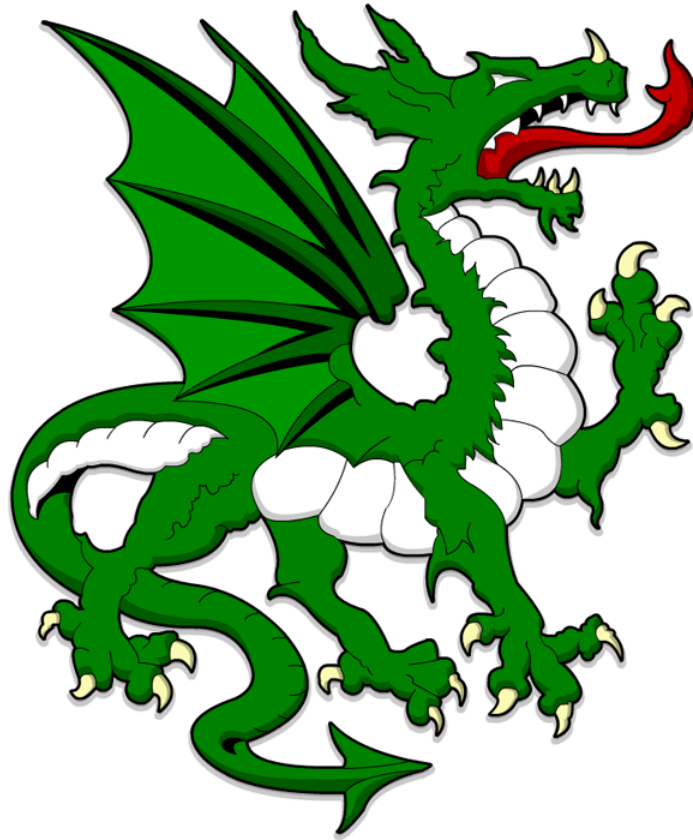


# Willow Avenue Elementary School



Student/Parent Handbook  
2025-2026

*"Striving for Excellence Every Day"*

### **CCSD MISSION STATEMENT**

The Cornwall Central School District is committed to working together with the community to provide a secure and nurturing environment of diverse learning opportunities for all students. It is our goal to help students achieve their dreams and aspirations and to prepare them to confidently face challenges while promoting strength of mind, body and character.



**Willow Avenue Elementary School** is a dynamic community which empowers individual growth. We believe children grow and learn best in an environment which creates challenging intellectual and positive social experiences, while blending them with vital life skills. It is through these experiences that learning occurs and responsible citizens develop.



## **STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION/ANTI-HARASSMENT/ANTI-BULLYING**

It is the policy of the Cornwall Central School District and the State of New York under the Dignity for All Students Act to afford all students an environment free from discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, sexual orientation, weight, religious practices, genetic information, mental or physical abilities/disabilities or gender identity in the district's educational programs, activities or employment.

Harassment/Bullying may take the form of comments, name-calling, jokes, stalking, perpetuating rumors or gossip, offensive gestures or language, assault or any other behavior that is designed to annoy, intimidate, threaten or cause fear.

In order to work, play and live as a community, all students must show respect for each other and their differences. Actions or comments based on a person's real or perceived race, creed, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, economic status, marital status, sexual orientation, weight, religious practices, genetic information, mental or physical abilities/disabilities or gender identity are called harassment and are not allowed in school. Examples of harassing behaviors include: name-calling, inappropriate gestures, offensive remarks, physical abuse, pinching or any other behavior that is designed to annoy, intimidate, threaten or cause fear. If anyone believes they are being discriminated against or harassed they should tell a teacher, school counselor or see an administrator.

