



2025-2026

Student & Parent Handbook

Dear DHE Families:

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year!

At Diamond Hill, we believe in building and maintaining strong partnerships between school and home to help every child learn, grow, and SHINE. Our little school on *The Hill* is not just a place of learning, but a place where every child is known, supported, and loved.

Please take a few moments to review the Student & Parent Handbook, where you can find important information about our school policies, expectations, procedures, and resources. Understanding this information will help set everyone up for a successful school year. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We look forward to a great year of joy, learning, growth, and success together!

Sincerely,

*Beth W. Riddle, Principal*

*Samantha C. Ferguson, Instructional Specialist*

## School Hours:

7:50 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.

The school building opens at **7:15 a.m.** Please do not drop off students before this time. There is no one to supervise students before 7:15 a.m. When the front door opens, and on-duty staff members are present on the front porch, students may exit the vehicle at one of the four cones near the building. Students should not exit the vehicle until the car has come to a complete stop at one of the four cones. **No passing** is allowed after merging into one lane near the building, as indicated by the signs.

### **7:15-7:35 - Breakfast**

*Breakfast is available and free for all students. Students must arrive at school before 7:35 to eat breakfast.*

### **7:50 - The School Day Begins**

Students arriving after 7:50 are marked tardy. If your child is tardy, please park and walk into the front office to sign your child in using our Check-In system. Your child will need a tardy slip from the office before going to class.

### **2:40 Car Rider Dismissal Begins**

All car riders **MUST** be picked up by 3:00.

*\*\*Refer to the [Transportation: Car Rider](#) section for more details.\*\**

### **3:00 Bus Rider Dismissal**

## **Afternoon Dismissal**

We will begin our afternoon announcements and dismissal at 2:40. Vehicles may use either loop to pick up car riders until 2:55. After 2:55, no vehicles should be in the bus rider loop (located to the left of the building). Students must have a documented way of afternoon transportation established at the beginning of the year. This method of transportation must be consistent. (See *Transportation* for more information.) Please be aware and put down your phone when in line to pick up students.

## **Attendance**

Regular attendance is essential for student success and is a top priority at Diamond Hill Elementary. Every absence requires a note from the parent or an official medical excuse from a doctor. The principal and guidance counselor will review excessive absences. A conference will be scheduled, and an intervention plan will be implemented. If absences continue, the ACSD Board Policy will be followed, and further action will be taken.

## **Beta Club**

Students in grades 5 and 6 must meet the following criteria and qualifications to be eligible for the Junior Beta Club.

Ethical Character	-No office referrals for the current school year -Model character and exemplary behavior
Exemplary Achievement	-Members must maintain a yearly average of 90 or above in their core academic subjects (ELA, math, science, and social studies).
Commendable Attitude	Students will submit 2 recommendations, with at least one from a teacher.
Grade Levels	5th and 6th
Induction Held	Fall
Probation/ Removal Guidelines	If a student's average falls below 90, they go on probation. A student will be placed on probation if a behavior referral is received. A student will be removed from the Beta Club if they receive an additional behavior referral. A student will be removed from the Beta Club if suspended or expelled.
Dues	\$25.00

## **Cafeteria**

Students are expected to use good manners and quiet voices in the cafeteria. Breakfast and lunch are FREE for all students. If your child brings lunch from home, please note that food can not be heated at school.

If you wish to eat lunch with your child, the cost for an adult lunch is \$5.30. If you are visiting your child for lunch, please sign in at the front office, wear a visitor tag, and check out at the front office when your child leaves the cafeteria. Visitors are NOT allowed to follow students back to the classroom.

## **Cell Phones**

Students are not permitted to bring cell phones to school. If your child requires a cell phone due to unique circumstances (such as after-school sports or travel), the phone must be turned off and placed in the student's book bag. The phone should not be visible, used, or turned on while on campus. If school personnel see or hear the phone, it will be taken and given to the principal. The principal will notify the parent to pick up the phone. There will be zero warnings for cell phone use on school grounds.

## **Communication**

Information, announcements, and events are shared on our school website, social media, and school messages are sent via text or voice call. Please inform the school if your contact information changes to ensure you receive important information.

## **Discipline**

All students are expected to respect others and themselves, be prepared to learn, and demonstrate responsibility. In addition to our school-wide expectations for behavior, each teacher establishes classroom expectations, rewards, and consequences. This information will be shared with you at the beginning of the year. When it becomes necessary for a student to be referred to the office, the principal (or designee) will contact parents/guardians to discuss the behaviors and consequences. Behaviors that interfere with the learning of other students are not acceptable.

## **Dress Code**

Students are to dress neatly and age-appropriately. Clothing and accessories should not distract from the teaching and learning environment. We ask that adults visiting school events

model the exact expectations of students.

