

# VINCENT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Parent/Student Handbook 2022-2023



Value Lifelong Learning  
Embrace Diversity  
Strive for Excellence

**Vincent Elementary School**  
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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Page Number</b>
<b>After School Care</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Arrival/Dismissal Times and Procedures</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Birthdays</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Bullying</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Bus Transportation and Safety</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Car Rider Information</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Chain of Command</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Change of Information</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chaperone Guidelines for Field Trips</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Check-In/Check-Out Procedures</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Conduct</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Conferences</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Dress Code</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Field Trips</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Head Lice Policy</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>How Sick is “Too Sick” to Attend School?</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Inclement Weather</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Letter from Administration</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Lost and Found</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Lunchroom Information</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Medication Policy</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Parent Volunteers</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Personal Cell Phones and Wearable Technology</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>PTO</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Returned Checks</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>School Parties</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>School Safety/Emergency Procedures</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>School Visitors</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>School-Wide Communication</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Snacks</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Transportation Changes</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Withdrawing a Student from School</b>	<b>6</b>

\*Any procedures not covered in the VES Parent/Student Handbook are included in the Shelby County Code of Conduct and Attendance which is created and approved by the Shelby County Board of Education. The information in this handbook is not intended to conflict with the Shelby County Board of Education’s policies and procedures. Those board policies supersede the information in this handbook.

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Vincent Elementary School! We have a talented and experienced faculty and staff who work to challenge and encourage your children to perform to his/her potential in a safe and positive school environment. Students will participate in lessons that are engaging and hands-on. Also, each child will have a technology device to use in the classroom to enhance his/her educational experience.

We would like to encourage to you to join our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and take advantage of the numerous opportunities to volunteer. Parent engagement demonstrates to students that you value school and are committed to their success. Teachers will update you regularly regarding your child's academic progress. Feel free to contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference if you have any questions about his/her progress.

Our handbook is a means of communication that explains numerous policies and procedures for our school. We ask that you carefully review the handbook and refer to it during the year when you have questions. Please also refer to the *Shelby County Code of Conduct and Attendance* for additional policies and procedures. If you have any questions, please call 205-682-7320.

Please visit the school website for a current list of the faculty and staff. Also, please join listserv via the school's website to receive school reminders and district announcements.

We look forward to meeting and working with each of you this year. Thank you for entrusting your children into our care!

Sincerely,  
Tonya Borden-Hudson  
Principal

Wendy Cespedes  
Assistant Principal

## Chain of Command

If you have a concern or problem, please follow the steps below in the order provided:

1. Refer to the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance* or the *VES Parent/Student Handbook*
2. Contact your child's classroom teacher
3. Contact administration at VES

## School-Wide Communication

Vincent Elementary School will use ListServ, Facebook, the VES website, the VES google calendar (located on the VES webpage), and the school's marquee to communicate dates, school information, and important reminders.

- VES Webpage: <http://shelbyed.k12.al.us/schools/ves/index.htm>
- VES Facebook Page: [https://www.facebook.com/vincentelementaryschool/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/vincentelementaryschool/?ref=br_rs)
- Sign up for the VES ListServ at <https://eforms.shelbyed.k12.al.us/subscribe-parent-list.html>.

## School Visitors

1. To ensure a safe school environment, all visitors must enter through the front entrance by the office. **Each visitor must sign in and wear proper identification while in the building.**
2. Please allow children to walk into the building to their classrooms without parental assistance. Parents **are** allowed to walk their children to classrooms the first day of school.
3. Please refrain from unannounced classroom visits. If you need to talk to your child's teacher, schedule a conference in advance. Everyone must sign in at the office and be given permission before going to a classroom.
4. There is a no smoking policy in effect for our entire school campus which includes while in your car (on campus) and on field trips.

## Change of Information

It is imperative that the school be notified immediately of a change of address, home and/or work telephone numbers, or emergency contact information.

## Conferences

If a parent/teacher conference is needed during the school day, please contact your child's teacher to schedule a conference. Each teacher can meet during his/her planning time. Teachers are expected to hold two conferences per student each year. One conference may be conducted over the phone if necessary.

Teachers are expected to return phone calls and/or emails to parents within a timely manner. Teachers are unable to return phone calls or emails when supervising students.

## Attendance

Please refer to the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance* for the detailed attendance policy. Take note that parents must send a written note **within three days** of the student's return to school. All parent notes will not automatically be excused. Acceptable excuses are listed in the Code of Conduct. Failure of the parent or guardian to send an excuse will result in the absence being marked unexcused.

