week character-building program addresses all aspects of girls' development - their physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Program and registration information will be sent home in the fall.



Health

A child who is ill is routinely sent to the school health room where the school nurse or office staff will assess the child, contact the parent or guardian, and send the child home if necessary. If your child has a chronic health problem (i.e. diabetes, seizures, asthma, etc.), be sure to make the teacher and office staff aware of his/her special needs. Parents will be contacted if there is an accident at school or if a child has an elevated temperature. If for medical reasons, it is inadvisable for a student to take part in physical education classes, games, or play outside during recess, written notification should be sent to the classroom teacher. As a general rule, we assume if students are well enough to attend school, then they are well enough to participate in the total program.

Homework

The purpose of homework should be to:

- Extend learning and provide practice in applying concepts presented in class;
- Strengthen concept and skill development;
- Build enjoyment and stamina for reading



Illness

In the event of an illness, the parent or guardian should notify the school by email, note, or phone call. If you suspect your child has a communicable disease, please note that at the time of your contact. If an illness occurs during the school day and a student must go home, a staff member will contact the parents. The person picking up the student should come to the office to sign out the child. If a child has an accident or is suddenly taken ill, every effort is made to contact a parent to arrange for transportation home for further medical treatment if necessary. Parents will be required to pick up their child if they have a fever of 100 or higher, vomiting, suspected pink eye, diarrhea, unexplained rashes, or other medical determinations made by our school nurse.

Instagram

Please sign up and visit the Blythe Instagram page at [blytheelem](#) to see the latest in photos! The direct link to our Instagram page is available on our website.

Instructional Schedule

Assessment information is consistently used to differentiate instruction in math and reading to provide curriculum that is academically challenging and appropriate for each child. Students participate in a minimum of two hours of literacy instruction and one hour of math instruction daily. Teachers utilize thematic units and structured center activities to integrate science and social studies concepts. A variety of instructional strategies (including tiered assignments and differentiated planning) are utilized by teachers to enhance the overall quality of instruction while challenging students at appropriate levels. Students receive direct instruction in art, music, physical education, and technology on a weekly basis and Spanish and Science from special area teachers on an alternating basis.

International Baccalaureate

We are an International Baccalaureate World School. IB is a global program that develops children as inquirers, both in the classroom and in the world. There are six themes that are taught which are in-depth and last over several weeks. There is also an emphasis on community service and the character traits of a learner, such as being a risk taker, a communicator, and being an inquirer. Please visit our school website to learn more about IB at Blythe Elementary.

Internet Access Policy

CMS requires that each school keep on file an *Acceptable Use* form signed by each student and his/her parent or guardian. Teachers will review the policy at the beginning of each year and send home the *Acceptable Use Policy* for any student that does not have one on file.



Junior Achievement (JA)

Junior Achievement is a non-profit organization sponsored by corporate and individual contributors. Through age-appropriate curricula, JA programs begin at the elementary school level, teaching children how they can impact the world around them as individuals, workers, and consumers. JA uses hands-on experiences to help young people understand the economics of life. In partnership with business and educators, Junior Achievement brings the real world to students, opening their minds to their potential.



Lost and Found

The Lost and Found area is located in the main lobby. Please consider labeling your child's name on all personal belongings. Sweaters, coats, hats, and lunch boxes are items that are frequently lost. These items are periodically displayed so students and/or parents can claim their belongings. Items not claimed at the end of the first and second semester are donated to a charitable organization.

Lunch Program

Students may select one entrée, two sides, and milk to be considered a complete school lunch. The minimum requirement for a lunch meal is an entrée and one additional item. The additional item may either be a side item or milk. By offering a variety of nutritious choices, students can select a meal made up of foods they enjoy. The menus follow the nutrient-based guidelines established by the USDA and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. See Appendix: *Cafeteria News*.



Meal Payment Options

Child Nutrition Services will accept payment for meals by the following methods: a processed meal application, direct certification, advanced payment, or payment at time of service by

cash, personal check, money order, or cashier's check. The student's full name, account/PIN number, and teacher's name should be included with the payment. You can also create an online account at www.paypams.com to pay for your child's meals.

Medication Policy

If your child must have medication of **any** type given during school hours, **including over-the-counter medication**, you have the following choices:

1. You may come to school and give the medication to your child at the appropriate time.
2. You may discuss with your doctor the possibility of giving your child the medication outside of school hours (before or after school).
3. You may take a *Medication Authorization* form to your child's doctor and have him/her complete the form. The doctor and the parent must sign it. **This form must be completed by the physician for both prescription and over-the-counter medications.** Prescription medicines **must** be brought to school in a pharmacy-labeled bottle which contains instructions on how and when the medication is to be given. When dosage or times change, a new pharmacy-labeled bottle must be obtained. Over-the-counter medications must be received in the original container and will be administered according to the doctor's written instructions. Please instruct your child regarding his/her responsibility in taking medication at school. All medications **must** be brought in by the parent or designee.
4. Students **may not** bring their own medication to school.
5. School personnel will not administer any medication to students unless:
 - o A Medication Authorization is properly completed.
 - o The medication is in a properly labeled container.