Guidelines for appropriate dress at Diamond Hill Elementary School:

- Hats, bandannas, etc., will not be worn in the building (unless the head covering is worn as an officially recognized religious ritual). Hoods should be removed upon entering the building.
- Clothing and/or accessories should not promote profanity, alcohol, drugs, tobacco/smoking, risqué imagery, weapons, violence, nor portray imagery that threatens the safety of other students and openly persecutes students based on race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, or disability.
- Shirts should cover the student's back, stomach, and sides. Students should not wear crop tops, muscle shirts, shirts with straps less than 2 inches, or low-cut tops. Shirts should cover undergarments.
- Pants should be worn at the waist, preferably with a belt; no baggy or sagging pants are allowed. Jeans with excessive rips above the knee are not acceptable.
- Shorts should reach mid-thigh for both males and females. A good way to check this is to ensure that shorts reach the child's fingertips when their arms are put down on each side.
- Leggings and jeggings must be paired with a shirt that is mid-thigh length.
- Skirts and dresses should be no more than 3 inches above the knee. If dresses or skirts are any shorter than 3 inches above the knee, leggings or knee-length shorts must be worn underneath.
- Pajamas and bedroom shoes are not considered appropriate school attire. (unless noted as a special dress-up day)

The principal reserves the right to determine age-appropriate dress and attire that may disrupt the learning environment. The principal will pre-approve dress code exceptions for spirit days and special dress-up events. Teachers will report any incidents of inappropriate dress to the principal directly. Dress code violations will be at the principal's discretion.

### **Early Dismissals**

Student learning takes place until the very last minute of each day. Intercom calls to classrooms to have students dismissed interrupt learning and should be avoided if possible. However, appointments do come up that can not be avoided. Therefore, there are times when an early dismissal is necessary.

Please do not schedule an early dismissal after 2:15 p.m. This is a busy time as teachers, students, and the front office prepare for dismissal. This request is for the safety of all students.

Do not call to request that your child be called up to wait on you. If an early dismissal is needed, please allow sufficient time to arrive, park, and enter the building to sign your child(ren) out on our Check-In/Check-Out system.

**\*\*Students must be signed out by the individuals listed in PowerSchool.\*\***

Excessive early dismissals and tardiness result in lost instruction. Therefore, the school administration will keep records of early dismissals and tardiness. (refer to ACSD Board Policy JHA) A conference will be scheduled, and an intervention plan will be implemented if needed. If excessive tardiness and early dismissals continue, the ACSD Policy will be followed, and further action will be taken.

### **eLearning**

Students have a red eLearning folder that should be kept in their book bag throughout the year. If eLearning is necessary during the school year, the materials inside the red eLearning folder will be the assignments for the eLearning day. Your child's teacher will share additional information regarding eLearning and/or assignments at the necessary time.

### **Health**

Every effort is made to prevent accidents on campus. However, in the event of an accident, first aid will be administered. Parents will be contacted. If parents can't be reached, emergency numbers will be used. The school must have current phone numbers where someone can be reached in any situation.

### **Homework and Makeup Assignments**

Homework reinforces classroom learning. Please schedule a time each evening to sit down, put all devices away, and interact with your child(ren) to review what they learned at school. If your child does not have assigned homework, spend time reading together, practicing math facts, or letting your child teach you what he/she learned at school. Students in K-2nd grade should spend no more than 20 minutes on homework. Students in grades 3-6 should spend no more than 30 minutes on homework each day. *These guidelines for homework time apply to the actual time your child is working cooperatively and continuously on homework.*

Assignments missed due to absences should be completed and returned to school within five school days of the student's return to school. If your child is absent for more than 2 days, you may email your child's teacher to ask that assignments be sent home with a sibling or neighbor. Please allow 24 hours for teachers to gather materials.

## **Immunizations**

All students must have an up-to-date immunization form from their doctor or the South Carolina Department of Health before entering school. When a child enters from another school, immunizations will be checked for completion. If not complete, the student must get the necessary shots immediately. Please contact the school nurse if you have questions.

## **Media**

Students' pictures may be used throughout the school year to promote accomplishments and activities. These pictures may be displayed on bulletin boards, in newspapers, on school or district websites, and in other media. Parents can "opt out" of this by indicating on the registration form or submitting the request to opt out in writing to the school administration.

## **Medication**

According to district policy, guidelines must be followed for prescription and non-prescription medication. The doctor must complete a special form for prescription medicine to be administered. The school nurse will be available to guide the parent through this process. Students are not allowed to carry medication in their book bags (prescription and/or non-prescription). If your child needs non-prescription medication at school, you must complete the non-prescription form. The medication must be stored in the health room.

## **Student District-Issued Devices**

All students are issued a Chromebook for educational purposes. A \$25.00 technology fee is required each year and must be paid at registration. Students are responsible for maintaining appropriate behavior on school computer networks, both at home and in the classroom. Users will comply with the technology standards established by the district. Teachers and staff will closely monitor student internet use. Any misuse will result in disciplinary action. The ACSD has a warning system to alert designated school staff of inappropriate searches/use.

Students should not handle any other student's device at any time.

If your child brings his/her Chromebook home, it must be returned the next school day. Students will not be allowed to call home if they forget their device.

Fees for damaged or lost devices and chargers must be paid within 30 days of the issued invoice.