Upon the second unexcused absence, parents will receive a letter from the school. When a student has accumulated three unexcused absences, administration will schedule a pre-referral conference with the parent to review the student's attendance record and the system's attendance policy.

**Absences beyond 10 (excluding 2x and 3x absences) must be documented with a doctor's excuse, court excuse, or permission of the principal.** Parent notes will not excuse time missed from school after any combination of absences coded 1X, 4X, 6X, or 7X has exceeded 10. Once a student has accumulated 10 or more absences (coded 1X, 4X, 6X, and 7X), a doctor's excuse will be required to explain any future absences for the remainder of the school year. For additional information, please refer to the attendance section of the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance*.

Requests for principal permission excused absences should be sent in for approval **prior** to the requested date. Family vacations and other trips should be planned and taken while school is not in session.

## Check-In/Check-Out Procedures

All students arriving at school after 7:45 a.m. **must** be checked in at the office by the person transporting the student. Please refer to the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance* concerning excessive tardies.

- Students checking out of school must be signed out in the office by a parent or a responsible adult designated on the child's check-out list. A reason for the check-out must be indicated or the check-out is considered "unexcused." Please limit check-outs to necessities only.
- For the safety of your child, please be prepared to show identification.
- When checking a student in or out, parents are not permitted to go to the classroom without permission from the office.
- Check-outs should occur before 2:30 to keep from interfering with car/bus rider dismissal. Check-outs that occur to avoid the dismissal process will be deemed unexcused.

Any student checking in before 11:30 a.m. is considered present for the day. A check-in after 11:30 a.m. is considered a full day's absence. A check-out before 11:30 a.m. will be a full day's absence.

## Arrival/Dismissal Times and Procedures

School begins at 7:45 a.m. each day and ends at 2:45 p.m. No students should arrive on campus *before* 7:15 a.m. Students are to report to their designated area if arrival is before 7:30 a.m. The students will be dismissed to their classrooms at 7:30 a.m. Students should be in their classrooms by 7:40 a.m. to allow for class preparation time. The tardy bell rings at 7:45 a.m.

The area outside of the gym is for buses and for Pre-K dismissal which occurs before buses arrive.

7:15 – 7:30 a.m.	All students report to designated areas as they arrive
7:15 – 7:40 a.m.	Breakfast served
7:30 – 7:45 a.m.	Report to homerooms
7:45 a.m.	Tardy bell rings

- After 7:45 a.m. parents **must** accompany their child(ren) to the office for tardy check-in. All exterior doors are locked to the public **except** the main front door.
- Check-outs should occur before 2:30 p.m. to keep from interfering with car/bus dismissal.
- At 2:45 p.m. the car riders are dismissed to the library until their names/numbers are called.
- At 2:50 p.m. first load bus riders are dismissed.
- At 3:05 p.m. second load bus riders are dismissed.

**\*Supervision is not provided for students before 7:15 a.m.\***

## Bus Transportation and Safety

The safety of each and every student is of the utmost importance for us at Vincent Elementary School. Please help us by discussing bus safety with your child and encouraging him/her to obey the rules and regulations outlined in our bus conduct policy.

Students who ride the bus to and from school and on field trips are expected to behave in a safe and courteous manner and to obey each of the rules enforced by the bus driver and Shelby County Schools. **To ride the bus is a privilege, not a right.** The privilege is maintained by behaving appropriately while on the bus.

Shelby County transportation rules, guidelines, and the discipline process are listed in the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance*. Please review these guidelines with your child and emphasize the importance of following these rules in order to maintain a safe and orderly bus.

Please use this link to view the most current bus stop schedule:

<https://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/transportation/schoolbusstops.html>

## Car Rider Information

In order to make car rider dismissal more efficient, all drivers must have the **original** car rider number visible to VES faculty/staff. If the driver does not have the student's original car rider number, he/she must park and come to the main office to retrieve the student or to obtain another car rider number.

Morning Riders: When dropping your child off in the mornings, cars will form two rows. Please make sure your child is ready to exit the car as soon as school personnel blows the whistle. This ensures that the car rider line process remains efficient for all parents. If there is not a faculty/staff member present at the drop off area, your child is tardy and must be checked in by an adult in the front office. Students are expected to be in their classrooms by the time the tardy bell rings at 7:45 a.m.

Afternoon Riders: Students who are not picked up from the car rider line by 3:15 p.m. must be checked out at the office by a person listed on the checkout list.

For your child's safety, all students who are car riders will receive a new car rider number each year. The previous year's car rider number will no longer be valid.

