

Robert E. Willis Elementary School

2019 – 2020 Student & Parent Handbook



14705 The Masters Avenue

Bradenton, FL 34202

Phone (941) 316-8245

Fax (941) 316-8259

<https://www.manateeschools.net/willis>

<https://www.facebook.com/Robert-E-Willis-Elementary-School-1393618317423284/>

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Important Phone Numbers

Main school number: (941) 316-8245

Kathy Price	Principal	ext. 2001
Billie-Jo Fintel	Assistant Principal	ext. 2002
Susie Johnson	Student Support Specialist	ext. 2003
Kim Thomas	Student Support Specialist	ext. 2007
Phyllis Morales	School Counselor	ext. 2004
Venner Badgley	Senior Secretary	ext. 2008
Kelley Carpenter	Registrar	ext. 2009
Christa Nash	Clerical Assistant	ext. 2000
Lisa Fanchi	Guidance Clerk	ext. 2081
Art Badgley	Head Custodian	ext. 2039
Jeff Cardarelle-Hermans	Cafeteria Manager	ext. 2014
Michelle Swensen	School Nurse	ext. 2010
Kris Miller, LPN	Clinic Nurse	ext. 2011

The School District of Manatee County: (941) 708-8770

Bus Transportation: (941) 708-8800

To report an absence: (941) 316-8245 and press 8.

Please make every effort to contact the school office by 8:15 a.m. if your child will be absent. This request is made for the protection of your child.

Welcome to Robert E. Willis Elementary School! We are going to have an exciting and successful year of learning and growing together. Please take the time to acquaint yourself and your child with the contents of this handbook. It will serve as a reference for information throughout the year allowing students and parents to have a clear understanding of school policies. In addition, please visit the following link to access the **SDMC Student Code of Conduct** <https://www.manateeschools.net/policy>.

Education should be a cooperative effort between home and school. Research supports that success is achieved through the frequent and open communication among teachers, staff, and parents regarding student progress. If you have questions throughout the year, please start by contacting your child's teacher first. Often, an email or quick phone call can answer any misconceptions or concerns. If your concerns remain unresolved after speaking with the teacher, please contact the school and ask to speak with a school counselor, student support specialist or administrator for further assistance. We will be glad to assist you.

There will be several ways we communicate with families so you can stay up to date with the many activities at Willis. Our school uses electronic communication in the form of email notifications, Facebook, our school website, PTO announcements, and informational flyers. In addition, we will send "Connect Ed" messages and as needed throughout the year.

Thank you for supporting your child's success at Willis. We look forward to working with you as partners in education to help every student at Willis Elementary achieve their goals and pursue excellence. It is going to be a great year! Go Geckos!

Sincerely,

Kathy Price
Principal

Student Hours.....8:25 a.m. – 3:15 p.m. (Monday – Friday)

*The first bell rings at 8:20 a.m. indicating students have five minutes to get to class before he/she is marked tardy after the 8:25 a.m. tardy bell.

Early Release District Wednesday's8:25 a.m.- 1:40 p.m.

Early Release Friday's..... 8:25 a.m.- 12:55p.m.

Front Office Hours.....7:45 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Attendance(Taken from the District Student Code of Conduct)

Florida Compulsory School Law (F.S. 1003.21) states all children must attend school regularly during the entire school term.

a. You are expected to be on time and in school for the entire student day, each school day.

b. On the day of your absence, a parent or guardian should call the school to explain the absence. The absence will be excused if it meets the criteria outlined in the District Student Code of Conduct. The parent or guardian must contact the school within 48 hours of the absence or appropriate documentation is required within 5 days. If this contact is not made, the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

d. If you are continually sick and repeatedly absent from school, you must be under the supervision of a physician in order to be excused from attendance. Excessive absences will lead to a parent conference, referral to the District's Child Study Team, referral for social work services, referral to Truancy Court, and the involvement of the State Attorney. Parents who fail or refuse to cooperate with the school in the matter of regular school attendance for their child may be prosecuted for truancy by the State Attorney's Office.

