

Charlottesville Parks & Recreation

# Day Camp

## Parent/Camper Handbook

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# Introduction and Welcome

Dear Parents,

Welcome! Thank you for choosing Charlottesville Parks and Recreation (CPRD) Camps. We look forward to serving your family and providing your child with a fun camp experience. Our goal is to offer a comprehensive summer program that focuses on extended learning activities, fun recreational activities, programs, and field trips. Participants will experience traditional camp activities, enrichment clubs, swimming, sports, active play, indoor and outdoor games, arts, crafts, nature, science, and much more.

The following is information intended to enhance your family's camp experience. Please take the time to read this manual carefully so that you and your child will be fully prepared and informed about camp. Please read it and keep it throughout camp for reference whenever you have questions. Also, feel free to contact us if you have any additional questions or concerns.

Thank you,

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# Mission Statement

To enhance the quality of life for all through the stewardship of public land and parks and to provide quality recreational experiences.

## Day Camp Program Goals

1. To offer a unique camp experience by increasing campers' awareness of the City of Charlottesville and the surrounding area and all that it has to offer them.
2. To promote the campers physical, intellectual and social skills by offering a variety of high-quality programs and activities that are inclusive to a wide range of abilities and interests.
3. To provide an inclusive environment by encouraging campers to accept, respect, be responsive and understanding of individuals and groups of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, habits and environments.
4. To encourage curiosity, questioning and develop a desire to explore beyond one's comfort zone.
5. To develop quality friendships and expand the desire for positive social interaction through continued and varied interactions among campers and camp staff.
6. To provide a safe environment, to learn, and to have fun.

## Camp Overview

### Camp Setting

All campsites are at indoor sites. It is a full, busy program with a variety of camp activities and field trips. Camp Shenandoah houses up to 80 children per site, ranging from rising First to 4th grade during the 2024-25 school year. Camp Blue Ridge houses up to 80 children per site, ranging from grades 5-7 during the 2024-25 school year. Campers will be assigned to groups using the following ratios:

- **1st-4th:** 1 Counselor per 10 Campers
- **5th-7th:** 1 Counselor per 12 Campers

Campers will move from activity to activity with their assigned group. There will be some all-camp activities.

Site Directors will assign campers to groups. Campers may be reassigned to a new group mid-week. Groups are based on the following factors:

- Age
- Grade
- Group sizes
- Group dynamics (how personalities and relationships will affect the group)
- Counselor assignments (making effective staff/camper matches)
- Special placement requests (ex. to be with friends or relatives)

## Communication

Emails will be sent to the address that is listed on the primary member's account that is on file. On the Friday before each session, you will receive important information regarding schedules, field trips, special events, etc. Please submit all changes of any phone numbers, emails, work history, emergency contacts, etc. to CPRD staff.

Please use the following directory as a guide for contacting CPRD staff:

- Program Management (434) 970-3572
- Scholarships (434) 970-3267
- Inclusion (434) 970-3264

If your child is experiencing problems during the camp day, we will call the phone numbers you have submitted on the registration form.

Most parent questions and concerns are best handled by the Site Director at the location where your child attends camp. You will receive their direct contact information in your welcome packet via email prior to the first day of camp. In the event the Site Director is not available, please call the Program Management at the number above.

## Meals

A nutritious breakfast and lunch will be provided for each camper through the USDA Summer Food Service Program at no additional charge. If for any reason a child is unable to eat the meal provided by the program, it will be necessary for you to provide your child with lunch. You may also choose to pack your own lunch.

## Transportation

School bus transportation will be provided to and from each camp location M-F. The Summer Camp bus route is the same as the Summer School Route.

Due to the late finalization of the Summer School Route, a transportation schedule will not be available until closer to the start of the first week of camp. The Summer Camp bus route will be emailed to the address that is listed on the primary member's account that is on file prior to the first day of camp.

## Staff

As a provider of children's programs, CPRD strives to effectively screen and train all staff and volunteers. The summer camp staff is comprised primarily of recent high school graduates, college students, schoolteachers, and our professional Parks & Recreation full time staff. The camp staff are innovative and creative individuals who love working with children. They have attended extensive training to prepare them for the summer camp season.

Each day a camp site will have a Director, Assistant Director and Inclusion Leader.

## Surveys and Participant Feedback

We encourage you to share your feedback with us. Campers and their parents are the primary sources of feedback for camp. Feedback will be collected each week, through the use of camp surveys completed by parents/guardians and feedback activities with campers. The Program Management Office will use the feedback to learn about the camp experience for both campers and parents. Feedback will be used to assess the success of the program and to offer an opportunity to implement changes if necessary.