## Transportation Changes

Students will not be allowed to vary from their normal established routine without **written permission** from their parent/guardian. Therefore, written permission instructing the teacher of the change is necessary in the following situations:

1. Getting off the bus at any stop other than the regular one
2. Riding in a car when the regular method of leaving school is the bus
3. Riding a bus when the regular method of leaving school is by car
4. Riding in a car different than the regular one

Students will need to ride their regular bus each day to their primary residence. However, if there is an extraordinary circumstance in which students will need to ride a different bus, the administration must **receive** and **approve** a written request 24 hours in advance.

**Please do not call the office to request a change in transportation, and do not fax or email transportation changes. These requests will not be honored. To ensure the transportation change is made, written notices should be received in the office by 12:00 p.m.**

## Withdrawing a Student from School

Parents withdrawing a student from VES should complete the withdrawal/transfer form located on the school's website and notify the registrar of the withdrawal. Once the withdrawal form is completed and submitted, the registrar will be in communication via the email address provided on the form. Before withdrawing your child from school, all library books need to be returned and cafeteria balances must be paid. Please contact the VES registrar for additional assistance.

## **Lunchroom Information**

Students are encouraged to eat breakfast and lunch in the school lunchroom. Visitors are welcome and will need to sign in at the school office.

<u><b>Breakfast</b></u>		<u><b>Lunch</b></u>	
Students	\$1.75	Paid	\$2.50
Reduced	\$0.30	Reduced	\$0.40
Visitors	\$3.50	Visitors	\$4.50
Employees	\$2.50	Employees	\$3.50

A new application for free/reduced meals is required each school year. Please take the time to complete the application as soon as possible. **If your child is approved for free or reduced lunches after the start of school, you are still responsible for the balance accrued up to the approval date.**

### **\*\*\*\*Important CNP Information\*\*\*\***

Shelby County Schools realize that students may forget or lose lunch/breakfast money. To make it easy for parents to view charges, fund accounts, and get notified of low balances, we have partnered with [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). Parents may also utilize the MySchoolBucks mobile app on their mobile devices to monitor accounts. Parents will still be notified of negative student balances.

It is unlawful for the Child Nutrition Program to absorb unpaid, charged meals. Parents are responsible for providing funds for student accounts. If parents need financial assistance paying for school meals, a meal benefit application for free/reduced price meals must be completed. The meal application only takes a few minutes to complete and can be found online at [www.shelbyed.k12.al.us](http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us). If a parent refuses to complete a meal benefit application or provide funds for student meals after a reasonable amount of time, an alternative meal may be provided at the principal's discretion after parent notification. **Please review the policy regarding negative lunch balances which is posted on the VES website.**

## **Returned Checks**

Your check is welcome. The Shelby County School System recognizes that occasionally a parent may inadvertently overdraw a checking account and a check may be returned by your bank. In order to recover these funds in a private and professional manner, the Shelby County School System has contracted with a third-party vendor for collection of returned checks.

Checks should be written on a commercially printed check with your name, address, and contact telephone number. When a person writes a check to a school or the school system, he or she agrees that if the check is returned for any reason, it may be represented electronically on the same account and that the service fee for returned checks established by law may be debited from the same account.

If the check and fee are not collected electronically, the third-party vendor will contact the check writer by mail and/or by telephone to make payment arrangements.

## Medication Policy

All medications, whether prescription or Over-the-Counter, must be turned into the school office by the student's parent/guardian or other responsible adult.

### **Medications cannot be transported on the bus.**

No student will be permitted to carry or possess any type of medications, whether prescription or over-the counter, on his/her person at any time.

The parent/guardian must sign a School Medication Physician/Prescriber/Parent Authorization Form (located in the Code of Conduct) before any medication, prescription or over-the-counter, can be administered at school.

If the prescription medication order is changed during the school year, a new authorization form is required. Both physician/prescriber and parent/guardian must sign the form.

For over-the-counter medications, an unexpired, unopened, age appropriate, original container is required and all manufacturers' labeling must be clearly legible. The student's name must be written on the container.

The school will not supply any prescription or OTC medications to staff or students.

All unused medications not picked up by parents/guardians by the last day of each school year will be discarded according to medication procedure guidelines.

These procedures were adopted with your child's safety in mind. If you have any questions concerning these medication procedures, please contact your school nurse.

Note: The "School Medication Prescriber/Parent Authorization" form is located in the code of conduct book. Additional forms are available from the school office or online from the Shelby County School's website at [www.shelbyed.k12.al.us](http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us).