Tardy and Early Dismissals

Being late to school disrupts the instructional program for not only the tardy student, but for the teacher and other students in his/her class. A record of tardies is reported to parents at the close of each quarter and is recorded on the student's permanent record. The tardy bell rings at 8:20 a.m. Students are expected to be in their classroom ready to learn at 8:25 a.m. Please note that three tardies and/or three early dismissals are equal to one unexcused absence.

Please be sure your child arrives at school in enough time to get to his or her classroom before the tardy bell rings. Students that are not in their classroom by 8:25 a.m. will be considered tardy. In addition, for safety

reasons, students will not be dismissed after 2:45 p.m. If a parent comes during these times, we will ask that you wait in the office until the bell rings at 3:15 p.m. to pick up your child. Under no circumstances will a teacher release a student to a parent from the classroom.

Student Absences

Please call the school by 8:30 a.m. if your child will be absent. This request is for your child's safety and informs us that your child is safe at home. By noon each day, if we have not been notified of your child's absence, a Connect-Ed phone message will call you with an automated message stating that your child is absent. If your child is absent and the school has not been notified, these absences will be marked unexcused. Sometimes parents request that a child be allowed to miss school for trips of various sorts. While in many cases there may be value derived from these trips, please understand that such absences are recorded as unexcused. If such an absence does occur, the student is required to make up the work missed. A record of absences is reported to parents at the close of each quarter and those absences will show as unexcused on the child's permanent record. Student attendance is monitored daily through our Student Information System.

Morning Arrival/Drop-Off

Please remain in the drop-off car line if you drop your child off in the morning. For your child's safety, please also be sure you only drop your child off at the designated locations. If you wish to drop your child off in the parking lot, you must park in a designated parking space and accompany your child to the crosswalk. For the safety of our students, children must be accompanied by an adult when walking through the parking lot.

Students should arrive no earlier than 7:55 a.m. Students who need to be dropped off prior to 7:55 a.m. must be enrolled in a before school program as supervision is not provided prior to 7:55 a.m. Car riders, bus riders, bike riders, and walkers will enter through the front lobby. Any student who is accompanied by an adult must enter through the front office so that the adult may check in and receive a visitor's pass. Once a student enters the building, they may choose to go to the lunchroom for breakfast. Breakfast

is free for all of our students. Students who do not choose to get breakfast are expected to go to the assigned hallway where there is a designated location for them to sit with their classmates. While in the hallways, students will sit quietly and read while they wait for school to begin

Parking Lot

When arriving at school, parents are requested to follow the traffic patterns and **not** cut across the grass. This will help ensure everyone's safety and respect school property. Please park in designated parking spaces only. Please be sure to use the crosswalks as you walk from the parking lot to the school building. Children may not be dropped off in the parking lot and left to walk to the building by themselves.

Dismissal/Pick-Up Dismissal

If it is necessary to change your child's mode of transportation, please send a note with your child in the morning. We never take a child's word they are changing their transportation home for the day. You must send a note to school that is dated and explains how your child's transportation will be changed for the day. You may put the note in your child's agenda if you choose. In the event of a true emergency, please call the main office at extension 2000, and speak to someone directly and we will do our best to work with your situation. Do not leave a voice message. We ask that you do this at least thirty minutes before dismissal. Without such notification, your child will be sent home the usual way. If it is necessary to pick your child up early from school, they must be picked up prior to 2:45 p.m. for safety reasons. Students will not be called from class after 2:45 p.m. as we will be preparing for dismissal. If a parent comes after 2:45 p.m., we will ask you to wait in the office until the bell rings.

Car Riders 3:15 p.m.

There are designated areas for students waiting to be picked up in front of the building. Please wait for your child to proceed to the safe area to enter your vehicle. Please remember to place your car tag identification sign (provided by the school) on the dash of your car every day, so that we may identify you. We will provide each family with multiple car tags to ensure an authorized person is picking up your child. The left lane is

for parking lot access only. Please stay in your vehicle at all times.

*Please do not bring animals to pick-up areas, as they are not permitted on school grounds.

Bus Riders 3:15 p.m.

