

Villas Elementary School

A Title I School

Parent/Student Handbook



Show Your Villas P.R.I.D.E.

POSITIVITY-RESPECT-INTEGRITY-DETERMINATION-EXCELLENCE

Villas Elementary School

A Title I School

8385 Beacon Blvd
Ft. Myers, Florida 33907
vls.leeschools.net

Mr. Shane E. Musich, Principal
Mrs. Tiffany Sanders, Assistant Principal

School Phone Numbers

Office.....936-3776
Fax.....936-6884
Transportation (South Zone).....540-4000
After School Program936-1186

School Hours

After School Program.....2:10 PM-6:00 PM
School Day for Students7:55 AM-2:10 PM
Front Office7:00 AM-3:00 PM

A Message from Administration

At Villas, each staff member is committed to establishing a supportive learning environment that focuses on student success in and beyond the classroom. We believe in building a positive relationship between home and school in order to foster a spirit of community. Please let us know what we can do to make this a great school year for you and your child!

Mr. Shane E. Musich, Principal

ShaneEM@Leeschools.net

Mrs. Tiffany Sanders, Assistant Principal

TiffanyMS@LeeSchools.net

Villas Code

I will show my respect by listening to others,
Using my hands for helping,
Caring about others' feelings,
And being responsible for what I say and do.

Show Your Villas **P.R.I.D.E.**

POSITIVITY-RESPECT-INTEGRITY-DETERMINATION-EXCELLENCE

Attendance/Tardy Policy

Attendance is mandatory by law and is vitally important for the education of our students. To participate fully in the educational process, your child needs to attend school every day and be on time. The last bell rings at 7:55 am. If a student is not in his/her classroom at that time, he/she is considered tardy and must go to the front office to obtain a pass to enter the classroom.

- Students may be marked Absence Excused for the following reasons: illness, the death of someone in the family, religious holidays of the child's own religion, a subpoena by a law enforcement agency or other justifiable reason approved by administration.
- Nineteen (19) or more absences, excused or unexcused, shall be considered excessive. Students with excessive absences may be considered for retention.
- If your child is going to be absent, parents should call the front office between 8:00 am – 9:00 am on the first day of their child's absence. A written excuse should also be sent to school on the first day the child returns. Not sending a written excuse will result in an unexcused absence.
- Absence notes should include the following information:
 - Child's Name
 - Teacher's Name
 - Date of Absence/Tardy
 - Reason for Absence/Tardy
 - Parent's Signature
- If a parent expects that their child will be absent for an extended period of time, he/she should speak to administration before the absence occurs.

A complete copy of the District's Attendance Policy is available by request.

Parent Drop-Off (7:25 am – 7:55 am) and Pick-Up (2:10 pm – 2:30 pm)

To promote safe and prompt movement of students, staff, and visitors, we ask that you please follow these guidelines:

- **The speed limit on campus is 5 MPH.**
- Display the provided Parent Pick-Up sign with QR code in your front window.
- Parents who are dropping students off in the morning should use the outside lane around the staff parking lot and stop at the cones in the drop-off area, where a staff member will open the door to let your child out. **Do not park in this area to**

bring your child into school as this will impede the flow of traffic for other parents who are dropping off students. If you must come into the building, please park in one of the designated visitor spots or main parking lot and use the crosswalks.

- **There is NO STUDENT DROP-OFF in the parking area.** It is extremely dangerous to allow students to walk across the parking area unattended by a parent or guardian. Please drop-off only in the designated area.
- Anytime parents arrive on campus, they must park in designated parking spaces. Lanes must be kept open for emergency vehicles (fire and ambulance). Please do not double park. When parking in the visitor spaces in front of the building, please cross only at the designated crosswalk. **Parents must always escort their children to and from parked vehicles.**
- The area outside the main office must be kept open and free from crowding for students being dismissed. Parents are not allowed to meet their children in the hallway or at their classrooms.
- **We request that parents who are picking up students in the afternoon remain in their vehicles and drive through the parent pick-up line.** We ask that you stay in your car in line unless there is an emergency. In the case of an emergency, please park your car in one of the designated visitor spots.
- **Parents are not to use the bus ramp area to drop off or pick up their children.** This includes the area to the right and left of the ramp. It is against county ordinance to park across a sidewalk and violators may receive a ticket. In addition, parents should not drop off or pick up their children on the side of Trailwinds Drive.