**Cornwall Central School District**  
**Willow Avenue Elementary School**  
**2025-2026**

**Telephone Numbers:**

**District Phone Number: 845-534-8009**

Main Office: x. 3000

Principal: Samantha Buchholz x. 3004

Secretary: Rebecca Cassidy x. 3003

Secretary: Kathy Kear x. 3001

Attendance: x. 3006

Health Office/Nurse: Katie Cowart, RN x. 3010

School Psychologist: Erin Malleolo x. 3009

School Social Worker: Kim Zawacki x. 3026

**Central Administration**

Ms. Megan Argenio, Interim Superintendent of Schools x. 7000

Mr. John Fink, Assistant Superintendent for Business x. 7100

Ms. Kathleen Affigne, Interim Assistant Superintendent for Instruction x. 7200

Mr. Brent Harrington, Director of Human Resources x. 7111

**District Administration**

Ms. Nicole Triassi, Director of Pupil Services x. 7400

Ms. Kristine Schinella, Assistant Director of Pupil Services x. 7410

Mr. Jason Semo, Director of Athletics x. 7500

Mr. Walter Moran, Director of Facilities x. 7600

Mrs. Amy Bishopp, Director of Food Services x. 7700

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Mrs. Christine Diaz, President**

**Mr. Christian Brunelli, Vice President**

**Mr. Brendan Carty**

**Mr. Jim Creagan**

**Ms. Eleonora Fazio**

**Mrs. Jamie Fox**

**Mr. Carl Gilpatrick**

**Mrs. Lofton Riser**

**Mr. Richard Schaffner**

## **School Information**

### **School Hours:**

Doors Open: 8:35 am  
School Bell Rings: 8:50 am  
Late Bell: 8:55 am  
Walkers Dismissed: 3:15 pm  
Busers Dismissed: 3:25 pm

Please help your child plan his/her arrival at school so as to be on time.

Please do not make requests for students to come to school early or remain after the regular dismissal time. Teachers will not be able to supervise them at these times because of other professional responsibilities.

### **Attendance**

It is important that children attend school regularly if satisfactory progress is to be made. Parents should make a determined effort to have their children in school, except in cases of illness. Parents should notify the school immediately when an illness has been diagnosed as a communicable disease.

### **Absences**

We have instituted a call-in system for reporting student absences. Whenever a child is not expected to be in school, the parent/guardian should call the telephone number listed below and leave a message to that effect. The line will operate 24 hours a day so that you may call anytime, the night before or in the morning, and inform us of the expected absence. **PLEASE CALL WHEN YOUR CHILD WILL BE OUT SO WE CAN EFFECTIVELY MONITOR WHERE EACH STUDENT IS ON ANY GIVEN DAY.** For this operation to work effectively and successfully, we must have the cooperation of all parents.

**Number to be called:** 534-8009 x. 3006

**Message should include:** child's name, grade and teacher

### **Absent Note/ Tardy Excuse**

A child must present an excuse when arriving at school after being absent or tardy. The excuse must give the date of absence or tardiness and the reason. The only excuses which are legal are as follows: sickness or death in the family, impassable roads, religious

observance on specified days, quarantine, attendance at organized clinics, remedial health treatment, and personal illness.

### **Art**

Working with a variety of materials is important to a well-rounded art program. Although we stress neatness in the use of these materials, an occasional mishap is unavoidable. To protect your child's clothing against such occurrences, it is suggested that he/she have an apron, a smock, or one of Dad's old shirts for artwork.

### **Automobiles**

A series of traffic signs indicate areas where no parking or standing is permitted at any time. Visitor parking is designated in the spots in the front driveway or alongside the field in the rear of the school. The driveway directly in front of the building is the walker dropoff zone in the morning and the walker pickup zone in the afternoon. When picking your child up at dismissal, you should park in the front driveway in the designated visitor spots or the rear parking lot alongside the field and proceed to the front entrance. Pursuant to New York State law, cars parked in designated handicap spots need to have a legal handicap license plate or handicap sign clearly visible. **There is No Parking in the Fire Lanes in the front of the building at any time.**

### **Behavior Expectations Throughout the School Day**

- We are polite to our classmates, teachers, administrators, and other visiting adults and children who may be in our school.
- We follow the rules whether an adult is present or not. We walk and talk quietly in the hallways.
- We allow others to walk without pushing and shoving them.
- We do not tease one another or call each other names because of how people look, what they believe in, or how they act.
- We include others and do not leave anyone out.
- We use appropriate language at all times.
- We help one another to cooperate.
- We solve our problems with one another by talking, not touching or fighting.
- We ask a teacher or another adult for help if we have a problem we cannot solve on our own.
- We are proud of our school and ourselves and we do not do anything to damage either.
- We take care of each other and each other's belongings.
- We tell the whole truth.
- We will not bring real or toy weapons or dangerous objects to school.

