

Charlottesville Parks & Recreation

# Summer Camp

Parent/Camper Handbook

# Introduction and Welcome

Dear Parents,

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

The following information is 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,

**Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Program Management**  
434-970-3243



# 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 to and understanding of individuals and groups of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds, habits and environments.
4. To encourage curiosity, questioning and exploration beyond one's comfort zone.
5. To develop quality friendships and 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 120 children per site, ranging from 5-9 years old. Camp Blue Ridge houses up to 100 children per site, ranging from 10-12 years old. Camp Skyline houses 40 children per site, ranging from 13-15 years old. At each campsite, Site Directors will assign campers to groups using the following ratios:

- **Ages 5-9:** 1 Counselor per 10 Campers
- **Ages 10-12:** 1 Counselor per 12 Campers
- **Ages 13-15:** 1 Counselor per 15 Campers

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

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 in WebTrac. On the Friday before each session you will receive important information regarding schedules, field trips, special events, etc. If you are not receiving emails, please check your spam folder or verify your account information through [webtrac](#).

Most parent questions and concerns are best handled by the Site Director at the location where your child attends camp. You will receive their contact information (email address and phone number) in your "welcome email" prior to the first day of camp. In the event the Site Director is not available, please contact Program Management. Please use the following directory as a guide for contacting Charlottesville Parks & Recreation staff:

- Program Management (434) 970-3243
- Scholarships (434) 970-3267
- Inclusion (434) 970-3264

You will receive the contact information (phone number and email address) for your child's campsite in the welcome email sent on the Friday prior the camp starting.

## ePACT Network – Emergency Contact Software

ePACT is a secure emergency network that we use to collect medical and emergency contact information electronically. Not only will ePACT replace paper forms, but it will also ensure we have a way to communicate with you in the event of an unexpected situation.

### **Why Are We Using ePACT?**

- To save you time - With ePACT, you only need to complete your child's information once, and can then use that same record for other programs or subsequent years.
- Improved privacy and security – Eliminating paper forms ensures that your key information is safe and secure. ePACT maintains the same levels of security as online banking, and limits access only to the administrators we assign for enhanced privacy.
- Better support – ePACT makes it easy for you to share comprehensive health and emergency contact details, so we can provide the best support to your child. Plus, you can update this anytime and we will automatically receive those new details.

### **How It Works**

- You'll receive an email invite to share information with Charlottesville Parks & Recreation.
- Click 'Complete Request' to create a free account, or log-in if you already have an existing ePACT account.
- Enter the required information, like medical conditions, and share it with Charlottesville Parks & Recreation so that program staff have access.

For ePACT assistance, please view their [informational packet](#).

## 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 your 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. Campers must arrive by 10:00 am to be included in the meal count.

## Transportation

School bus transportation is provided to and from camp from June 15 to July 24. Stops will be limited (within city school districts), are not the same as the school year and cannot be changed. City residents attending Camp Shenandoah who are planning to use camp transportation must enroll at a location within their school district. Burnley Moran students enroll at Clark; Greenbrier students enroll at Venable; Johnson students enroll at Jackson-Via .

The summer camp bus route is the same as the summer school route. Due to the late finalization of the summer school route, a bus schedule will not be available until closer to the start of the first week of camp. The bus route will be emailed to the address that is listed on the primary member's account in WebTrac and posted on our website as soon as it is available.

Morning bus routes are expected to have stops ranging between 8:30 – 8:45 am in order for campers to arrive by 9:00 am.

Afternoon bus routes will leave the last camp site between 4:00 – 4:15 pm.

## 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 completing a "Shout Out Form." "Shout Outs" give you an opportunity to recognize or compliment a staff member for a job well done.

## Refunds

No refunds will be issued if cancellation is less than 6 days (144 hours) before camp begin date. You will not receive a refund if your child has been suspended from camp.

# Daily Operations

Camp will run from 7:30 am - 5:30 pm. The hours between 7:30 - 9:00 am and 4:00 - 5:30 pm are designated pick up and drop off periods. These times include unstructured playtime. Campers will have breakfast at 9:00 am and then start scheduled programs, activities and field trips for the day.