Dismissal for Walkers and Bikers

- All walkers and bike riders will be dismissed at 2:10 pm. **Parents of walkers must meet their children by the bike ramp and have the coordinating Parent Pick-Up card in order for their children to be released to their custody.**
- During rainy days, if your child is a walker or bike rider, you will need to meet your child at the South Gate facing Trailwinds Drive or come through the parent pick-up line. In order for your child to be released, you must have your coordinating Parent Pick-Up card.

Bicycle Helmet Law

Florida State Law 316.2065 requires a bicycle rider or passengers under 16 years of age to wear a bicycle helmet that meets the standards of the American National Standards Institute. Bicycle helmets must be worn by anyone under the age of 16 riding on a bicycle on School Board property.

Early Dismissal

On district designated early dismissal days Villas Elementary School will dismiss at 12:10 pm. Early dismissal days are listed on the School District of Lee County Instructional Calendar. The After School Program is not provided on early dismissal days.

School Closing

The School District of Lee County will always consider student and staff safety of primary importance when making a decision to close school when severe weather threatens. Unless there is a clear threat of danger, the decision to close school will be made around 4:00 am and announced through local media morning news and via NOAA Weather Alert Radios. Parents and staff should listen to local media beginning at 5:00 am for the latest information pertaining to school closing during severe weather months. The district will also utilize School Messenger to message families and employees in regards to school closings.

Dismissal Changes/Early Pick-Up

- If there is a change in the way your child will be going home, please notify your child's teacher and/or the front office in the morning with plenty of time prior to dismissal. Late requests will only be accommodated as able.
- If your child needs to be picked-up early, please send in a note to be given to the child's teacher and/or the front office. Your child will be called to the front office upon your arrival.
- Students will only be released to an adult with a valid driver's license who is either a parent, guardian, or designated as an authorized adult on the student emergency card.
- **According to district policy, no students shall be released within the final 30 minutes of the school day. All early sign-outs must occur before 1:40 pm. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this policy.**

Emergency Cards

It is imperative that every student have a completed student emergency card on file in our office. Please make sure that you complete this information for your child with your correct and updated home, cellular, and work phone numbers and addresses. Also, include additional contact information for other individuals who are authorized to pick up your child if you are not available. In an emergency situation, it is critical we have this information on file in order to contact you. Make sure to include all current health needs your child might have.

Change of Address/Telephone Number

It is important that we have your correct home address, work address, telephone number, and email address on file. If you do not have a telephone, please provide a neighbor's phone number or an emergency number where we can reach you if needed. Should you move during the school year or your telephone number change, notify the front office in writing immediately.

School Messenger

The School District of Lee County and Villas Elementary uses the School Messenger app to enable parents, staff, and students to stay informed and up-to-date on important information and activities within the school and the district. Parents/Guardians should visit Go.SchoolMessenger.com and sign up for a free account. Communication preferences may be set for phone calls, emails, and text messages.

Visitors

Safety is very important to us. All visitors must stop at the front office to sign-in, have their valid driver's license scanned and receive a visitor's pass.

All classroom visits should be arranged with the school ahead of time. If you would like to have a conference with a teacher or administration, contact your child's teacher in order to make an appointment. After the first week of school, parents will not be permitted to walk their child to class.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a valuable asset to our educational program. We invite our parents, community members, and business partners to become a part of our volunteer family. Whether you can give one hour per week or many hours, WE NEED YOU! No previous experience is required. The following is a list of jobs that volunteers perform:

- Work with individual students and/or small groups.
- Listen to students read and/or read to students.
- Assist in the Media Center.
- Aid teachers with clerical work and bulletin boards.
- Help in the cafeteria during student lunch times.
- Meet and greet at parent drop-off.