[ACSD Device Handbook](#)



## **School Property**

Any intentional damage to school property must be repaired or replaced at the offender's expense. Parents' cooperation is required to help us teach our students to respect school property, books, textbooks, materials, equipment, and our building.

## **Tardies**

If your child arrives after 7:50, please park in a parking space and walk your child inside. Do not park in the bus or car loop, as this blocks other vehicles. Excessive tardiness and early dismissals result in losing instructional time for your child and other children. Therefore, the school administration will keep records of early dismissals and tardiness. (refer to ACSD Board Policy) A conference will be scheduled, and an intervention plan will be implemented. If excessive tardiness continues, the ACSD Policy will be followed, and further action will be taken.

## **Teacher Conferences & Communication**

If you have questions or concerns about your child, your first point of contact should be with your child's teacher. Teachers will communicate with parents throughout the school year to share celebrations and concerns. Parents of students in grades 1-7 may use the Parent Portal System (PowerSchool) to view student grades and attendance.

If you would like to speak with your child's teacher in person, you must schedule a conference with your child's teacher in advance. Phone calls, emails, and/or messages sent through communication apps (such as Class Dojo) will be returned when the teacher is available to do so. Please allow time for teachers to respond. Teachers are not expected to respond to emails/communication apps outside of work hours or during instructional time with students. Teachers will respond during their planning, if available, or at another time during the school day. It may be the following day before a teacher is able to reply.

A conference will be scheduled at the end of the first nine weeks to review student progress. Parents/guardians are expected to attend these conferences to receive their child's report card and any other information from the teacher.

## **Telephone**

The school telephone numbers are 864-446-2600 or 864-348-7235. The school fax number is 864-446-2602. Messages will be taken for staff and delivered as soon as possible. Parents wishing to speak to their child's teacher are asked to schedule a phone conference directly with the teacher. Classroom learning will not be interrupted by phone calls and/or messages. Students will not be allowed to call home unless there is a true emergency.

After-school arrangements/transportation for students should be made before the child leaves home in the morning.

## **Textbooks**

Students will be charged for lost or damaged textbooks. Payment for damages or lost books is required within 30 days of the invoice.

## **Transfers**

If your child moves during the school year, please notify the office. On the last day of attendance, all textbooks, school materials, and outstanding charges must be cleared before report cards are issued or records sent to the next school. Records will NOT be released until these items are collected.

## **Transportation**

Transportation for your child (car or bus) will be established at the beginning of the year. Transportation (that you select during registration) is how your child should get to and from school each day. Alternating days and/or frequently changing transportation will not be allowed. This causes unnecessary confusion during dismissal for the child and school staff. These procedures are established for the safety of our students and will be followed.

If a change in transportation is necessary, written permission from the parent is required for both bus and car riders. Additionally, please call the school by 1:00 p.m. to confirm receipt of written consent. Changes in transportation should only be made if necessary and in extreme circumstances.

Please refrain from sending emails or messages to teachers regarding dismissal after the school day has started. Teachers do not always see these messages during the school day.

*The principal has the authority to deny a change in transportation if the procedures above are not followed.*

### ***CAR RIDERS:***

Students who will be car riders will be “called” as their guardian nears the pickup area. Parents should remain in the vehicle while the students load (from the passenger side). If your child needs help buckling up, please park after exiting the carline to assist them. Parents/Guardians should not “walk up” to the front entrance of the school to pick up students during dismissal. Car riders need to be picked up in the car line. The *2025-2026 Car Rider Tag* must be displayed. Without the appropriate CAR RIDER TAG, you may be asked to park and wait for verification before your student is called. This is for the safety of every child. Each car rider will be issued two tags. Additional tags can be purchased for \$5.

When picking up your car rider, school staff will direct you to pull to a designated cone (identified by a specific color and number). Students must load (and unload) from the passenger side. Once students have loaded, you will be directed when to pull off. NO PASSING is allowed in the area where students are loading.

### ***BUS RIDERS:***

Students are expected to follow safety procedures and bus rules. Students who do not follow directions will be referred to the principal for disciplinary action.

### **Valuables**

Students are responsible for their personal property brought to school. Your child should only bring items needed for the school day. Students do not need to bring toys to school. Unless directed by the teacher for a special day, ALL toys, blankets, and personal items that are not school-related should be left at home. **The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items that should not be at school.**

### **Visitors on Campus**

All visitors must enter through the front office, use our Check-In system with a valid photo ID, and receive a visitor's badge. There are no exceptions. Classroom visits are not allowed. Office visits should be for school business only.

## **Water Bottles**

It is recommended that your child bring a water bottle to school. Water bottles must be made of clear plastic. Water is the only drink allowed in classrooms. If your child wants juice, tea, or a soft drink at lunch, these beverages are only allowed in the cafeteria. Energy drinks are not permitted for students. Metal water bottles or coffee cups are not allowed. Students are not allowed to have energy drinks at school.

**The ACSD Board Policy, as well as the ACSD Students' Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, should be referenced as both guide procedures and rules at Diamond Hill Elementary School. Both are available online.**

*Updated 07-25-2025 - Subject to change.*

*If changes are made, DHES parents will be notified via email.*