Do you think a Camp Staff member is going above and beyond? Ask your Site Director about filling out a "Shout Out Form." "Shout Outs" give you an opportunity to recognize or compliment a staff member for a job well done.

## Daily Operations

Camp will run from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm. The hours between 7:30-9 am and 4-5:30 pm are the main time in the day when drop-offs and pick-ups occur. The times are designated as daily "warm-ups" and "cool-downs," with unstructured playtime. At 9 am, campers will break into their groups and start scheduled programs, activities, and field trips for the day.

### Arrival

#### **Bus Arrival**

Children that arrive to camp via school bus will be greeted by a Camp Counselor. The Camp Counselor will ensure that campers are getting off at the correct location. The Camp Counselor will mark each camper as "Present" on the *Daily Attendance Sheet*.

#### **Parent/Guardian Drop-Off**

If campers are dropped by a parent/guardian, you must walk your child into the building and mark your child present by signing your name on the *Daily Attendance Sheet* located at the welcome table. The welcome table is where you will sign campers in and out each day and receive important information such as the camp schedule, camp letter, and daily reminders.

#### **Late Arrivals**

It is okay for campers to arrive to camp after activities have started for the day. Campers still need to be accompanied into the campsite and signed in on the *Daily Attendance Sheet*.

If the camp leaves on a field trip before your child arrives, it is your responsibility to transport your child to the field trip location. Once you arrive at the field trip location, you must locate the Site Director and sign your child in on the *Daily Attendance Sheet*.

### Departure

#### **Bus Departure**

Children that arrived at camp by bus are the only campers permitted to leave camp by bus. If you dropped your child off and want them to go home via bus, you must provide the Site Director with written notice at the morning drop-off. Important information such as the

camp schedule, camp letter, and daily reminders will be sent home with campers that take the bus.

### **Parent/Guardian Pick-Up**

Children may only be picked up by parent/guardians or an authorized person listed on their *Emergency Medical Form*. If a staff member is unsure of who you are, you will be asked to show a photo ID when picking up your camper.

### **Late Pick-Ups**

Camp ends promptly at 5:30 pm. You are considered late when you have not picked your child up by 5:30 pm. If one hour or more has passed after the end of camp and you have not picked up your child and you and all emergency contacts are unreachable, police will be contacted. The following procedures are in effect if you do not pick your child up by the end of camp:

- **1st Offense.** If you are late, you will receive a verbal warning for your first offense. The instance will be documented on the *Summer Camp Late-Pick Up Form*. The form will then be attached to your campers *Emergency Medical Form*.
- **2nd Offense.** The instance will be documented *Summer Camp Late Pick-Up Form*, and you will be charged a late fee at \$1 per minute past closing. Payment is due at the time of pickup. Only cash or check are accepted forms of payment.
- **3rd Offense.** You will be issued a letter from the Program Management Office discussing the issue of late pickups and your program status will be evaluated.

### **Items for Camp**

Each camper is designated a basket to store their personal belongings. All personal items should be carried in a backpack to camp on a daily basis. Each item should be clearly marked with the camper's name.

Campers should wear clothing suitable for an active day at camp. Appropriate items would include shorts, camp t-shirts, light jackets (for chilly mornings), and athletic shoes (no sandals). On designated pool days, each camper will need a bathing suit, towel, brush/comb. We also suggest packing snacks and a refillable water bottle.

We strongly suggest that your child not bring valuable items to camp (Cell phones, iPad or Nintendo Switch ect..). These items are NOT allowed at camp. Please do not allow your child to bring items that may cause injury to themselves or another camper.

Staff will not be held responsible for your camper's personal belongings.

### **Sunblock**

Please apply sunscreen at home before coming to camp, and pack sunscreen for your camper to reapply if they go swimming.

Unless otherwise requested, staff will apply sunblock to campers as the need arises.

## Field Trips

Several camps will participate in field trips or have special guests come to camp. Please periodically check at your child's welcome table for trip announcements. We may also send your child permission slips for signature on the Monday of the trip week. In case of rain, a field trip may be changed or cancelled.

## Medications

You must complete and sign a *Medication Authorization Form* before a campsite can accept any medication.

- Authorization is valid for 5 days without a physician's signature.
- Pain relief medication and/or medication needed longer than 5 days will require a physician's signature.
- Any changes to the dosage will require a new *Medical Authorization Form*.

## Sick Campers

We do not have the facilities to care for sick campers. If your child is sent to camp they will be expected to participate in the daily inside/outside activities for that day. When a camper exhibits any symptoms of a contagious illness, please keep him/her home. Such symptoms could include fever, diarrhea, unexplainable rash, lice, upset stomach, and vomiting.