## **Daily Schedule (Non-Field Trip Days)**

7:30 am	Arrival & free play
9:00 am	Breakfast and review the daily schedule and rules & expectations
9:30 am	Morning programs
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	Afternoon programs
3:45 pm	Bus pick up for Camp Blue Ridge & Camp Skyline
4:00 pm	Bus pick up for Camp Shenandoah
4:30 pm	Pick up & free play
5:30 pm	Pick up ends & camp closes

## **Arrival**

### **Bus Arrival**

If your child is arriving via bus on his or her first day of camp, please attach a name tag to him/her with the child's name, your phone number and the color bus they are riding. This ensures that they are at the appropriate location and get on the correct bus at the end of the day.

If your child is taking the bus to camp but will be picked-up from camp by a parent/guardian, please attach a note to your child and notify the Site Director via email or phone (text or call) as soon as possible.

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

If you drive your child to camp, you are required to escort 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**

Campers 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 during 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.

If buses are late departing from camp a text alert will be sent via ePACT.

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

Campers may only be picked up by a parent or an authorized person listed in ePACT. If a staff member is unsure of who you are, you will be asked to show a photo ID when picking up your child.

### **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. This will be documented on a *Summer Camp Late-Pick Up Form* and kept on file.
- **2nd Offense:** This will be documented on a *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

### **Storage**

Each camper is designated a basket or area to store his or her personal belongings. All personal items should be carried in a backpack to camp on a daily basis. Each item should be clearly marked with your child's name. Staff will not be held responsible for your camper's personal belongings.

### **Attire**

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

### **Sunblock**

Please apply sunscreen to your child before coming to camp, and pack sunscreen for your camper to reapply if they go swimming. Unless otherwise requested, staff will apply

spray-on sunblock to campers as the need arises. Please call your Site Director for information about the brand of sunscreen that we use.

### **Not Permitted**

Cell phones, gaming devices, etc. are NOT allowed at camp. Please do not allow your child to bring valuables, or items that may cause injury to themselves or another camper.

### Field Trips

Please periodically check at your child's welcome table for trip announcements. We may also send your child home on Monday with permission slips for signature for field trips during the week. In case of rain, a field trip may be changed or cancelled.

All campers and staff attend field trips. If your child misses the field trip bus in the morning, they will not be able to attend camp that day.

Campers are STRONGLY DISCOURAGED from bringing money on field trips. No money will be required for admission, food, or otherwise on the field trip. Please consider the risk associated with choosing to send money with your child on a field trip: camp staff and management are not responsible for lost or stolen money or purchases associated with this decision. No time is allotted for shopping while on field trips.

You may accompany your child on a field trip if it is strongly desired. You must provide your own transportation to and from the field trip location and must pay your own admission fee. While with us on a field trip, all camp rules continue to apply to your child unless you sign them out of camp for the day. You may not buy food for other campers while on a field trip. If the bus is running late returning from a field trip, a text alert will be sent via ePACT.

### Medications

In addition to submitting medication information through ePACT, 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. Campers are expected to participate in the daily inside/outside activities for that day. If your child 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.

If your child has vomited, had a fever or diarrhea, s/he must be kept home for a minimum of 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided. Campers with lice must be nit free before returning to camp.

## 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.

## Rules & Discipline

### Rules

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

- Follow all instructions given.
- Remain in sight and sound of staff.
- Respect others and the property of others.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.

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

### 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.

At times, behavioral concerns warrant disciplinary action. Examples of behavioral 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; uses profanity or inappropriate language; damages, steals, or destroys property; or is unwilling to conform to the rules and guidelines of the program.

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**

If your child exhibits behavior that is in violation of program rules, then he or she will be spoken to by staff and given a warning. Behavior modification techniques will be used to teach your child appropriate behavior. A *Behavior Log* will be established for your child with the first warning and staff will communicate any concerns during pick up or via phone call if your child is a bus rider.

### **Step Two – Incident Report**

If behavior concerns continue after a warning has been issued, an *Incident Report* that documents the behavior will be completed. The Site Director will ask you to sign the report and speak with your child about changing/improving the behavior. A summary of the incident report will be noted on your child's *Behavior Log*.

### **Step Three – Temporary Suspension/Suspension from Field Trips**

If behavior does not improve or continues to escalate, your child will be temporarily suspended from the program. If your child is suspended, you will be notified by phone about the length of the suspension, and a notice will be sent home explaining the problem.