To ensure that medications are given to students in the safest and most effective manner, there will be **no exceptions** to this policy.

Messages to Students

Necessary plans should be made with children before they leave home in the morning. In case of an emergency, call the school office and messages will be relayed to students during the school day.

Men In Blythe (Dads Group)

At Blythe, we value the input and support of the men in the lives of our students. Men In Blythe (MIB) supports our school mission and gives students male role models. For more information, visit <http://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/blytheES/Pages/MenofBlythe.aspx>.

Mid-Quarter Progress Reports

Students are on a nine-week grading schedule. *Mid-Quarter Progress Reports* are issued midway through each nine-week grading period to inform parents of their child's academic progress before final grades are issued. We encourage you to talk with your child and the teacher if problems are indicated on the report. Progress reports are to be signed and returned promptly.



Newsletters

Nurse

Our school nurse is employed by the Mecklenburg County Health Department and is present in our school. Nursing services include identification of health problems, referrals to community resources, and consultation with parents and physicians about health problems. Teaching and counseling students concerning health issues and consulting with administrators and staff are also part of the nurse's responsibilities while on campus. The school nurse also attends to health room issues, medication administration, and communication on communicable diseases.



Observing in Classrooms

Parents are welcome to observe an instructional activity in their child's classroom. Observations of classroom instruction must be prearranged with the classroom teacher and the assistant principal a minimum of 24 hours in advance. As a professional courtesy, all teachers are notified of observation times. A school administrator, guidance counselor, or school psychologist will accompany parents during the time of the observation to respond to questions related to instruction, daily routines, grade-level expectations, etc. While visiting, please remember that an observation visit is not the time to talk to teachers. If you wish to discuss a matter with your child's teacher, please schedule a conference.



Parties

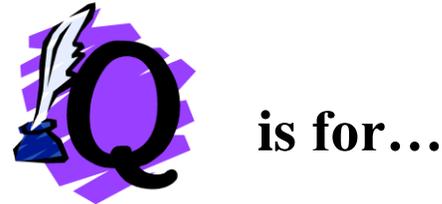
Instructional time is valuable and is to be protected. Classrooms have two celebrations each year at winter break and at the end of the year. Class parents that wish to 'surprise' a teacher or class with a party or gift in honor of a special occasion will need to make a written request to the principal.

Physical Education Guidelines

Attire for participation in physical education consists of appropriate dress for safety, health, and motivational reasons. Elementary physical education requires students to have tennis shoes ("sneakers"-closed toe and heel). Slip-ons, Crocs, flip-flops, heels, boots, and sandals (even sport-type sandals) are not safe or appropriate. The clothes students wear to school on "physical education days" should be comfortable, safe, and appropriate for physical activity.

PTA

Blythe's PTA is an integral part of our program! PTA sponsors a variety of events such as our school fund raisers, the Father Daughter Dance, Mother Son Event, Scholastic Book Fairs, arts programs, and teacher appreciation activities. They also coordinate a variety of school support such as Yearbook, agendas, school spirit wear, and instructional materials. Please consider joining! Follow them on Facebook **Blythe Elementary School - PTA**.



Questioning

One of the best ways you can help your child as a reader and learner is to ask them questions about what they read. At the beginning of the year, teachers will provide question stems to help you ask higher order, "figure it out" type questions.



Report Cards

Standard report cards are issued four times during the school year. Please reach out to your child's teacher if you have any concerns regarding your child's grades. Parents of 3-5 graders have access to their students' grades at all time in PowerSchool. Please let your child's teacher or our front office know if you need directions to access them.

Restrictive Diet

Child Nutrition Services accommodates any special diet for medical reasons. Please notify your child's teacher and the cafeteria manager if your child has a restrictive diet based on food allergies or other medical needs.



Safety at Bus Stops

Parents are responsible for student safety at bus stops. Parents are encouraged to work together at bus stops to establish a phone tree for communication and to ensure that students have appropriate supervision while waiting for the bus. Parents are welcome to call the school if the bus fails to arrive within twenty minutes of the scheduled time.

School Improvement Plan

Each school is required by state law to develop a School Improvement Plan. At Blythe Elementary we strive for continuous improvement and set goals based on data. The School Leadership Team (SLT), consisting of staff and parent representatives, monitors the improvement process.

School Leadership Team

Every school has a team charged with setting the school's mission and goals and monitoring student achievement. The School Leadership Team (SLT) meets twice per quarter and is responsible for monitoring the School Improvement Plan. This team consists of the school administration, academic facilitators, teachers, parents, and an instructional assistant.

School Messenger System

Connect ED messages are sent to all Blythe families to communicate important information and share upcoming events.

School Spirit Day

Each Friday is *School Spirit Day* when school colors may be worn. Please encourage your child to show his/her school spirit by wearing their Blythe t-shirt or dressing in red. Several themed spirit days will also be scheduled throughout the year. All students and parents are encouraged to show their support!