At dismissal students that ride a bus will be seated according to their bus number/color. Each bus has been assigned a different color. Bus students will have a colored wristband attached to their backpack, which corresponds to the bus they ride. As students board their bus, staff members ensure they are boarding the correct bus by checking the colored band on their backpack.

Bike Riders 3:15 p.m.

Students must use sidewalks provided to exit school grounds.

1. Bike riders must walk bikes off of school grounds and as required by law, should always wear a helmet.
2. Bike riders are expected to follow bicycle safety rules.
3. All bicycles will be locked in the caged area during the school day.

Walkers 3:15 p.m.

1. Students are expected to go directly home after school.
2. Students **MUST** cross the street where there are crossing guards, if provided.
3. Students are expected to show courtesy to our neighbors by respecting private property, walking along sidewalks, and by speaking courteously to adults.
4. It is assumed that students who are designated as walkers have permission from their family to walk home independently. If a parent chooses to have their child meet them at the park or any other destination, it is the parent's responsibility to be in that area every day. If you choose this procedure, please practice with your child what to do if for some unforeseen reason you are not there one day. We never want a child to be in a position where he or she is afraid and unsure of how to get home safely.

Rainy Days and Lightening Dismissal

If there is heavy rain or lightening at dismissal, please be patient as the safety of all students is our number one priority. In the event of lightening, dismissal will be held until the lightning passes.

Willis Gecko Care 3:15 p.m.

Students registered for Willis Gecko Care report directly to the cafeteria at dismissal.

Emergency Contact List

Please be sure to list all possible adults that may need to pick up your child throughout the school year. There is no limit to the number of names that you provide to pick up your child. It is important for parents to understand that children are easily confused by frequent changes in their routines. By being consistent in the method of transportation for your child, you will ensure a safe arrival home and your child will feel more secure knowing their daily routines. Please know that this policy is for the safety of your child and that we are not permitted to release your child to anyone that is not on the approved list.

Student “Sign-Out” Procedures

Prior to a child’s release during the school day, individuals are required to:

1. Be an approved person listed on the student’s bio form.
2. Show proper identification: a valid Florida Driver’s License, State of Florida Identification Card, or a valid driver’s license or state identification card from any of the other states in the United States of America.
3. Sign the child out in the office.
4. Wait in the front office for the child.

No child is to leave the school area or a classroom with a visitor or parent unless permission has been received from the office. Children will only be released to those adults for whom the school has written authorization on the information form in the office.

Visitors

At Willis Elementary School, family involvement is strongly encouraged. We welcome parents/guardians and other relatives at our school. All visitors, including parents, must first report to the office. The procedures stated in the "Visitor Sign-in Process" must be followed to ensure a safe environment for our children. When you arrive on campus for lunch, conferences, and special events during school hours please report to the office, complete the sign-in process and obtain a visitor badge which must be worn the entire time a visitor is on campus. Before you leave, please return to the office to sign-out. Parents who want to visit the classrooms must make arrangements with the teacher at least one day prior to the visit.

Visitor Sign-in Process

To ensure a safe environment for our children, all visitors must register and sign-in at the front office using the computerized visitor registration system. All visitors must provide a valid Florida's Driver's License, State of Florida Identification Card, or a valid driver's license or state identification card from any of the other states in the United States of America. It will be necessary for you to log into the system and register as a Willis visitor. The Willis office staff will be happy to assist you with this.

Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)

When a child is registered at Willis Elementary School, his or her family automatically becomes a member of our Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO). There are many ways for our families to become involved in our school community. For more information about Willis' PTO, please check out the PTO website at <http://www.williselementarypto.com/>
Our P.T.O. Board for the 2019-20 school year is below:

President- Deborah Hossenlopp
debhoss@gmail.com

Vice President- Valerie Demino
vdemino@gmail.com

Treasurer- Dawn Barbour
dbarbour78@yahoo.com

Secretary- Liz Johnson
lizjohnson07@hotmail.com

School Advisory Council (SAC)

As required by Florida Statute every school must have a School Advisory Council (SAC). The SAC is a governmental body formed for the purpose of advising the principal on policies and procedures at the school, which help ensure that every student is meeting with success. As such, the SAC must abide by all Florida Sunshine laws. This group is also responsible for approval of the School-Improvement Plan and the expenditure of school improvement funds budgeted to every school, which must be spent on school improvement. In addition, the SAC approves the spending plan for any A+ Recognition dollars awarded by the state for school grades. The makeup of the SAC is defined in statute and must be representative of the school population. It is to be comprised of the principal, teachers, parents, support employees, and other business and community members. The majority of the members of the SAC at any school may not be employees of the school district. All positions are elected positions except for the community representative, which is assigned by the school principal.