If you are interested in learning more about our Volunteer Program, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Beth Grace Flesher, at 239-936-3776 or via email at BethEG@leeschools.net.

The school administration may discontinue a volunteer's service if the volunteer interferes or disrupts the learning environment of the classroom or school.

Bus Changes

Students may only ride their assigned bus.

Parents must request transportation changes in writing. If a child moves, the parent is responsible for providing the office with a new proof of residence. Only then will the child's bus be changed. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the front office at 239-936-3776. The contact number for South Zone Transportation is 239-590-4000.

Bus Rules for Students

- The driver is in full charge of the bus and students must obey the driver.
- Students shall keep assigned seats at all times with arms and head inside the bus.
- Eating, drinking, using tobacco products or chewing gum is not allowed on the school bus.
- Anything that interferes with student safety such as fighting, profanity, abusive language, large or sharp objects, fireworks, balls, bats, radios, animals, and/or glass containers are not allowed.
- It is suggested that seat belts remain buckled.

Riding the Bus is a Privilege

If this privilege is abused, the following steps will be taken:

First Bus Referral – Conference with administrator and parent contacted.

Second Bus Referral – Conference with administrator and parent contacted.

Third Bus Referral – Suspension from the bus. Number of school days is dependent on the severity of the problem. Parent contacted and letter sent home.

Fourth Bus Referral – Suspension from the bus. Number of school days is dependent on the severity of the problem. Parent contacted and letter sent home.

Fifth Bus Referral – Suspension from the bus. Number of school days is dependent on the severity of the problem. Parent contacted and letter sent home.

Sixth Bus Referral – Transportation department and administration may choose to deny the student the privilege of riding the bus for the remainder of the quarter, semester, or school year (depending on the severity of the problem).

The above consequences for inappropriate bus behavior are minimum consequences. In the case of severe misconduct a student may receive a bus suspension at any step in the process.

Villas After-School Program (ASP)

Villas offers a Before (6:30 am-7:25 am) and After-School Program (2:10 pm -6:00 pm) for students enrolled in Kindergarten through Grade 5.

Enrollment Criteria

- Students must be enrolled in Villas Elementary School.
- Students must be able to function in a group of students with one adult supervisor.
- We do provide care for ESE students; however, students must be able to function in a group of 20 students with one adult.
- Students must maintain appropriate behavior that will not lead to injury to themselves or others.
- Students will be provided a copy of the After-School Program Discipline Plan.

Program Activities

2:10 pm – 3:00 pm – Dinner/snack and outside recess

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm – Homework, arts and crafts, inside games, videos, outside games, themed activities, and computers

When

Villas After-School Program operates every school day. There is no After-School Program on early dismissal days.

Registration and Program Fees

Registration Fee \$25 Registration Fee (1 child)
 \$40 Family Registration Fee (2 or more children)

Program fees may be paid daily or weekly. Fees include snack items, juice or milk.

Before School (6:30 am - 7:25 am):**Early Elementary Schools**

6:30am -7:30am - \$20/Flat rate per week

After School (2:10 pm - 6:00 pm):

\$50.00 a week per child

Payments may be made by cash, check, or credit card. Checks should be made out to Villas Elementary School. Any returned check will result in a \$35 surcharge.

- Tuition will be prorated on days in which there is no school (ex: holidays, professional duty days, etc) or when we offer no afternoon services due to Early Dismissal Days.
- Payments for services must always be made in advance of the week beginning services. This means that all tuition fees are due by the **Friday prior** to the participating week. Three (3) late payments will result in dismissal from the program. There will be no discounts for absences in programs using the flat rate structure.
- Children must be picked up by 6:00 pm each day. A late fee of \$1.00 for each additional minute will be charged beginning at 6:01pm. Late fees are to be paid upon arrival and in *your school's form of payment*. Three (3) late pick-ups will result in dismissal from the program.

Student Dress Code

The purpose of the dress code is to encourage students to focus on the learning process without distractions. It is expected that students maintain a clean and orderly appearance at all times. Violation of the student dress code may result in disciplinary action.

