



# A.C.E. BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

A.C.E. PROGRAM C/O RIVER VALE EDUCATIONAL FUND, INC  
172 BROADWAY, SUITE 210 WOODCLIFF LAKE, NJ 07677  
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## **MISSION**

“The River Vale A.C.E. Program will provide a safe and supportive environment to the children (up to sixth grade) of the Norwood Public School whose parents are seeking an effective bridge between their child’s time between school and home hours. It will be founded on the principles of character development, wellness, caring and academic enrichment.”

## **SCHEDULE POLICIES**

### **HOURS OF OPERATION/SCHEDULE**

The A.C.E. Program will work in conjunction with your school’s schedule. The Before Care Program will run from 7:00 a.m. to the first bell Monday through Friday. The After Care program will start from dismissal of school and operate until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

### **PROGRAM CLOSINGS**

In the event of extreme weather, the program will adhere to the decision of the district regarding operations. If weather or other emergencies occur during after school hours, forcing the program to close early, parents will be contacted by phone or email to arrange pickup of their children. School closings or early dismissals for inclement weather will result in the program being cancelled until school resumes normal operations.

**Example:** Delayed Opening results in Before Care Program to be cancelled  
Early Dismissal results in After Care Program to be cancelled  
School Closure results in both the Before and After Care programs to be cancelled

### **WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION**

Please take note of the holidays and professional development days that are on the schools calendar. On certain days off, there will be activities planned for enrolled participants of the program. You will receive a Welcome Letter (emailed about a week before school starts) that will outline the days we will provide these activities. This program requires advance enrollment and a separate fee. This fee includes a full day’s care, the selected activity and transportation (if going off site). Permission slips are emailed as the dates approach. These days may take place at a local, off site location other than your child’s school.

### **SNOW DAYS ADDED BACK TO SCHOOL CALENDAR**

In the case where snows days are built into the school calendar and not all are used, the school might “give” these days back. If school is not in session because of snow days “given back”, we will not offer full day coverage for these days.

### **SCHEDULED HALF DAYS**

On scheduled half days the program will run as normal from dismissal until 6:00 p.m. There is no additional charge for these days. The Welcome Letter will outline the half days that are on the district calendar.

## **PARENT TARDNISS**

The program ends at 6:00 p.m. It is a parent or guardian's responsibility to ensure that children are picked up by that time. Parents will be assessed a late fee of \$5.00 for every additional 10 minutes your child is there beginning at 6:01 p.m. After 6:30 p.m., all emergency contacts will be called to arrange an alternate pick up for your child. Continued tardiness may result in expulsion from the program. Parents will be required to sign the "late pick up log" at time of arrival and will be reminded of the fees assessed. These fees will be added on to your account balance.

## **ABSENCE/SCHEDULE CHANGES**

If you know in advance that your child will be absent or have a change in schedule, we ask that the Site Director or Program Director is advised a day in advance or send a note. If your child's schedule changes without notice, please call the Program Director and leave a message with your child's name, date of absence and a return phone number. You can also e-mail the Program Director at: [director@rvedfund.org](mailto:director@rvedfund.org). Please call and/or e-mail prior to 2:00 p.m. **Do not call the school directly, as there is no communication between them and the A.C.E. program when it comes to absences.**

## **CHECK IN/CHECK OUT PROCEDURES**

If your child is attending Before Care we will require a drop off by the parent/guardian/authorized person with a signature on our sign-in sheet. Your child, depending on his/her age will report directly to his/her assigned classroom/line or whatever method the school has in place for the students upon the first bell. If your child is in kindergarten, they will be brought to his/her classroom/line etc.

If your child will be attending After Care, he/she will check into the program directly after school and will be in the care of A.C.E. program staff. **We cannot assume any responsibility of your child until he/she has checked in.** Your child will be in the staff's care until an authorized person arrives to check him/her out. We require that all children be checked out directly with a staff member through a signature on our sign out sheet. **For the first few weeks, we ask that as the parent/guardian you show ID to our staff on site when picking your child up from after care until the staff is familiar with you.** If you will be sending someone who is not authorized previously by you to pick up your child, you will need to send an authorization with the person's full name, date and times of pick up. Please ask the individual picking up your child to bring a picture ID for verification of identity.