School Supplies

A list of required student supplies is available on the school web site and in the front office. Parents are encouraged to replenish school supplies as needed to ensure that students are prepared for class.

Snacks

Whenever foods are brought to school for personal snacks, healthy choices should be considered. The following are some healthy snack suggestions: pretzels, graham crackers, vanilla wafers, ginger snaps, carrot sticks, dried fruit, apple or banana slices, and

cheese crackers. **Several children at Blythe have severe peanut allergies. We encourage you to refrain from sending products containing peanuts.**

Student Intervention Team (MTSS)

The mission of Blythe Elementary School's Student Intervention Team is to identify and implement strategies to enhance the learning and achievement of individual students. The teams are comprised of a combination of the following: Exceptional Children's teachers, classroom teachers, school administrators, academic facilitators, and the School Counselor. If your child is experiencing difficulty in school, a referral may be requested through your child's teacher or the school counselor. This request will lead to the development of the *Intervention Plan for Student Success* through a team process of reviewing information, proposing success strategies/interventions, and monitoring results. This process may also be referred to as the MTSS – Multi -Tiered Support System.

Student Transfer

Please notify office personnel as soon as possible if your child will be transferring to another school. The teacher needs at least one day's notice to prepare transfer papers. All books and materials owned by the school should be returned. Cafeteria charges and library fees must be paid in full.



Talent Development (TD)

The goal of the Talent Development (TD) program is to provide rigorous curriculum and academic opportunities whereby each student may reach a classroom performance consistent with his/her intellectual ability. The implementation of the program at Blythe Elementary is a joint effort by classroom teachers and talent development teachers who use the technique of "consultation and collaboration" as they develop curriculum.

Tardy Policy

Students will be marked late if they arrive after 8:00 a.m. Parents are strongly encouraged to make sure their children arrive in their classrooms by 7:50 a.m. By making sure your child arrives promptly for school, you are helping your child to develop a future work ethic that is also important in the work place. Blythe Elementary **requires** that a parent accompany children who arrive after 8:00 a.m. to the office to sign in and receive a tardy slip. Because of student supervision and safety, they may not be

dropped off to walk in alone after 8:00 am. Tardy students will not be admitted to class without a tardy slip. Students who arrive late due to a delayed bus will not be marked tardy. Teachers are required to keep a record of tardiness. Consistent tardiness will be referred to the school counselor and the Administrative Team. Guidelines for monitoring tardiness are aligned with the attendance policy. Tardies, like absences, are coded excused or unexcused. If you are coming from an appointment, please bring in a doctor/dental note so we can mark those tardies excused! **If your child is in third grade, you will be required to walk him/her to the cottages after signing them in at the front office. Please do not drive directly to the cottages without first signing your child in at the office.**

Technology

The most current technology and software are available for student use and support in developing word processing skills, research skills, Internet use, and multi-media presentations. Our goal is to integrate technology into the curriculum to provide authentic learning experiences for all students. Each classroom is equipped with three networked computers providing access to an extensive library of educational software programs. In addition to classroom computers, students have access to stations in our two computer labs and Media Center. All workstations are networked to the school server. Blythe also has iPads and Chromebooks designated for student use.

Telephone Usage

Please bear in mind that the office telephone is for school business. In emergency situations, students may use the phone in the assigned tutor room or in the health room with permission from the classroom teacher. Students will not be permitted to use school telephones to ask parents to bring school supplies, homework, or money.



Visitors

Visitors are always welcome at Blythe! For the safety of our students, all visitors must report to the office upon arrival to sign in on the volunteer computer and obtain a visitor's badge. Please remember that proper ID is required.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a valuable component of our overall school success. Children whose parents are involved in schools value education more because they see that their greatest role models, their parents, value education. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools has developed the *Volunteer Management System* as a means to record your volunteer time. The primary focus of the program is to ensure our students' safety at school. In addition, the computer system allows Blythe Elementary to stand out as a leader in effectively incorporating volunteers into the overall program by documenting the vast number of hours that our volunteers dedicate to our school. Please remember to respect the confidentiality of our students. You will need to visit the CMS Volunteer Web site at **www.cmsvolunteers.com** to sign up as a volunteer. The online form only takes a few minutes to fill out and submit. You will be notified by email when your status is confirmed.



Web page – School

Our school frequently updates our school web page. Our web page includes current events, calendars, relevant links, staff and student resources and accomplishments, the Principal's newsletter, and other useful resources. Visit us at <http://schools.cms.k12.nc.us/blytheES/Pages/Default.aspx>.



X-tra Curricular Activities

Students participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities. These may include STEM Club, Performing Arts Club, Chess Club, Chorus, Girls on the Run, Let Me Run, Math Olympiad, Morning WBES News Broadcast, Engineering Club, and Imagination Destination. Paid activities vary due to enrollment and include tennis, golf, rugby etc.