Shoes – Tennis shoes are recommended at all times and must be worn at PE. High heeled shoes, cleats, flip flops, slides, shoes without heel straps, or sneakers with wheels are not allowed at any time.

Tops – T-shirts, collared shirts, button-down shirts and school spirit shirts are permitted. All shirts/tops must have sleeves.

Bottoms – All bottoms must be worn at the waistline. Ripped pants, jeans, or shorts are not allowed. Shorts must be fingertip length or longer.

Skirts/Dresses – Skirts must be fingertip length or longer or just above the knee. Slits above the knee are not permitted. Shorts under skirts and dresses are recommended. Backless/strapless dresses are not allowed. All dresses must have sleeves.

Jackets/Sweaters – Hooded sweatshirts may be worn; however, hoods may not be worn up during school hours.

Nails – Acrylic fingernails are not permitted.

Headwear – Hats and sunglasses should not be worn on campus unless students are at PE or recess.

Pajamas/Costumes Students may not wear costumes or pajamas unless it is a school sponsored dress up day for a coordinating themed activity/event.

Jewelry and Piercings – Any article of clothing or jewelry that could likely cause injury – such as chains, bracelets, rings and chokers – are prohibited. Wallet chains of any length are prohibited. Adornments that could cause injury, be a safety risk or cause disruption to the classroom environment may not be worn. Examples of prohibited adornments include, but are not limited to, hoops or rings attached to the nose, eyebrow, cheeks, or lips.

Physical Education and Recess

Physical Education is a regular part of our school program. It is important that students wear clothes that are appropriate for physical activity. Athletic shoes that are closed toe and closed heel must be worn. High heeled shoes, cleats, flip flops, slides, shoes without heel straps, or sneakers with wheels will not be allowed for your child's safety. These same requests apply during other activities such as daily recess. If a child needs to be excused from Physical Education, a written note from the parent must be presented for the day. If a child is to miss more than three days, a doctor's note with dates to be excused is required.

Discipline

The Lee County School District Code of Conduct for Students serves as a guide as we implement Villas' discipline plan. Positive discipline is used throughout our school. Our school-wide rules are:

- Always try and always do my best.
- Treat others as I want to be treated.
- Respect myself, others, and school property.
- Walk quietly in and around school.
- Keep my hands, feet, and objects to myself.
- Follow directions.

- Use appropriate language.
- Leave gum, candy, and toys at home.
- Always show your Villas P.R.I.D.E. (Positivity-Respect-Integrity-Determination-Excellence)

Individual teachers develop behavior management plans to meet classroom needs. Rules, rewards and consequences are included in each classroom plan. Examples of rewards may include verbal praise, positive notes or phone calls home, stickers, visits to the office for a prize, indoor or outdoor free time, class incentives, classroom celebrations, and P.R.I.D.E. tickets.

Severe or repeated infractions will result in a disciplinary referral. An investigation of the problem or situation that occurred will be conducted as needed. Based on the administrator evaluation of the situation, the following are examples of consequences that may be applied: parent contact via telephone or email, student, teacher, and/or parent conference, restorative practices, time out, non-academic detention, In-School Suspension, and/or Out-of-School Suspension.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

We encourage parent communication with our staff. If you would like to schedule a conference with your child's teacher, please contact the teacher directly. Please understand that teachers supervise students during the hours of 7:25 am – 2:10 pm. Conferences should not be scheduled during this time unless arranged in advance with the teacher. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call 239-936-3776.

Student Planners

All students are given school-issued planners at the beginning of the school year. Students are expected to bring their planners to and from school each day. Please review all materials, homework assignments, and sign your child's planner prior to returning to school the next day.

Focus Parent Portal

The Focus Parent Portal provides parents/guardians a real-time view of their child's assignment grades, attendance information, current grade average in all classes, as well as progress monitoring results. Directions to register for the Focus Parent Portal are sent home at the beginning of the school year and can be found at www.leeschools.net. Please contact the front office if you need assistance setting up your account.