The Site Director will notify you whenever your child becomes ill. You must pick your child up as soon as possible.

A child who has vomited, had a fever or diarrhea must be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided. Children with lice must be nit free before returning to camp.

## Inclusion Program

The Summer Inclusion Program is a local collaboration with "Camping for All" and "The Enrichment Alliance" that provides mentors, adaptive materials, and ongoing support to assist with the inclusion of children with special needs in CPRD summer camps. The Summer Inclusion Program's mission is to help create a supportive environment for children who could use just a little extra assistance in camp, due to special needs.

## Inclusion Leaders

Our Inclusion Leaders have two primary roles:

1. They provide support and encouragement for children to help them become more comfortable and successful with activities that might otherwise prove challenging.
2. They share strategies with other staff members so that all the staff can better understand and accommodate children with special needs.

The Inclusion Leader is not a medical, behavioral, or educational specialist. They are not there to provide therapeutic interventions, but to lessen the likelihood that a child's disabilities will disrupt their camp experience. The Inclusion Leader provides simple support and suggestions, while at the same time encouraging children to function as independently as possible.

In practice this work plays out in a variety of ways, even in the same setting. Here are some of the things Inclusion Leaders have done to help children be successful in CPRD Programs:

- Step in to help calm an agitated child.
- Offer suggestions on how to adapt a craft activity for a child with fine motor coordination issues.
- Help a leader simplify instructions for a child with intellectual disabilities.
- Take over a group so that another camp leader can focus on assisting a struggling child.
- Recommend solutions to reduce problem behaviors (one Inclusion Leader created a safe place for a child who tended to run from the room when overwhelmed).
- Provide materials and activities that are well suited to a child's needs and interests.

These are only a few of the ways the Inclusion Leaders have provided support to participating programs. The needs of each child and program will vary.

There will be an Inclusion Leader assigned to every Camp Shenandoah location (grades K-3) and Camp Blue Ridge location (grades 4-6). An Inclusion Leader is not provided in Camp Skyline (grades 7-9). It is possible that original assignments will be changed, based on emerging needs of the camps. In other words, if one site does not need an Inclusion Leader's support, they could be re-assigned to a site that could benefit from an additional Inclusion Leader on site.

### Inclusion Participants

We are open to serving any child with special needs who can be expected to be successful in this setting with the level of support described above. Thus far, we have served children with autism spectrum disorders, cognitive challenges, mood disorders, ADHD, and learning disabilities.

Children need to be able to function with a one-to-ten adult child ratio with occasional support. They need to be able to respond to cues and supports. As an example: a child who ran out when overwhelmed was successful because she responded well to reminders to go to her safe spot. If a child is unable to resist dangerous or disruptive behaviors even with cues, camp staff will need to evaluate the appropriateness and safety of the setting for the child at that time.

We do not have enough staff to provide one-to-one support for a child who needs it all the time. Typically, we find that there are up to a dozen children enrolled in a program who need support from time to time. Our Inclusion Leaders support these children as needed.

Some require help more often than others and Inclusion Leaders need to be accessible to more than one child.

### Program Enrollment

When you enroll in our Summer Camp Program, you will need to indicate on the registration form that you would like to have your child participate in the Summer Inclusion Program. From there, you will be contacted by someone from the Summer Inclusion Program. We will have a candid discussion about what we can and cannot offer in the way of support, to allow you to determine if this program is a good choice for your child.

We will all do our best to help your child have a positive experience, but please remember this is not a therapeutic or special education program, and do not enroll your child if you do not believe they can function in the conditions described.

## Rules & Safety

### Rules

Camp rules will be established and taught to campers at the beginning of each session and regularly reviewed to ensure the safety of all campers. There are three basic rules which should be followed by campers at all sites. Please review the following list of rules with your child:

- Remain in sight and sound of staff.
- Respect others and the property of others.
- Keep hands and feet to themselves.

Additional rules are expected to be followed during pool visits, while riding the bus, and during field trips.

Examples of behavior concerns may include a camper who: disrupts the smooth flow of the program; requires constant one-on-one attention and correcting; inflicts physical or emotional harm on other campers; physically and/or verbally abuses other campers or staff; damages, steals, or destroys property; or is unwilling to conform to the rules and guidelines of the program.

### Discipline

We believe in the power of positive reinforcement to encourage appropriate behavior. Campers are successful when limits are explained and staff members model appropriate behaviors.

The following disciplinary steps serve as a guideline. Depending on the severity of the behavior, staff may need to start with step two.