## How Sick is "Too Sick" to Attend School?

Children get sick, and as parents we would like our children not to miss more school than necessary. So how sick is too sick for school? There are times when you should keep your child away from school. If your child is sick, you should know that keeping him or her home improves the time required for getting well. You also reduce the possibility of spreading illnesses. Here are five types of illnesses that are reasons for keeping a child home:

- **Fever** – Temperature of 100.0° or above, child should remain home until fever-free for 24 hours.
- **Vomiting** – Your child should not attend school if he or she has vomited in the last 12 hours.
- **Diarrhea** – Your child should remain home if he or she has diarrhea or has had it in the last 12 hours.
- **Undiagnosed Rash** – Your child should not attend school until the rash has been diagnosed and treated. It could be measles, chicken pox, or some other contagious disease.
- **Pink Eye** (conjunctivitis) – This is very contagious. Your child should be treated before returning to school.

## Head Lice

Symptoms are irritation and itching of the scalp. Presence of light gray insects and nits (eggs) in the hair means that the student will be excluded from school until effective treatment can be used. The student will be checked by the school nurse before being allowed to return to class. Students should be checked by parents on a regular basis. The first occurrence is an excused absence.

## Conduct

The Shelby County School's *Student Code of Conduct and Attendance* states the behavior expected of each student. Teachers develop classroom rules that follow the code of conduct. The school requests that each parent read the code of conduct and discuss the expectations of this handbook with his/her child. If any section is not fully understood, the school urges the parent to contact the teacher or office for further explanation. Most regulations or procedures for Vincent Elementary that help maintain an effective school program are found in this handbook. Effective communication between parents and their child's teachers/bus drivers is very important.

Students are under the jurisdiction of the Shelby County Board of Education and Vincent Elementary rules any time they are on campus, on the bus, or attending an off-campus event as a school member.

## Bullying

Bullying is defined by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as "aggressive behavior that is intentional and that involves an imbalance of power or strength," noting that "typically, it is repeated over time."

Our faculty and staff make every effort to prevent bullying in our school. Our counselor leads us as we continue to learn more about the effects of bullying on our students. At the beginning of each school year, our counselor will hold sessions with each classroom explaining what bullying is and the reasons why we will not tolerate this behavior at our school. Should problems with bullying arise, a series of graduated consequences for any violation of this policy will be those outlined in the student code of conduct.

If a student believes that he or she has been bullied or a parent believes his or her child has been bullied, the student and/or parent will complete a bullying reporting form and a formal investigation of the incident will be conducted by administration. Bullying reporting forms are located in the main office.

## Dress Code

\*Pants, shorts, and skirts must be worn at the waist and fit properly. Pants worn too low, too long, too large, too short, too tight, or too loose are not permitted. Skirts, shorts, and dresses must be mid-thigh or longer in the front and back.

\*No tank tops, halters, backless dresses, midriff shirts, tops with spaghetti straps, pants with excessive cuts/slits, or cut-off shirts will be allowed.

\*Jackets and coats are to be worn in good taste.

\*No hats, caps, head coverings, hair curlers, picks, or sunglasses will be worn in school.

\*Students are prohibited from wearing any sign, symbol, logo, or garment, which has become synonymous with any gang, cult, Satanism, or unauthorized club or organizational activity. Also, hair paint is prohibited.

\*Students are required to wear appropriate shoes at all times. Students must wear tennis shoes to P.E. each day. Shoes with wheels and flip flops are not appropriate for the school environment.

Additional information regarding the dress code can be found in the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance*.

## Personal Cell Phones and Wearable Technology

The Shelby County Board of Education respects parents' wishes for their children to bring a cell phone and wearable technology to school. Please refer to the code of conduct regarding Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) and cell phone use. **Our school expects students to keep cell phones and wearable technology (with smart phone capabilities) turned off and inside their book bags unless the student has the teacher's permission to use the device for educational purposes in the classroom.** The school is not responsible for lost or damaged cell phones and/or wearable technology.

## **Physical Education**

Daily physical education instruction is required by Alabama law and participation is mandatory except for health reasons. In the event your child is not able to participate in PE, a dated, written note from a doctor or parent explaining the nature of the illness or injury should be presented to the physical education teacher stating specifically the length of time until normal participation can be resumed. Everyday school dress is acceptable for participation.

