



Beaver Brook Children's School, Inc.

2024 SUMMER CAMP HANDBOOK

Updated 3/2024

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ABOUT US

Philosophy

At Beaver Brook Children’s School (BBCS), our top priority is to provide a safe, loving, and secure environment for every one of our children. Our philosophy is that children learn best through hands-on experiences in the natural world. Our program provides the opportunity for children to gain knowledge through interactions, exploration, and curiosity. Our camp staff strive to help each child build a solid foundation to their social and emotional development and develop a lifelong love of learning and curiosity about our natural world.

Our camp program is an outdoor nature-based education program, and the majority of the day is spent outside. We believe that connections with nature foster critical thinking and self-confidence.

Mission

The Beaver Brook Children’s School mission is to provide high-quality early education experiences to Wilmington and nearby towns with the goal of promoting enrichment, nature based education, place based education, and social development for families and children in the community.

Certification

Our summer camp for ages 4-8 years is unlicensed, and exempt from licensing requirements because it operates on a week to week basis for 10 consecutive weeks and each week provides a skill based experience. Our summer camp for ages 4-8 is separate from our licensed childcare facility.

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child.

Definition of Program

In this handbook, the terms program, school, camp, center, or BBCS may be used to describe our operation. All of these terms refer to Beaver Brook Children’s School, Inc.

Program Setting

BBCS Summer Camp is a nature-based program. The day is spent outdoors, rain or shine. Our program uses pop up tents for shelter from sun and rain and provides tables, benches, and other seating for children for use during some activities. We frequent a local brook, hiking trails, and the town park during our camp weeks. It is very important that children are dressed appropriately for our program. Families may be required to pick up or bring additional clothing if children are unprepared. See “what to bring” section for more details.

OPERATING INFORMATION

Hours/Dates of Operation

Our program's base hours are **9am-3pm, Monday through Friday, June 24th-August 23rd**. *The program will close early on July 4th at 12:30pm*. Extended care as late as 4pm, and early care starting at 8am may be available on a per diem basis. Contact us about availability for extended care or early care.

Absence/Tardiness

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:15AM, please call or email us no later than 8:45AM. Our camp program may leave the drop off area to begin their day shortly after 9:15AM, so please be sure and communicate with us if you will be late.

Late Pick Up

If you will be late picking up your child please call us as soon as possible, and consider sending an emergency pick-up person to retrieve your child.

Force Majeure

BBCS may be closed or delayed for forces or events that drastically impedes program safety or operations (i.e., very severe storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, loss of power, loss of water, etc). These closings will be communicated via email and/or phone. We do not offer refunds for closings

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Admission and Registration

Children ages 4-8 years enroll in our camp program on a week-to-week basis. Families may opt to enroll for one week, some weeks, or all weeks as available. Enrollment is first come first served. If needed, we will keep a waitlist for enrollment.

Part time enrollment: We highly recommend children attend full days and full weeks, Monday through Friday, to get the most out of our camp structure, curriculum, and projects. Enrollment priority is given to families attending full weeks (5 days). Families opting to attend partial weeks or partial days are enrolled as space permits.

Our camp program uses google forms for all registration paperwork needed for summer camp enrollment. The registration form is digital and can be accessed via computer, tablet, or phone.

Only one set of registration documents is required regardless of week(s) enrolled. If siblings are attending the program, families may list multiple children on the same registration form as long as family information is the same.

Program Fees and Policies

Our camp tuition is currently \$200 per child per week.

When we receive your digital registration form, we will confirm there is space available then send a digital invoice directly to your email. Invoices will include a non-refundable deposit of \$50 per week which is required to confirm registration. Once we receive your deposit, we will email a registration confirmation message. Any remaining fees must be paid by the due date indicated on the invoice or your child may be disenrolled from the program.

Additional payment policies:

- We do not prorate fees for partial day or partial week enrollment. Each week has a flat fee of \$200.
- Specific weeks may require additional fees for materials and special presenters.
- Deposits are NOT refundable. Deposits ARE transferable to other weeks IF there is space to allow for a change in registration.
- Payment in full is required by the date indicated on your invoice. If payment is not received by this date your family may be disenrolled and your deposit will be forfeit.
- Refund policy: tuition (less the non-refundable deposit) is refundable on the following timeline, based on the first day/Monday of the registration week
 - 2 weeks notice - 100%
 - 1 week notice - 50%
 - less than 1 week notice - 0%

Donations to our camp program are greatly appreciated and help fund our high-quality programs, facilities, and staff wages. Donations are tax deductible and can be made by check or via our website www.beaverbrookschool.com.

Expulsion/Disenrollment

At BBCS, we work hard to create strong family partnerships and work through any issues as a team. However, some circumstances prevent appropriate care and education, and may be grounds for disenrollment of a family. Disenrollment of a family may happen due to any of the following reasons:

- Excessive absence of your child without proper notification
- Excessive tardiness at pick up or drop off time and/or repeated failure to follow operating hours
- Failure to communicate appropriately and professionally with school staff
- Extreme behavioral circumstances and/or safety concerns of a child

Inclusion / Non-Discrimination

Children are admitted without regard to race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate because of special needs if a safe, supportive, inclusive environment can be provided and/or if your child uses a private aide to access the program. Please inform us prior to enrollment if your child has special needs or requirements so we can discuss program options for inclusion.