## **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (SPONOSORED BY SCHOOL OR OTHER ORG)**

If your child is part of an afterschool activity sponsored by the school or other organization, we must have written notification of these plans. **Even though you inform the Program Director or staff of these plans, your child must still check in with us before they go to the scheduled activity.** If your child will be returning to the aftercare program upon completion of a sponsored afterschool activity, we will expect notification of what time your child will be in our care. If under any circumstance, your child does not report directly to the After Care program when scheduled to arrive, the parent/guardian will be contacted and they will be held responsible for then locating the child. If the parent/guardian and/or emergency contacts cannot be reached staff may call the local police to report the missing child.

## **PROGRAM POLICIES**

### **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

It is the policy of the A.C.E. program to enroll the children of Norwood Public Schools (up to sixth grade) without bias towards sex, religion, race or physical disability. Every reasonable effort is made to accommodate any special needs. Our program provides supervisory care not medical or nursing care. Should your child require special care, please contact the Program Director to arrange a consultation between you and the staff. **ALL CHILDREN ENROLLED MUST BE POTTY TRAINED.** A child is considered enrolled only after the non-refundable registration fee has been received and all necessary forms have been completed and returned.

### **ENROLLMENT DELAY TIME**

If you are enrolling your child during the school year, please note there will be a week delay from when forms are received and your child starting the program. A start date will be provided by the Program Director.

### **PROGRAM MAXIMUM**

There is a maximum amount of students allowed in the program each day. Therefore, a cap is set to maintain these numbers. If a program has reached its limit, a waiting list will be held and families will be placed in the program in the order the registration forms were received.

### **PAYMENT**

There will be no monthly bill sent out as a reminder. Payment is due by the first of each month. *For example: November fees are due on November 1st.* Three billing methods are accepted 1) Checks can be mailed to: RVEF, C/O ACE 172 Broadway, Suite 210 Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677 2) a recurring card transaction can be set up by providing a credit card or debit card (Visa or MasterCard) at time of registration or 3) Paid in Full at time of registration. A 10% discount will be given off the year's total tuition payment. A year is based on 10 months.

A form will be available if you would like to change your billing method at any point during the year. Calls/emails will be made to those who miss payments or if the card transaction was not approved. Any payments submitted late will be assessed a fee of \$25.00. If a payment is rejected for insufficient funds, a \$30.00 fee will be assessed.

\*If your account is past due for two consecutive months, program privileges will be revoked for your child until your account is made current. Within three months of non-payment, your account will be sent to our collection agency.\*

The monthly tuition payments are based on the school calendar year (180 days). All days off are taken into consideration, then a predetermined monthly fee is created.

### **PAID IN FULL:**

You can choose to pay the tuition in full for the year (based on 10 months). A 10% discount will be received if doing so. Refunds will only be provided to those who cancel their enrollment. All monies remaining for the year will be prorated and returned. There will be no refunds for change in scheduled days, or interruptions within a month. This option is most useful to those who do not plan to change their children's schedule throughout the year.

### **DROP-IN SERVICE:**

This service allows you to use the program on days you are not registered. For example, if you are registered for After Care and a need arises for Before Care, you can use the Before Care Program for a daily rate. You are able to sign up for just the Drop-In service and use it on an as needed basis. A 24-hour advance notification is required and the space is subject to availability. The proper registration forms must be filled out before any student can attend the program. Once you enroll your child with the appropriate paperwork, there will be no need to fill out additional forms. When the program is needed, send an e-mail or call the Program Director at least 24-hours in advance. There is a limited number of "drop-ins" per month allowed; you can use six (6) for Before Care and three (3) for After Care. Pricing is as follows: \$15 for Before Care; \$30 for After Care. This service can be paid for by: check or credit card only.

### **TIER PRICING**

Tier pricing is defined as having two different monthly tuition prices based upon the amount of days and the time the child is picked up from After Care.