Lost and Found

Any clothing found on campus will be placed in the lost and found area. It is suggested that you label your child's jackers, sweatshirts, backpacks, lunch boxes, and water bottles to assist with recovery of lost or missing items. At the end of each quarter, unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

Breakfast/Lunch Program

All Villas students are provided with a free, nutritious, well-balanced breakfast and lunch daily. Breakfast begins at 7:25 am and closes at 7:55 am, except for students who arrive on a late bus. Students who arrive on a late bus will be permitted to get breakfast upon arrival.

Outside food and drinks that have been opened should not be brought on school property. Outside breakfast items should be finished before entering campus. Students who arrive late with outside breakfast items will be asked to finish their breakfast before reporting to class. Please do not send glass or carbonated soda drinks to school. Students should only be sent with a refillable water bottle.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Villas Elementary enjoys celebrating special occasions with our students. Birthday and other celebrations should take place during the scheduled lunch period or at a time designated by the classroom teacher. All treats must be store bought. No homemade foods can be distributed to students for health and safety reasons. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with this policy.

Toys and Valuables

Students are not allowed to bring jewelry, toys, trading cards, or handheld video games to school. Often these items are lost, stolen, or damaged and cause classroom disruptions. **The school is not responsible for valuable items that are lost, stolen, or damaged.** Items which create a disruption may be taken from the child and held until an adult comes to pick up the item. If there are items that are not claimed, they will be discarded at the end of the school year.

Accelerated Reader Program (AR)

A lifelong habit of independent reading is encouraged through our Accelerated Reader Program (AR). Students in all grade levels participate in AR, a technology-based reading program. Students in Kindergarten through Grade 2 are expected to spend 10-20 minutes each evening reading or being read to if they are not yet an independent reader. Students in Grades 3-5 are expected to spend 20-30 minutes each evening reading. Students may also have opportunities during the school day for independent

reading. Students will have a quarterly reading goal based on their independent reading level. Goals include a reading comprehension percentage of 80% as well as points earned.

Responsibility for Books

All lost textbooks and library books must be paid for prior to the end of the school year. Payments should be given to the school bookkeeper. Please call 239-936-3776 for more information.

Illness Policy

Deciding whether to keep your child at home or to send them to school when ill can be difficult. An ill child will not perform their best and could infect others within the classroom. Some illnesses like diarrhea, vomiting, fever, pink eye, and chicken pox are illnesses where exclusion from school is necessary. If you are unsure about sending an ill child to school, consult your healthcare provider or contact the School Nurse or clinic.

Clinic – Medication – First Aid

A student who becomes ill will report immediately to the clinic with a pass from the classroom teacher. When a child becomes ill or injured at school, every practical effort will be made to notify the parent/guardian.

Medication should be given by the parents and taken at home if possible. Medication may be taken at school only if failure to take it could jeopardize the student's health. In such cases, the parent must provide a medication order form supplied by the school and signed by a health-care professional as well as a parent/guardian. The parent/guardian is responsible for delivering to the school clinic all medications to be given during school hours including refills when appropriate. Medication may not be transported on the school bus. Oral medication may not be transported by a student. The parent is responsible for dropping off all oral medication to the clinic so that a pill or volume count may be done, ideally with the clinic personnel.

Prescription medication must be in its original, labeled container from the pharmacy, kept in the clinic, and taken under the supervision of authorized school personnel. Non-prescription medication (aspirin, cough medicine, cough drops) may be given only if ordered by a health-care professional. The container must be labeled with the student's name and directions concerning dosage. No over-the-counter medicines such as aspirin or cough medicine will be given without a written statement from the doctor.

Students may not bring medicine to school to take on their own. All medication must be administered in the clinic. This includes aspirin, cough drops, sore throat lozenges, vitamins, etc.

Health Screenings

The school Health Services Act mandates that each school district shall provide health appraisals and management of actual or potential health problems which include but are not limited to nursing assessments, vision, hearing, scoliosis and growth development screenings. A parent/guardian must give consent on FOCUS by opting in for health screenings and clinic treatment.. If the student is not opted in, the student will not be able to attend health screenings or receive treatment in the clinic. Any questions regarding this process, please contact the School Nurse.