**\*\*\*Tennis shoes are required during physical education class, and shorts MUST be worn under dresses/skirts.\*\*\***

## **Inclement Weather**

When inclement weather occurs before regular school opening, central office administrators will decide if the school will open or remain closed. The decision will be sent to area radio and television stations, and a message will be sent to all parents who have signed up for automated messages via the Listserv and/or Blackboard Connect systems. If inclement weather or other emergencies occur after the start of the school day, central office administrators will decide if schools will remain open for the remainder of the school day. If schools close early, area radio and television stations will air the decision. The school district will send out a Blackboard Connect message regarding the closing of school. In most cases, After School Care services will not be available during these emergency situations, and you will need to make other arrangements for your child. School personnel will take every possible precaution with each student's safety. All checkouts are to be handled through the main office.

**\*\*Please sign-up for the VES Listserv to receive important information about our school. The link is located on the VES website.\*\***

## **School Safety/Emergency Procedures**

Fire, tornado, intruder, and bus evacuation drills are conducted throughout the year for the students' safety. A complete crisis plan has been developed by school administrators and is in compliance with county and state guidelines.

## **Snacks**

Each teacher has an allotted time for snack each day. Please send a healthy snack from home on a daily basis. If you are unsure if an item is allowed, please contact your child's teacher for additional information. Also, please send clear drinks or water for snack.

## **PTO**

Please join! Make this the best year ever. Dues are \$10 for a family.

- VES PTO Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/vincentelempto>
- VES PTO Email Address: [vincentelempto@gmail.com](mailto:vincentelempto@gmail.com)

## **Parent Volunteers**

We love to have parents involved in our school community, and we believe that you are the key to making a difference. You may contact your child's teacher or the front office staff if you are interested in volunteering at the school.

## **School Parties**

School policy allows for two parties each year:

1. Christmas
2. End of Year

No homemade items are permitted. Each individual classroom teacher will send home notes regarding the party arrangements and other classroom information pertaining to parties.

## **Birthdays**

Teachers celebrate birthdays in their classrooms in a variety of ways. Please contact your child's teacher for additional information. Outside food for birthdays will not be allowed in the lunchroom.

## **After School Care**

If you are interested in the After School Care program, please contact:

- Community Education
- Vicki Murphy, VES Director

Enrollment information is located online at <http://www.shelbyed.k12.al.us/community/ascp.html>

## **Lost and Found**

After 30 days our lost and found box is emptied and sent to a charitable organization. To ensure that a student's lost items are promptly returned, *label* all supplies, personal items, coats, sweaters, lunch boxes, etc. Ask your child to check the lost and found immediately if any item is misplaced. The school will not be held responsible for lost items.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are scheduled to enrich units of study. A student must have **written permission** from a parent or legal guardian to participate in this planned activity. A permission slip is sent home by the teacher along with the information pertaining to the trip. The number of adults that may attend field trips may be limited and is usually filled as your request is received by the homeroom teacher. Parents may not ride the bus and are responsible for their own transportation. Monies collected for field trips are calculated based on the number of students and parents who plan to attend. Also, due to safety reasons, no checkouts are allowed during field trips. Please refer to the chaperone guidelines on page 13 for additional field trip information. Always send the **exact** amount for field trips because money is not kept in the main office. Therefore, we are unable to provide change.

**\*\*Students not enrolled at Vincent Elementary School may not attend field trips!\*\***

## Chaperone Guidelines for Field Trips

1. Chaperones are chosen by the teacher, and only those chaperones may accompany a class on field trips.
2. Do **not** bring other children/guests on the field trip.
3. Chaperones must provide their own transportation. Students will ride the school bus to and from the field trip.
4. Chaperones are responsible for their own admission, fees, and lunch unless otherwise specified by the teacher.
5. Dress appropriately for the occasion by following the Shelby County School's dress code for students.
6. Act in accordance with the *Shelby County School's Code of Conduct and Attendance*. There should be no smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages at any time before, during, or in route to field trips.
7. Report to the school at the appointed time. You may be asked to assist with certain responsibilities such as loading lunch coolers onto the bus. Chaperones may be asked to meet in the cafeteria or to wait in their parked cars.
8. Always follow the teacher's instructions.
9. Treat all children with fairness and respect. Set a good example with the language and tone of voice used. Profanity is prohibited.
10. Stay within the same geographical location as the teacher.
11. Do not purchase gifts, food, or souvenirs for students in the assigned group.
12. Direct discipline concerns to the teacher. Discipline is not the chaperone's responsibility.
13. Allow school transportation vehicles to go first unless otherwise directed. Do not travel between the buses.
14. Do not take pictures of VES students and post them to social media websites.

My signature below indicates that I have reviewed all of the above information and acknowledge that I will adhere to the field trip guidelines.

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**Chaperone's Signature**

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**Date**