Volunteers

Volunteers enhance the quality of education in our schools which in turn, gives our schools the opportunity to excel beyond measure. Our school needs and welcomes volunteers who can work to assist us in carrying out our mission. Some examples might include:

1. Assist teachers in providing more individualization and enrichment of instruction.
2. Relieve teachers of non-teaching duties and tasks.
3. Strengthen school-community relations through positive participation.
4. Shelve books in the media center
5. Assist with PTO events

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Christa Nash at extension 2000. Please note that in accordance with district policy, all volunteers must provide a valid Florida's Driver's License, State of Florida Identification Card, or a valid driver's license or state identification card from any of the other states in the United States of

America; complete a volunteer application packet; and will be subject to a background check. There are two types of volunteer screening levels. Level 1 screening must be under the supervision of a staff member at all times. Level 2 screening allows a volunteer to work with individual students and in small groups. More information will be given at the time of the volunteer registration.

School Clinic

The school clinic is available for students who become ill or are injured during the school day. If the illness or injury is of such a nature that the student needs to go home, the parent will be notified and be expected to make arrangements for the child to be picked up from school. The telephone number for the Willis clinic is 316-8245 extension 2011. **Please do not send a sick child to school, as we do not have facilities to care for him or her. This also prevents the spreading of illnesses to others.**

Administering Medication

If it is essential for children to receive medication during school hours, the stated guidelines must be followed:

1. Only prescription medicine will be given. Over the counter medicine is not permitted without a prescription from a physician.
2. The medication shall be supplied by the parent or guardian in person in a childproof container, bearing the prescription, child's name, attending physician, the name of the medication, the amount to be given, the frequency of administration, and any special instructions.
3. All medications to be administered in school to an elementary student must be delivered to the school by a parent or guardian. When presented in the school office, parents or guardians must fill out the "Authorization for Medication Form" before the medication is given. ** Sample bottles of medication must be accompanied by a written prescription and labeled with the child's name.*
4. The parent and/or physician should make school personnel aware, in writing, of symptoms or possible reactions relating to the medication or lack of medication.

No medicine for acute or contagious illness should be given in schools. Children should be home under these conditions.

Cafeteria

Breakfast is served every morning from 7:55 – 8:20 a.m. in the cafeteria. All Manatee County School District students may receive free breakfast daily at no charge if they choose to eat in the cafeteria. All students wanting to have breakfast should report directly to the cafeteria upon arriving at school and should arrive to school prior to 8:10 a.m in order to have enough time to eat before the bell rings at 8:25 a.m.

The Willis Cafeteria is run on a computerized point of sale system, which enables us to have money held in an account for each student. Your child may purchase lunch, milk, juice, an additional entree, side dish, bottled water or snack as long as there is money in their account. For students on full-pay status the lunch cost is \$2.50 per day or \$12.50 per 5 day week. Reduced status lunch is \$.40 per day or \$2.00 per 5 day week. The price of an adult lunch is \$3.50. It is preferred that you send money for your child's lunch needs in advance. This saves time and confusion in the lunch line.

Payment Options:

Fast and convenient online payments can be made with a credit card or debit card at MyPaymentsPlus - <https://www2.mypaymentsplus.com/> You will need your student's 10-digit ID number, which can be obtained at the school site or by calling the Free and Reduced office at 941-739-5700 extension 2029. Cash or check may be sent to school in an envelope labeled as "Lunch Money". **Your child's name, grade, and your child's teacher's name** should also be clearly written on the front of the envelope.

Checks should be made out to Willis Elementary School.