Aggressive, destructive or threatening/abusive behavior (fighting, destroying property or stealing, bullying, profanity toward others), or behavior that endangers others will result in an automatic suspension and possible expulsion. The length of suspension will be determined by the Site Director and Program Management. If your child is suspended during the middle of the day, you will be required to pick him/her up immediately.

Parents must meet with the Site Director following a suspension before the child returns to camp. The Site Director and parent/guardian will agree on an action plan for changing and improving behavior.

If your child receives a suspension during the week, they are not allowed to attend the field trip.

### **Step Four - Dismissal from the Program**

If your child's behavior is not corrected within the specific time outlined in the action plan, the Program Management Office will notify you of further disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from camp.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> temporary suspension, your child will be expelled from the program.

You will not receive a refund if your child is suspended or expelled from camp.

## Bullying

Bullying is unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. Whether it is on the bus or on-site, please encourage your child to inform staff members of any instance of bullying as soon as possible. If your child is reported to be bullying another child, we will investigate the incident. If it is found that your child is bullying another child, they will be dismissed from the program.

## Bus Discipline Referrals

Bus transportation is a privilege and safety is a top priority.

Bus discipline referrals may be issued at the discretion of the Bus Driver. Bus Drivers will communicate issues and give all referrals to the Site Director.

Due to the short duration of camp and the high usage of bus transportation during the week, campers that receive bus referrals that result in a loss of their bus riding privilege, will also be suspended from camp for the same amount of time.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Discipline Referral**

Your child will be issued a warning for the first referral. The Site Director will call their parent/guardian to inform you of the incident.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Discipline Referral**

Your child will receive a temporary suspension from riding the bus and attending camp for 1-3 days depending on the severity of the incident.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Discipline Referral**

Your child will receive a temporary suspension from riding the bus and attending camp for 1-2 weeks depending on the severity of the incident.

### **4<sup>th</sup> Discipline Referral**

Your child will lose all transportation privileges and will be suspended from camp.

## Inclusion Program

### What is the Summer Inclusion Program?

The Summer Inclusion Program is a local collaboration that provides Inclusion Counselors, adaptive materials and on-going 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. We provide a trained Inclusion Counselor at each participating site. We provide simple adaptive materials. We provide training on inclusion to all summer camp personnel and are available for additional trainings and support throughout the summer.

## What do Inclusion Counselors do?

Our Inclusion Counselors have two primary roles:

1. They provide support and encouragement for children in order 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 of 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 Counselor 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.

## Does the Inclusion Counselor provide one-to-one support to children with special needs?

We do not have enough staff to provide one-to-one support for a child who needs it all the time. On average, we find that there are seven children enrolled in a program who need support from time to time. Our Inclusion Counselors support these children as needed. Some require help more often than others and Inclusion Counselors need to be accessible to more than one child.

## Who are the children we serve?

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.

### Will there be an Inclusion Counselor at every camp?

Generally, there has been an Inclusion Counselor assigned to every elementary and pre-teen site, a total of five camps. For summer 2020 we hope to also have Inclusion Counselors in the teen program. 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 Counselor's support, s/he could be re-assigned to a site that could benefit from an additional Inclusion Counselor on site.

### I think this might be a good match for my child. What do I do now?

You will need to enroll your child in Charlottesville Parks and Recreation's summer camp program, indicating that you would like to have your child participate in the Summer Inclusion Program during enrollment. Once enrolled, you will be contacted by someone from CPRD. 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. Conversations with school staff and service providers will help us understand your child's needs, so we would appreciate your permission to exchange information with them. To register available go to the [Charlottesville Parks and Recreation website](#). 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 s/he can function in the conditions described.

### I don't think my child can be successful with the level of support you are able to offer. What other options are available?

Charlottesville Parks and Recreation offers an Adaptive Recreation Camp Program for children and youth with disabilities, ages 8-21. These 5-week programs (Camp Crow, Camp Henry, and Camp Challenge) run from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday at locations within the City of Charlottesville. In addition to 5-week camps, we have a two-week specialty camp (Nature Arts) for youth and adults ages 13 – 25, and a one-week camp for preschool students with disabilities (Robin and Mani's All Buddy Camp). For more information on these programs contact Sarah Blech (434-970-3264).