BBCS believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in community based programs. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs and level of comfort.

If your child has an identified special need, please include any paperwork related to their diagnosis and/or any services he/she receives in or out of camp upon enrollment. We also prefer to meet in person with you and

your child’s special education team prior to enrollment. We do not provide individual aides through our program but can discuss options for adjusted program schedules, private aides, etc.

Equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Family Activities

We believe that each family is a child’s first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program by visiting the facilities, by participating in family events, and by providing feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released to anyone. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Our counselors are vetted by experience and education. References and criminal records are checked.

Position Title	Minimum Education/Certification	Prior Experience
Director	Master’s Degree in Education or Related Field	5 years
Head Counselor/ Curriculum Lead	Bachelor’s or Associate’s Degree in Education or Related Field	2 years
Counselors	None	2 years

All BCS staff participate in orientation and annual, ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, trauma, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by BCS.

Child to Staff Ratios

We maintain the following MINIMUM standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
4-5 years	10:1	20
6-8 years	10:1	20

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications. All families will receive a verbal summary of children's activities and participation at the close of each day.

Newsletters. Weekly newsletters provide camp news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are written by the program administrative staff and are sent via email prior to and at the close of each week.

Email. We require all families to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, camp newsletters and general updates. If you do not have an email address, we can assist you with creating one.

Family Events Your child's program will host family events at varying times throughout the summer. Invitations to these family events will be sent out by your child's counselor and participation is highly encouraged.

Conferences. You may request a confidential, in-person family conference at any time. The best way to request a conference is to email us.

Open Door Policy

We offer an "open door policy" for direct family members at all times. However, we ask families to be respectful of children's routines, schedules, and learning activities, and encourage you to check with your child's counselor and/or the program director about the best time to visit.

Publicity

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the program for use within the program or on our website/other social media. Written permission will be obtained prior to taking photographs, via your child's registration form. You may opt out of photographs at any time.

CURRICULUM & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each of our programs. Our programs are designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, self-confidence, responsibility, independence, curiosity, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to participate with others respectfully.

Curriculum

The curriculum for our camp program is based on 9 separate weeks of individually themed skills based topics. Curriculum is scaffolded and differentiated to be accessible to all ages participating.

Outdoor Environment

Our program values nature and a connection with the outdoors. **Our day takes place outside**, and children may participate in hikes, walks, water activities, movement activities, sports and games, scientific observation and analysis, and more.

It is very important that your child is dressed for outdoor success and comfort at our program. Please provide seasonally appropriate outdoor clothing and gear for your child every day. See “what to bring” section for more info on appropriate outdoor gear and clothing that is required.

Transitions

Your child’s participation in our program should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced. If you have concerns about your child transitioning into the program, please contact us and we will be happy to set up tours and meet-and-greets for your family prior to your child’s first week.

Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include any electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use. However, we may use age appropriate primary resources (interviews, photos, real videos, etc) as teaching aids and discussion stimulators for our students. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material only. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Celebrations

If your family would like to assist with or coordinate a celebration, especially one that is in your family’s culture or heritage, we encourage you to reach out to your child’s counselor or the program director.

Toilet Training

BBCS does require children in our 4-8 year old camp program to be fully toilet trained. If your child has special emotional or medical needs surrounding toileting, we are happy to accommodate these when given prior notice and documentation.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

BBCS is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our program works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the program community.

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to gain self-control and regulation. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people and property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Behavior Policy

We have created a behavior policy that reflects our philosophy of positive guidance with children. A copy of our behavior policy is included in the registration form for you to review.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's immediate safety or that of others and we may briefly restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation, or we may pick up and remove the child from the area if physical aggression may harm others or self.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illness

Children and staff will be excluded from in-person activities if they show symptoms of an illness or other condition including but not limited to cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, fever, rash, large amounts of nasal discharge and/or stuffy nose, diarrhea, vomiting, eye or ear irritation, head lice, or other symptom that inhibits or prevents them from participating in activities or may be contagious.

If above signs and symptoms begin while at the program, the child must be sent home as soon as possible. Sick children will be kept separate from others and staff contact will be limited as much as reasonably possible, while ensuring the safety and supervision of the sick child(ren) until they leave.

Children shall be excluded from the program until the following conditions are met:

- They no longer have symptoms and are no longer contagious
- They are able to fully participate in programs
- They have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication
- They have not had any vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours without the use of medication

The family should consult with the child's healthcare provider. Based on their clinical judgment, the child's healthcare provider will be able to help the family determine what medical course to take.

Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, awaiting test results, or who has been exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 should follow current CDC guidance for quarantine and isolation.