District Head Lice Policy

The School District of Lee County has a no-nit policy regarding head lice. Nits are the eggs laid by a head louse. The no-nit policy simply means that a child excluded for head lice and/or nits shall not return to school until all nits are removed from the hair

1. A student is sent to the clinic to be screened if there is the possibility of head lice.
2. Head checks will be done discreetly by the School Nurse or Clinic Assistant so that a student and/or parent is not embarrassed or otherwise victimized.
3. When a student is determined to be positive for lice or nits, the parent/guardian will be contacted for the child to be picked up. A student who is determined to be positive for lice or nits cannot ride the school bus.
4. When a student is determined to be positive for lice or nits, the whole class must then be checked.

Excessive absence due to head lice should be reported to the School Nurse.

Facts About Head Lice

- Anyone can get head lice. It is not a sign of being unclean.
- Head lice cannot jump or fly, but they crawl rapidly.
- Head lice are transmitted by direct contact with a person who is infested by wearing infested clothing or using an infested comb, brush, or hat.
- Nits are tiny, yellowish-white oval specks attached to hair shafts. Unlike dandruff, they will not wash off or blow away.
- Persistent itching is one of the first signs that one may have head lice.

- If one person in the family has head lice, there is a good chance that others will have it also. Each family member should be checked.
- Dogs and cats do not have head lice.
- After treatment, the nits are easily removed in the bright sunlight.
- It is recommended that a parent/guardian continue daily head checks for 1-2 weeks after a lice diagnosis as even one nit left over can result in recurrence of lice.

Sun Protection

To help prevent students from exposure to sun, hats and sunglasses are approved by the School Board of Lee County and should be included in school attire during outdoor activities only. When students come indoors these articles must be removed and placed in the student's own book bag or other designated storage area which keeps these items separated. Sunscreen is also an effective protection against sun exposure. If parents wish to have their child protected, sunscreen should be applied at home before the student dresses for school. This will provide protection to the student during the time spent at school as well as during the rest of the day.

Harassment/Bullying

If any words or actions make a student feel uncomfortable or fearful, this should be reported to a teacher, administrator, School Counselor, School Resource Officer, or trusted adult immediately.

Students may be asked to make a written report and an investigation may be conducted by administration. The student's right to privacy will be respected as much as possible. Villas Elementary School takes all reports of harassment based upon sex, race, color, age, religion, national origin, or handicap very seriously. We will take all appropriate action to investigate such claims in order to eliminate the harassment and to discipline any person found to have engaged in such conduct. Action will also be taken should a child be intimidated or harmed due to making such a report.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the School District of Lee County not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, age, religion, national origin, handicap or marital status in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies. For additional information, please see the Statement of Non-Discrimination Policy in the Student Code of Conduct. Established grievance procedures and appropriate discrimination complaint forms are available from the Equity Coordinator at each school. Complaints/inquiries regarding compliance with these regulations may be directed to:

Student-Related Equity Issues

Villas Equity Coordinator

Chuck Bradley, Director
Positive Prevention
239-939-6858

Catherine Cronin
CatherineIC@LeeSchools.net
239-936-3776

Parent Teacher Association (PTA)

All parents/guardians are invited to join the Villas Elementary PTA, a nonprofit organization run by volunteers. The main purpose of Villas PTA is to bring families together, along with the school staff, in ways that will benefit students. Research shows that children perform better academically and have better behavior when their parents/guardians are involved at school.

Another important purpose of the PTA is to raise funds needed to help provide improvements to the quality of our children's educational experiences. In the past, Villas PTA has purchased a variety of items including sunshades, picnic benches, new books, chair pouches, butterfly kits and sensory items. Villas PTA has also assisted in funding field trips.

Meeting dates and times will be sent out via School Messenger and can be found on our school website.



School Board of Lee County



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General Board Office Correspondence

BoardOffice@leeschools.net