Please be sure the check includes:

- Student(s) name in memo line
- Student ID number (obtainable from the school office)
- Correct date

Signature

No starter checks

All checks must include name, address and phone number

These envelopes should be dropped off in the cafeteria in the morning before the tardy bell. All money sent will be applied to the student's account, as we cannot return change. If you have any questions about your child's account, please call the Cafeteria Manager, Jeff Cardarelle-Hermans at extension 2014.

Parents/guardians are welcome any time to join their child for breakfast or lunch. You may sit with **only** your child at the designated visitor tables in the cafeteria. Parents/guardians visiting for lunch must meet their child in the lunchroom and may only visit their child in the lunchroom. Parents may not accompany their child to recess or back to the classroom. Please remember to sign in at the office to receive a visitor pass.

Cafeteria Rules

- G**- Get everything you need before you sit down.
- E**- Extend your hand to ask for help.
- C**- Clean up after yourself.
- K**- Keep your hands, feet, and food to yourself.
- O**- Only talk in four square and use your manners
- S**- Stay in your seat.

School/Home Communication

Communication and cooperation between home and school is vital to your child's success. At Willis Elementary School, a variety of methods are used to bridge the gap between home and the school. Some of these are the student agenda planner, school website, school Facebook page, PTO website, PTO Facebook page, SAC meetings, e-mail, PTO meetings, midterm progress reports, and conferences.

Progress Reports/Report Cards

Progress reports and report cards are posted to the Focus Parent Portal four times a year. Progress reports will be posted to the Focus Parent Portal

four times a year (half way through each of the four quarters). Report cards will be posted at the end of each quarter. Parents will be requested to attend a report card conference at the end of the first quarter and third quarter at which time you will have the opportunity to discuss your student's progress with their teacher.

Student Agenda Planners

As a tool to support home and school communication, each student will be provided a student agenda planner. Teachers may write notes home to parents in the planner. There is also a space for parents to write notes to the teacher. Please read and sign your child's agenda daily and be sure your child has it at school every day. Replacement agenda planners are available in the office for \$5.00. Your child's agenda planner may contain important pages, flyers, and information from the school. Please be sure to check the agenda planner daily.

Requests for a Conference

If you have any concerns regarding your child and would like to speak with the teacher, please call the school and speak directly to your child's teacher, leave a message on the teacher's voice mail system, or e-mail the teacher. The teacher will contact you and schedule a conference. Conferences are typically scheduled before or after school when the teacher is free from student responsibilities and able to devote their full attention to your concerns.

Please understand, your child's teacher will only be able to meet with you if prior arrangements have been made. Once you have scheduled a conference with your child's teacher, please remember to:

1. be on time for scheduled conferences. If you are late, there may not be adequate time to discuss your child's progress or your concerns; and
2. please stop in the office to check in and receive a visitor's pass before going to your child's classroom.

Building an atmosphere of cooperation and mutual support allows us to help your child reach their greatest potential.

Additional Conferences

You may be asked to participate in additional conferences to discuss your child's individual learning needs and to develop a plan for meeting your child's particular needs. These meetings are held to inform you of special services for which your child may qualify. We hold these conferences in the best interest of your child and we appreciate your attendance.

School Bus Procedures

Safety on the bus depends on the cooperation of each child. Bus drivers will review safety procedures on the bus during the first week of school. When students fail to cooperate with the bus driver, parents will be notified via a courtesy note and/or bus referral and the privilege of riding the bus may be temporarily suspended. We suggest that parents wait at designated bus stops in the morning and meet students in the afternoon to ensure safe practices are being followed.

School Bus Conduct/Safety

1. Sit in your assigned seat and use the seat belt.
2. Stay seated at all times while the bus is in motion.
3. Do not place any part of your body outside the bus windows.
4. Do not distract the driver with loud conversation or noises.
5. Observe appropriate classroom conduct.
6. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
7. Maintain absolute silence at railroad crossings.
8. Do not throw any items on the bus or out of the bus windows.
9. Do not mark, cut or damage bus seats or the bus itself.
10. Do not display signs from the bus.
11. Do not use obscene language or gestures.
12. Cell phones are to be turned off unless bus operator gives permission for cell phone use.