- **Step One - Warning.** A camper whose behavior is in violation of program rules will be spoken to by staff and given a warning. Behavior modification techniques will be used to teach the camper appropriate behavior. If the camper's behavior does not change with reminders, follow up with time out or loss of privilege. In addition, you will be notified at pick-up time and asked to assist the staff by discussing and reinforcing the rules with your child. A *Behavior Log* will be established for the camper. Examples of behaviors that warrant a warning include:
  - Name calling and teasing.
  - No profanity or inappropriate language
  - Arguing or talking while a counselor/adult is speaking.
  - Not following instructions, using loud voices inside, or disrupting the group
  - Play fighting or using physical contact during games.
- **Step Two - Time Out or Loss of Privilege.** If behavior concerns continue after a warning has been issued and you have been informed and had the opportunity to discuss it with your child, an *Incident Report* that documents the behavior will be completed. You will be asked to sign the report and speak with your child. A summary of the incident report will be noted on the camper's *Behavior Log*. Behaviors that are an **automatic timeout and loss of privilege** include:
  - Leaving sight and sound of staff
  - Pushing, shoving, or wrestling
  - Behavior that causes injury
- **Step Three - Send to the Director.** If behavior does not improve or continues to escalate, the camper will be sent to the Site Director. You will have a discussion with Camp Supervisors and Program Management Staff to create an action plan. The discussion and action plan will be documented on the camper's *Behavior Log*. Behaviors that result in a visit to the site director are:
  - Repeated time out behaviors
  - Disrespect or deliberate disobedience towards staff.
  - Unsafe behaviors on field trips or during fire drills
  - Actions or threats that cause someone to be hurt.
  - Continued use of profanity or offensive language
  - Stealing or destruction of other's property
  - Leaving the program without consent
- **Step Four - Dismissal from the Program.** If the camper's behavior is not corrected within specific time outlined in the action plan, the Program Management Office will notify you of further disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion from camp.

### Bus Safety

The following bus safety rules are intended to keep campers safe as they ride an authorized camp vehicle/bus and will be enforced at all times:

- Staff and campers will always respect and listen to the bus driver.
- Staff is responsible for their own conduct and that of the campers while on the bus.
- Campers will enter and exit the bus in an orderly fashion.

- Staff will walk bus periodically to check on campers.
- Staff and campers must remain seated facing forward while the bus is in motion, and hands and feet must remain inside the bus.
- Staff and campers may not, lie down; put their feet on the seats or on the seats in front of them.
- Campers are not allowed to sit on laps, and no more than three children are to be seated in one seat.
- Staff will seat themselves on the bus, so that they are spaced throughout the bus to effectively monitor campers.
- Staff will maintain a reasonable noise level, so the driver does not become distracted (i.e., no yelling or screaming).
- The aisle and rear entry emergency exit door must remain clear at all times.
- Eating or drinking on the bus is not permitted, with the exception of drinking water.
- Campers and staff are not to leave trash on the bus.
- Objects may not be thrown out of the windows or inside the bus.
- The last Staff member on the bus will complete a walk through and check under and on each seat to ensure that campers, and or belongings are not left behind before the bus departs at the end of the trip.

## Water Safety

### **General Pool Rules**

- No Running, No Horseplay, No Pushing
- Rest breaks are called for all youth, 17 and under, 15 minutes before the hour.
- Children 8 and under must be always accompanied by an adult [18 & over], applicable rates will be charged.
- Children 4 and under must be accompanied by an adult in the water, within arm's reach always.
- Children 5-8 may use the zero-depth area unaccompanied by an adult in the water but under close supervision on deck by said adult.
- You must be 48 inches tall to ride the slide.
- No diving from sides of pool in less than 9 feet of water
- During thunderstorms patrons are not permitted in the pool or shower areas until 30 minutes after the last thunder or lightning has been observed
- Patrons with open wounds, sores, or contagious diseases may not be admitted into the pool.
- Street shoes are not permitted past the blue and white safety rope at all entrances to pool deck.
- Infants/Children who are not toilet trained and adults who are incontinent, must wear disposable swim diapers.
- Abusive or profane language or other conduct deemed improper by the staff shall be grounds for expulsion.
- Food is permitted in the wet classroom, observation deck, and upstairs lobby only. Non-glass beverage containers are permitted on pool deck.

- All rules are not inclusive; additional rules may be added at the discretion of Management.

### **Pool Policies**

- Proper bathing attire is required; no cotton t-shirts, jeans or cutoffs allowed.
- Children 17 and under must pass the safety swim test in order to swim laps, go off the diving board and swim into the deep end of the pool. This card is valid for one year and must be retaken each year.
- Children 4 years old and over are not allowed in the locker room and showers of the opposite sex. Please utilize our family changing rooms
- No water guns, soaker cannons or water toys that shoot water.