### **Breakfast**

Breakfast is available each morning in the cafeteria. Our district has been approved for Provision 2 for the 2025-2026 school year. Provision 2 (P2) is a federal meal service option that allows School Food Authorities (SFAs) to offer breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students. **Through this program, each student is entitled to one free breakfast and one free lunch every school day.** Students will be eating breakfast in the cafeteria and then report to their classrooms.

### **Bus**

Students who are eligible for school bus transportation must ride their assigned trips. **In cases of family emergency or other justifiable reasons, permission may be granted to ride a bus other than the one assigned. An entry on the [Dismissal Change Form 2025-2026](#) and a permission slip from the office are required.**

Please review these rules with your child:

- \*Children should enter the bus in an orderly manner.
- \*After entering the bus, children should be seated and remain seated.
- \*Arms, legs and heads should always be kept inside the bus.
- \*In the interest of safety, it should always be possible for the passengers to hear the driver's instructions; therefore, students are asked to talk quietly.
- \*Bus students are to ride the trip assigned by the transportation coordinator, unless otherwise authorized by the Principal's Office.

Children who misuse the privilege of bus transportation will be reported to the school administration. Action will be taken in accordance with the number and severity of the occurrences. Suspension of bus riding privileges may result. Bus drivers cannot safely drive the bus and monitor misbehavior. Therefore, any violation of bus rules or the Code of Behavior will result in the most serious consequences.

### **Change of Address**

Please report changes in home address to the District Registrar, Mrs. O'Brien, 534-8009, extension 7803. **All changes to telephone numbers (home, work and cell) should be reported in writing promptly to the Willow Avenue Elementary School Main Office.** It is your responsibility to ensure that this information is available to the school. **It is crucial that we be able to contact parents.**

### **Character Education**

The Character Education Curriculum, Cornwall Cares and Responsive Classroom address the issues of civility, character and citizenship throughout the school year. We incorporate Character Education in everything we do and celebrate good character at our Friday Morning Openings.

### **Classroom Parties**

Willow Avenue Elementary School will only be accepting pre-packaged, store bought snacks. Please keep in mind that WAE is an Allergy Awareness Zone. Before sending in any food items please consult your child's classroom teacher in regards to any food allergies.

**Dismissal Change Form:** The Dismissal Change Form will take the place of you sending in notes and/or calling the office to make changes to your student(s) dismissal. Please make sure to fill this form out by 2:30pm the day the change will take place. The form will be included in each WWU and posted on the Willow Website as well. \*[Dismissal Change Form 2025-2026](#) (Form can also be found on the Willow Website)

**Dress Code:** Students will dress in a manner that does not distract from the educational process (For example, no belly shirts). Hats are not permitted to be worn in the classrooms or in the building. They should be removed upon entry to the building. Footwear, such as flip flops are strongly discouraged because they do not adequately protect a child's feet in the classroom or on the playground. (Additional dress code information can be found in the District's Code of Conduct on the District's Webpage)

**Emergency Phone Numbers:** State Education Law mandates that the school maintain a file of current telephone numbers so that parents may be notified in cases of emergency. This should include an alternate emergency number. It is of vital importance that unlisted, as well as regular telephone numbers and cell phone numbers, be available and on record for emergency purposes. You may be assured that the school will not release any telephone numbers to anyone.

**Guidance:** In elementary schools, guidance is primarily a function of the classroom teacher. When school related problems surface which appear to be serious in nature, the teacher may request a screening of academic, behavioral or emotional difficulties through the building Response to Intervention (RTI) process. If screening procedures indicate a need for further assessment, the child may be referred to Pupil Services for additional evaluative procedures. A school social worker may provide short term counseling for social and/or emotional concerns. In addition, the social worker may form groups that help children to deal with problems relating to topics such as death or illness in the family, divorce, and social skills.