Emergency Drills-Safety

Your child's safety is a priority and the staff and district have developed safety plans for emergencies. We conduct emergency drills to practice and evaluate our procedures. Should you be on campus during a drill or an actual emergency you will be asked to cooperate until the drill is over or the danger has passed.

Text Books/Library Books

Instructional materials issued or checked out to students are the property of the school board and must be returned at the end of the school year. According to school board policy, students must pay for lost or damaged library books and/or textbooks.

Party Policy

If you wish to send in treats for your child's class it must be arranged with your child's teacher in advance and meet the criteria outlined in the School District of Manatee County's Wellness Policy This policy states: "Only food prepared by and purchased from licensed food service establishments may be served to students, except food brought by the parent for their child. Ingredient labels must be available for all food brought to the classroom" (School District of Manatee County, (5) Food Safety and Security, p. 5-61). All food served must be served after lunch.

Student birthdays are celebrated as teachers choose to do so in their classrooms. However, **students are limited to sharing their celebration with their classmates only**. Invitations to home parties may only be handed out in class if the entire class or all boys or all girls will be invited, otherwise invitations may not be distributed at school. Please be sure to align all celebration snacks with the district nutritional policy.

<https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/2638>

Deliveries to Students

The delivery of flowers, balloons, valentines, or birthday presents, etc. to classrooms will not be permitted, as such deliveries are distracting to the learning environment. We know you love your children, but please help us focus on academics by not interrupting classes during the day.

Dress Code

Willis Elementary has a mandatory uniform policy. Students are required to wear a Willis Elementary Uniform to school each day. The Willis Elementary Uniform Policy is as follows:

Shirts should be a generic solid polo style shirt or button down collared shirt in white, light blue, or navy blue. Long or short sleeve is acceptable.

“Willis Elementary” T-shirts may be worn on the last school day in a week.

School T-shirts and monogrammed polo shirts are sold online. Please check the PTO website for details. The only acceptable logo on school shirts will be the Willis Elementary School monogram.

Sweatshirts, jackets, or outer garments may be worn. These items are to be in the school uniform colors of white, light blue, or navy. On very cold days, heavier jackets or outer garments in any color or style may be worn to and from school. However, if your child needs to wear something during school hours to keep warm, it must be in the appropriate school uniform colors.

Pants, shorts, skirts, skorts, jumpers, or capri pants should be khaki or navy blue. **No blue jeans, denim, or jeggings.**

Shorts, skirts, skorts, and jumpers must be fingertip length.

On announced “dress down days” students may wear denim bottoms. Denim bottoms are **not** to be low-rise, have any holes, cuts, slits, or bleached portions.

If **belts** are worn, they should be fastened and should be black, brown, khaki, or navy in color.

Oversized, baggie, extremely tight or ill-fitting clothing is not permitted. As a health and safety precaution, **shoes** must have a closed heel and closed toe. Sandals, thong-type shoes, shoes with cleats, shoes with thick platform soles, high heels, shoes with wheels, and Crocs™ are not allowed. Sneakers with socks must be worn for P.E.

Socks, crew length or less, of any color may be worn. Socks, tights, leotards, leggings, leg warmers, or other such coverings, which extend higher than crew length must be solid navy, khaki, or white.

Any intentionally visible items worn under uniform clothes must comply with the colors outlined in the uniform policy and be a solid color.

Make up is not allowed.

Hair must be neat at all times and **must be a natural hair color**. Barrettes and ponytail scrunchies, etc. are acceptable. Students, however, may

be asked to remove any items in the hair that are costume like or distracting (For example, headbands with animal ears).

Jewelry should be simple, safe, and appropriate for elementary school.

School uniform items may be purchased at any retail outlet as long as they meet the school uniform criteria. Willis Elementary School embroidered shirts are optional and may be purchased online through the PTO website.

Our uniform policy is mandatory for every student who attends Willis Elementary School. A student new to Willis Elementary has 30 days to comply with the school uniform policy.