### **Waterslide Rules**

- All riders must be 48" tall to ride the slides, the plunge pool water depth at the end of the slides are 3 feet 6 inches.
- Riders must enter the slide in a sitting position and wait for instructions from the lifeguard stationed at the slide starter tub.
- Maximum rider weight is 300 pounds.
- Do not pull or propel yourself into the ride.
- No goggles, combs or foreign objects are allowed in pockets and no jewelry can be worn while riding the slide. No cutoff jeans or swim wear with exposed zippers, buckles, rivets or metal ornamentation; only approved swimsuits are allowed.
- All riders must ride feet first while lying on their back with arms crossed across their chest. Do not go down the slide headfirst.
- No running, standing, kneeling, rotating, tumbling or stopping in the flume. Arms and hands must always remain inside the flume. At no time should the rider attempt to stand up while on the slide or prior to coming to a complete stop in the splash out area.
- Only one rider at a time per slide. Absolutely no trains or chains of riders are permitted.
- No tubes, mats or lifejackets are permitted on the waterslide.
- Riders must be in good health. Elderly persons, those suffering from heart disease, high blood pressure, epilepsy or persons using prescription medication should consult their physician before using this slide. Individuals with medical conditions including, but not limited to pregnancy, heart or back problems should not ride the slides.
- Do not use this slide while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- No diving from the slide
- Leave the plunge pool promptly after entering.
- Rider assumes all risk of injury due to misuse of this slide or failure to follow these rules.

### **Diving Board Rules**

- Any person under the age of 17 must pass the swim test in order to use diving

board.

- Only one person is allowed on the diving board at a time.
- One bounce on the board at a time
- Diver must dive straight from the front end of the board.
- Upon surfacing, immediately swim to the nearest ladder. Do not swim under the boards at ANY time.
- A diver must wait until the preceding diver has surfaced and reached the ladder.
- No backward take offs from diving board or pool edge
- No diving from side of pool in less than 9 feet of water

### **Current Channel Rules**

- No climbing on island
- No jumping into current channel
- You must use the stairwells or zero depth entrance for entry and exit.
- Lifejackets must remain in the current channel.
- You must swim with the current, no stopping or reversing.
- Only Coast Guard approved floatation devices permitted in the current channel.
- No noodles in the current channel

### **Zero Depth Rules**

- No Running, No Horseplay, No Pushing
- Please use entrance stairs/treads to gain access to play structure.
- All riders must ride feet first; no trains or chains allowed.
- Children may jump into the zero-depth pool from the wall dividing the slide pool and zero depth under direct parental supervision.
- Use of the following toys, floatation devices and swim aids are permitted in zero depth pool; swim rings, arm floats, inflatable toys, noodles, and small plastic toys that don't project water. The Manager on Duty has the authority to restrict the use of permissible toys during crowded conditions.
- Rest breaks are called for all youth 17 and under, 15 minutes before the hour.

### **Swim Bands**

All campers will receive a green swim band.

- Children over 48 inches will also receive a blue band.
- Children under 48 inches will also receive a yellow band.

### **Swim Test Requirements**

This test allows Youth, & 17 & under, to use the diving board and deep end of the pool [5ft or deeper]

- Front stroke: 10 – 15 yd either freestyle
- Forward motion, arms extended, rotary breathing, head in water.

- Body position should be less than a 45-degree angle in water
- Backstroke: 10 - 15m backstroke
- Backward motion, arms extended over-head, chin up, head out of water.
- Body position should be less than a 45-degree angle in water
- Treading water: 30 seconds
- Arm and leg motion, chin out of water the whole time.
- Stay in deep end without touching the sides.

Stopping while performing the swim test is not passing the test. Touching the wall during the test will be up to the discretion of the lifeguard. It is recommended to take the swim test only once a day. Practice on the skills the lifeguard pointed out and try again another day.

### **Open Water Rules**

- ALL staff will be in water with a perimeter around the campers.
- If camper ratio in open water changes, then staff can assist with campers not in water.
- If campers are outside of water (at shelter or nearby park) then staff will accompany the campers 1/10 ratio for example.

### **Weather**

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily camp schedule. Please dress your camper appropriately for the weather conditions. A light sweater or jacket may be needed in the mornings.

During periods of extreme heat (Code Red & Code Orange); staff will scale down the outdoor activities. Indoor facilities and shaded areas will be utilized by programming more crafts and low-level events or activities. Staff will encourage campers to increase their water intake on these days. All precautions will be taken to prevent heat related injuries during these times.