### **Health**

**Health Care:**



It is our goal to provide a safe environment for your student(s) that is free from accidents and illness. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, first aid will be administered to the child and the parents notified. No care beyond first aid (defined as the immediate, temporary care given in case of accident or sudden illness) will be given by the school. If your child informs you of an injury upon arrival at home, you should telephone the school immediately with this information.

The New York State law states that the health personnel are responsible only for the first aid treatment of school accidents. They may not treat a child for any accident that occurs outside of school.

If your child requires medication every day while at school, we will be sending a special notice home regarding the dispensation of medication in school and on field trips. Medications must be brought to school by a parent, guardian, or trusted adult. Students may not bring in medications in their backpacks. All medications administered at school require a doctor's order. Forms available on Willow Ave website (under the Students tab select School Nurse then browse available selections for forms and information.)

Students who are sent home from school with a fever will need to be fever free for 24 hours before returning. Cornwall Central School District considers a fever to be 100.0.

We have many children with various food and environmental allergies. Please pay close attention to see if your child's classroom is an allergy awareness classroom.

Please notify the School Nurse if your student has a change in their health status, to include but not limited to: broken bones or sprains, PE restriction (MD note required), concussions, new medications, new allergies, upcoming surgeries, and / or cardiac history.

Insurance is provided for every student in the district through the New York State High School Athletic Protection Plan, Inc. This provides limited coverage in excess to, or after, your own hospitalization plan has been utilized as the primary coverage for school activity related accidents. You or your child should report all injuries to the School Nurse or to the office at once.

If you have questions, please contact our Health Office.

#### **Health Services:**

A health examination is required by law for new entrants and students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. Examinations by family doctors are encouraged due to the private practitioner's knowledge of the child and family medical history. If your child needs a physical exam, please have your child's physician complete the **Required NYS School Health Examination Form**, which may be found on the Cornwall Central School district website under the Parents Tab - Parent Links and Resources and return the form to the

school Health Office/Nurse. School health offices are required to obtain a copy of the medical examination from the parent/guardian of each student within thirty (30) days from the date of entry for the grades listed above.

The School Nurse screens all students in grades K, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, and all new entrants for possible problems in hearing and vision. If a screening reveals results outside of the normal limits, parents are notified and a health referral is given. Following a health referral, it is important that the school be notified when a diagnosis is made and what corrective measures are taken. The purpose of screening students at school is to secure the earliest possible detection of potential issues. Without correction, learning could be adversely impacted.

**Please make sure your child's immunizations are updated and a copy of the immunization record is sent to the Health Office to place in your child's file. It is New York State law that we must follow and it is State mandated that your child will be unable to attend until immunizations are up to date.**

**\*\* If you have any questions concerning immunizations and/or health examinations, please contact our school Health Office.**

### **Ill Students**

Students and staff feeling ill must be seen by the school nurses. Appropriate precautions will be taken by the nursing team and persons feeling ill will be required to follow recommendations by School Nurses, including but not limited to going home. Students should not come to school if they are not feeling well, have a fever, or are experiencing vomiting or diarrhea.

**If your student is sick, please call 534-8009 x.3010 to report the absence to our School Nurse.**

### **Homework**

When requesting homework due to illness, please leave a message on the attendance line when you phone in your child's absence. Requests will be honored after two days of a student's absence. Calling before 8:30 a.m. will allow the teacher assignment preparation time. Generally, requests made in the morning before 11:00 a.m., will be available at 3:00 p.m. that afternoon. Requests made later in the day will be available on the following day.

### **Letter Day Cycle**

**Willow will continue to utilize an A-F letter day schedule. A monthly letter day schedule will be shared with families each month and can be found on our Willow website.**

### **Lost and Found**

Every day we collect lost clothing. **PLEASE** mark your child's possessions and encourage him/her to look for their things right away. Unclaimed clothes will be donated every three months.