Exceptions to the uniform policy will be allowed for those with strict religious beliefs regarding clothing as well as those participating in Boy or Girl Scouts or other national organizations, which have their own uniforms. Students are encouraged to represent these organizations on the day of their meetings by wearing the appropriate attire.

If a student comes to school out of uniform, the following actions may take place:

- A verbal warning may be given from a staff member to the student and/ or a note may be sent home.
- Parent/guardian may be contacted and required to bring appropriate attire to school for the child. A conference may then be scheduled with the principal.
- A letter or referral from the principal may be sent home requiring reply from the parent/guardian.

Please contact Ms. Morales, the school guidance counselor, at extension 2004 for information regarding financial hardship applications or exemption procedures. Willis Elementary School maintains a supply of gently used uniforms should a student have the need. If you have uniforms you no longer need that are in good condition and would like to donate these to the school, please drop the uniforms off to the staff in the front office

Student Discipline

At Willis Elementary, we believe everyone has the right and responsibility to achieve his or her educational best. Likewise, we believe that no one has the right to disrupt another student's learning. With these beliefs, we will show respect for all members of the Willis Community, clearly define our expectations across all settings, and hold each other accountable for appropriate behavior. All students are also expected to follow the Manatee County Student Code of Conduct that is located online at <https://www.manateeschools.net/policy>.

Classroom rules are posted and carefully explained to the students by the teacher. Children receive positive reinforcement when rules are followed, and redirection and appropriate consequences are given when they are needed. While classroom rules are unique to each classroom, all rules are linked to the school-wide expectations across all settings. Therefore, compliance and non-compliance of the rules will be identified as matching one of the following **school-wide expectations**:

- 1. Being Safe**
- 2. Being Respectful**
- 3. Being Responsible**

When a student experiences a problem at school, his or her classroom teacher may counsel the student individually or contact the parent to discuss the concern. In some instances, teachers may refer students to the student support specialist, school counselor, or administrator. If the student exhibits a lack of cooperation, or the behaviors are deemed dangerous or interfering with the learning opportunities of others, further interventions may be taken. In such a case, the parent may be notified in the form of a referral. If a referral is written, the parent will be contacted by phone. The referral can be accessed in the Parent Portal System.

Gecko Awards

The staff believes positive reinforcement is effective in promoting behaviors that lead to life success, and students are recognized for their achievements at quarterly assemblies known as Gecko Awards. Parents of children who are going to be recognized are invited to attend the assembly and join the staff in celebrating their child's success. Students being recognized will receive a certificate and incentives. On the day of the assembly, all visitors should arrive early to check in at the front office. Before being permitted on campus, all guests will be

required to present proper identification. For young children, research shows that positive feedback registers more strongly in the brain areas responsible for cognitive control and increases the likelihood positive behaviors will be repeated.

Character Program and the 8 Keys of Excellence

The staff at Willis Elementary School prides themselves in our character-building program that instructs our students in such qualities as cooperation, empathy and honesty. We have many positive incentives and feel that it is important for students to accept responsibility for their own actions and that the consequences of these actions result from the choices they, themselves, make. The staff believes positive reinforcement is effective in promoting behaviors that lead to life success. The following keys are what we focus on during the year for character development:



Ways to Stay Informed

The following websites will help you to stay up-to-date and informed about events and activities happening at Willis Elementary School and within the School District of Manatee County.

Willis Elementary School

Willis Elementary School Website

<https://www.manateeschools.net/willis>

Willis Elementary School Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Robert-E-Willis-Elementary-School-1393618317423284/>

Willis Elementary School PTO Website

<http://www.williselementarypto.com/index.html>

Willis Elementary School PTO Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Willis-Elementary-PTO-155725804495819/>

School District of Manatee County

School District of Manatee County Website

<https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/1>

School District of Manatee County Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/WeManatee/>

School District of Manatee County 2019 – 2020 Academic Calendar

The Academic Calendar denotes early release dates, school closure dates, and the end of each marking period.

<https://www.manateeschools.net/Page/2#calendar1/20190726/month>

You can also keep informed by downloading the Free MySDMC District Mobile App.