Please note, healthy children and/or staff with the following symptoms/ conditions will NOT be excluded from in-person activities:

- Allergy symptoms (with no fever) that cause coughing and clear runny nose may stay IF they have medically diagnosed allergies AND they provide documentation of a medical diagnosis
- Cough and/or shortness of breath due to well-controlled asthma with a medical diagnosis AND medical treatment plan from a doctor
- Other chronic ailments that are non-contagious and allow for normal participation. Medical documentation may or may not be required.

Injuries

Safety is a major priority at our program, but we also value children's independence, exploration, and risk-taking to build confidence and physical skills. Daily safety inspections are completed at the program area in order to prevent injuries caused by unsafe environments. If a child is injured, first aid will be administered by a trained team member for minor injuries (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive a written incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury includes any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. In the event of a serious and/or life threatening medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we contact you or an emergency contact. Each group carries a first aid kit at all times, and a trauma kit is carried on longer excursions.

Medications

BBCS currently permits administration of life saving medication only (epi-pens, inhalers). All other medications should not be brought to the program. If your child needs other medication administered during the program, families are encouraged to speak with the director to make a plan for administration.

If your child will be bringing a life saving medication to the program (epi-pen, inhaler) please request a copy of the medication administration form from program staff prior to or on your child's first day. Life saving medication shall be left with your child's counselor and NOT in your child's pack.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, please notify us via the registration form so that we can make appropriate accommodations.

We are able to accommodate most food allergies, but you may wish to pack your child their own lunch and snacks.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency or Approved Pick Up Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency or Approved Pick Up Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance. Your child will not be released to someone other than approved pick up contacts without prior authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if we have not been able to reach you, your family, or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency and police department.

Child Custody

State law requires safe release of children to either parent who is listed on a child's registration form. Without a court document, both parents/guardians (if applicable) have assumed equal rights to custody even if one parent says otherwise. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior, especially if it becomes a pattern or is severe. If this occurs, we may obtain an order of no trespass and/or disenroll your family from our program.

Cell Phone Usage

The times you spend at the program dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you in person about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you not use your cell phone at any time during drop off or pick up.

Smoking

The poisons in first and secondhand smoke are especially harmful to young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment are always non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco or marijuana in any form is prohibited on the center's premises, including our parking lot. All staff are required to change clothing after smoking, and we ask that parents not arrive at the camp area smelling of tobacco or marijuana smoke.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited by all staff and families.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called, and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons, and families, children, staff, or guests.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective

service agency will determine appropriate action and may investigate. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 30 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our indoor spaces are fully equipped with multiple fire exits, posted exit plans, fire extinguishers, and sprinklers. Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a weekly basis during camp.

Lockdown

In the unlikely event that a threat is made or presents itself to our program, we will lockdown the program and shelter in place. This determination will be made by the director and will be communicated with all parents as soon as all children are present and accounted for. Once police have cleared the threat to our program, children will either be released to parents or we may continue through the remainder of our normal daily operations depending on the severity and length of the lockdown.

Evacuation

In the unlikely event that a threat is made to our program and it is unsafe to stay in the building or in our outdoor space, or if there is a fire, flood, or other severe disturbance to our building, our program will evacuate to the Wilmington Public Safety Building. Parents will be alerted to the evacuation via phone as soon as all children are present and accounted for and would be required to pick up their child at the evacuation site immediately.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort (the program director and/or your child's counselor) will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives. This policy is also included in our registration form.

Contact Information

Program Phone: (802) 464-7100, messages checked morning and at the close of the day

Email: beaverbrookscool@gmail.com, checked throughout the day

Mailing Address: PO Box 1241 Wilmington VT 05363

Physical Address: 1 School Street, Lower Level, Wilmington VT 05363

Director: Julie Koehler, M.Ed. *Cell phone to use for emergencies, call or text: (518) 526-5434*

WHAT TO BRING

Please pack the following items into a backpack labeled with your child's name EACH DAY:

- o A water bottle labeled with your child's name
- o A change of seasonally appropriate clothes (underwear, shorts/pants and shirt)
- o A light jacket or sweatshirt
- o Hat or cap
- o Sunblock (non-aerosol only) OR an SPF sun shirt OR a light long sleeve shirt
- o A rain coat AND rain pants, weather dependent
- o Extra snacks if desired
- o Appropriate footwear: A pair of closed toe sneakers or hiking boots that your child is able to wear outside -or- rain boots if the weather calls for a wet day. Please do not send your child in crocs, sandals, or flip flops; we will ask that you leave and return with appropriate footwear.
- o *Note: During certain camp programs, specific clothing such as water shoes, life jackets, swim suits, etc. may be required at times. We will inform you of any additional required clothing items via email newsletter prior to the camp start date.*

Not permitted: aerosol sprays, weapons

Please avoid bringing excessive clothing, supplies, or toys from home to the program. Please label everything with your child's name and initials. BBCS is not liable for any belongings that are misplaced.