### **Lunch**

Students will be eating lunch in the cafeteria. Students have the option to bring lunch from home or to get lunch from the cafeteria. Our district has been approved for Provision 2 for the 2025-2026 school year. Provision 2 (P2) is a federal meal service option that allows School Food Authorities (SFAs) to offer breakfast and lunch at no cost to all enrolled students. **Through this program, each student is entitled to one free breakfast and one free lunch every school day.**

Please remember that Willow Avenue is an Allergy Awareness Zone. See below for lunch schedule:

#### **Kindergarten**

Recess: 11:05-11:20

Lunch: 11:20-11:50

#### **1st Grade**

Recess: 11:35-11:50

Lunch: 11:50-12:20

#### **2nd Grade**

Recess: 12:05-12:20

Lunch: 12:50-1:20

#### **3rd Grade**

Recess: 12:35-12:50

Lunch: 12:50-1:20

#### **4th Grade**

Recess: 1:05-1:20

Lunch: 1:20-1:50

Students will be eating lunch in the cafeteria and will be supervised by lunch monitors. There will be Allergy Awareness Zones in place for students who have allergies. Please make sure your child and teacher's names are clearly marked on their lunch box

### **Purchasing:**

Checks for school lunches should be made payable to "Cornwall Elementary School Cafeteria". There is also an online payment system for your child's account. More information about this may be found on our website. Mrs. Bishopp, the Food Service Director, may be contacted at 534-8009 x7700.

A monthly calendar will be sent home with pricing and meal information.

**Reduced and Free Lunch Program:**

If you cannot afford to pay for your child's lunch, you may apply for Free and Reduced Price School Meals/Milk. An application can be found in the Main Office or on the Food Services Website.

**Recess:**

Students will be going out to recess before they eat their lunch. Each class will be assigned one lunch monitor. That monitor will assist with recess and then bring the students to the cafeteria for lunch.

**Music**

Chorus: All 4th grade students will participate in our chorus program.

Instrumental Music - Band and District Orchestra/Strings: The instrumental music program consists of class instruction for band or orchestra instruments and band/orchestra rehearsals. Students in the fourth grade are eligible for this instruction. Students normally rent their instruments from a reputable dealer. A few of the larger and more expensive instruments are provided by the school. Instrument use should be discussed with the instrumental teacher.

**Passing School Bus**

By law, you may not pass a school bus when the red lights are flashing at any time. If a bus is stopped without flashing lights, you may pass it. This also applies to the school parking lot.

**Pedestrians**

Students walking to and from school should be instructed as to the safest route. Those approaching schools along thoroughfares should cross where the safety officer is stationed. Children should be instructed at home as well as at school to look both ways before crossing any street. Children who live close by who need to walk should use the sidewalk provided as an access when walking to and from school. They should not cross private property. **Students may not ride or bring skateboards to school as stated in the Code of Conduct which can be viewed on the District website.**

**Physical Education**

All students receive Physical Education every other day on our six (6) day cycle. Students are required to wear sneakers on these days. Your child's teacher will send home the classroom Physical Education schedule.

**No student may be excused from physical education class without a note from a physician to the school nurse. Only the nurse may excuse the student, not the classroom teacher or the physical education teacher. If a child is excused from**

physical education class by a physician, then participation in recess will also be prohibited until cleared by a physician.

### **Report Cards**

The elementary level reports grades on trimesters. This means that parents will receive reports three times an academic year in December, April, and June. Parent/teacher conferences will take place in November for all elementary students and then in February on an as needed basis. Anytime you desire additional information about your child's progress, you should e-mail or call the teacher to arrange for a conference.

### **Safety Drills**

Safety drills are practiced throughout the school year and include: fire, lockdown, weather advisory, severe weather and evacuation.

### **School Building Security**

If you enter the school building you are required to sign in with our Security in the Main Lobby. Identification badges are to be worn by all visitors while in the building during regular school hours. All doors are locked during the day and the only entry and exit point will be at the front doors.

### **School Closing and Early Dismissal Announcements: (Please review carefully)**

When weather is inclement, parents and students are asked to listen for Parent Square Alerts, check our District website at <https://www.cornwallschools.com/>, or listen to radio station WHUD 100.7 FM to receive current information about school operations. You may also call the School District main telephone number at 534-8009 and listen to the recorded message. If no special announcement is made, schools will operate on regular schedules. Announcements concerning school operations will state one of the following:

1. **No school for Cornwall Central School District.** On such days, all school activities are canceled.
2. **Delayed opening for Cornwall Central School District.** Bus pick-up times will be delayed for the specified period of time. Parents are asked to continue to listen for School Messenger Alerts, check the website, and listen to the radio station in the event that continuing or changing weather conditions force a no school announcement. On the days that a delayed opening takes place, schools will dismiss at regular times.
3. **Early dismissal for Cornwall Central School District.** When conditions warrant sending students home early, announcements will be made via School Messenger Alerts, on the District website, and posted on the radio station. In homes where both parents work,

parents are asked to make any necessary arrangements with neighbors and instruct children where they should go if an early dismissal occurs.

### **School Day**

The school day at Willow Avenue Elementary begins at 8:50 AM and ends at 3:20 PM. If you bring your child to school after the late bell rings at 8:55 AM, please bring them to the Security Desk and fill out a late form.

### **Arrival**

**Walkers:** Walkers should not arrive before 8:35 AM. There will be no supervision before this time. All walkers will enter through the Main Entrance. Parents driving students to school should pull into the front driveway and drop students off. Please remember to have your child(ren) exit the vehicle on the right, next to the sidewalk. When dropping off your child, please have your child exit the vehicle quickly so that traffic can move along smoothly. Please do not get out of your vehicle when dropping off your child. If you need to help your child during drop off, please park in our parking lot and escort your child to the Main Entrance. There is NO PARKING in the front driveway of the school during arrival. Students should report to the auditorium or to the cafeteria for breakfast.

**Busers:** Busses will start arriving at WAE at 8:50 AM. Busses will unload one at a time in the rear of the school. All students will enter through the rear entrance. Students should report to their classroom or to the cafeteria for breakfast.

### **Dismissal**

#### **Walkers:**

- Walkers are dismissed from the Main Entrance, beginning with Kindergarten, at 3:15 p.m. You must show ID and then you may sign your child out.
- If your child will be a walker for the day, a note must be sent to the teacher that morning.
- If your child needs to be picked up prior to walker dismissal at 3:20 p.m., please use the new Dismissal Change Form on our website. **\*Please note, there will be no early pick-ups permitted after 3:00 PM.** In the event of an emergency and a note or email was not sent in with your child that morning, please call the office at 534-8009, ext. 3000.
- Please be prepared to show ID whenever picking up your child. Please be sure that your child is prepared for dismissal at the end of the day and knows where to go. If there is a change in your child's usual way of leaving school, a

note must be sent in to his/her teacher indicating the change. If there is change in your child's dismissal procedure due to an emergency, please speak with a secretary in the Main Office prior to 2:30 p.m. If you have a long-term dismissal arrangement (i.e., religion on Tuesdays, karate on Thursdays), please notify your child's teacher in writing at the beginning of the school year.

**Busers:**

- Busers will be dismissed at 3:25pm
- If your child needs to ride the bus home with a different student for childcare purposes, a note must be sent to his/her teacher indicating the change. A child will not be permitted to get off at another stop or ride a different bus without a note from their parent/guardian.

**Tardy to School:** The school day at Willow Avenue Elementary School begins at 8:50 a.m. and ends at 3:20 p.m. If you bring your child to school after the late bell rings at 8:55 a.m., please bring him/her to the main office and fill out a late form. **Excessive tardiness will result in a meeting with the School Principal.**

**Valuables and Money:** It is not wise for children to bring to school more money than is needed for the day. Objects of considerable value should not be brought to school unless it is for class display or use. Expensive and electronic gadgets cannot be replaced if lost, broken or stolen. Cell phones are not permitted at school and should remain at home. Items that have been found either in the school or outside of it are displayed in the "Lost and Found" corner located in the front right area of the cafetorium.

**Please review the Code of Conduct on the District website under the Parents Tab - Parent Links and Resources.**

**8/6/2025 sb**