#### **Following are the criteria to qualify for tier pricing:**

- The child will have to be picked up no later than 4:30 p.m. each day the child is enrolled in the program to be considered for the lower tier.
- If the parent picks the child up after 4:30pm three (3) or more times in a month they will not be eligible for the reduced rate that tier pricing offers for that month. The difference in tuition will be added on to the next month's payment. This will be based on a monthly detail of their sign out report. The parent can then continue to participate in the tier-pricing program the following month.
- If a parent is late picking up their child(ren) three (3) or more times in any two months within the school year, the tier pricing option will no longer be available to them for the remainder of the year.
- Monthly tuition rates for the tier-pricing program can be found on the registration forms.

### **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

If you choose to withdraw from the program during the school year, please call or email the Program Director. **All requests should be received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month to give enough time to stop the recurring billing on your account.**

## **TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT-Refer to the Expulsion Policy located within this packet**

The child's enrollment can be terminated or enrollment can be declined for any of the following reasons. If a child's enrollment is terminated due to behavior issues, that child may not be allowed to enroll in future sessions. This also stands if the child's enrollment is terminated due to the parent's behavior

- Tuition or fees are continuously past due
- Recurring late pick-ups
- If the child is unable to abide by the rules, or the child's behavior is unsafe or unmanageable
- If the parent's behavior is inappropriate or the parent is unable or unwilling to work respectfully and cordially with the staff to resolve problems
- If a parent is unwilling to accept a resolution of the staff as to any matter
- If it is determined that registration forms and other necessary paperwork are falsified
- All decisions are at the discretion of A.C.E. and the RVEF.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT/VISITATION**

A.C.E encourages parent involvement and welcomes parents to visit the program. If you wish to visit and/or observe your child's program please see the Site Coordinator in advance to set up an appropriate time to visit our program and see your child.

## **COMMUNICATION**

We encourage parents to communicate with staff at your site. This helps to build positive relationships that greatly benefit your child. Frequent emails will be sent out by the Program Director to keep you informed about policy and procedure changes, events and other important information.

## **SNACKS**

There will be one snack provided for the after school program. Please list any food allergies on the registration form. You may send your child with a snack or additional snacks. Please be mindful of those with nut allergies.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Although staff will make every effort to help children keep track of their personal belongings, the final responsibility rests on the child. If the items are lost, stolen or broken, A.C.E. and the RVEF are not responsible for the replacement or repair of these items. We prefer personal items be left at home or in his/her backpack during program hours. This helps us to avoid many issues among the children and keeps their belongings safe.

## **CELL PHONE USE:**

A child may carry a cell phone for emergency purposes; however, the device should be kept in the child's backpack to avoid them being misused, lost, broken or stolen. If the child is misusing the phone, the device will be confiscated and returned to the parent upon pick up. Parents can call the site's phone number at any time to speak with their children. As well, the children may ask to use our phone to call parents. We will limit the amount of calls a child makes to a parent if we feel they are disrupting the parent during working hours.

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROCEDURES

### UNSAFE CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS

It is state requirement that the Department of Law and Public Safety (DLPS), Division of Consumer Affairs' (DCA) list of unsafe children's products be reviewed regularly to ensure there are no unsafe products on site. Following is the site for your review as well: [www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/recall/recalls.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/lps/ca/recall/recalls.htm)

### MEDICATIONS

We understand some children need to take daily medications; we strongly recommend medication be administered at home or during school hours. If this is not possible, staff will administer medication **only** with the completion of a "Medical Authorization" form; these forms are available from your Site Coordinator. These forms must be completed for each medication. All medications must be in the original container labeled with the child's name and dosage information. If the child carries a self-administered inhaler a form must also be filled out to provide verification that the child has permission to carry the inhaler. **Your child must keep his/her inhaler in his/her possession at all times and not share it with any other person.**

### ILLNESS/INJURY/EMERGENCIES

The safety of the children is the greatest concern at our program. If illness or injuries occur, the following guidelines will help to provide safety:

- Illness or Injury will be reported immediately to you.
- If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, your emergency contacts will be notified. In the case your child needs to be picked up for illness reasons, we ask you set up transportation (preferably an appointed authorized pick-up individual) if you are not available. It is our goal to keep our environment clear of illnesses to keep your children safe and healthy.
- In the case of a minor accident/injury, staff will administer basic first aid.
- If serious injury occurs first aid will be administered, and the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action.
- If injury is life threatening, the emergency squad will be contacted, parents notified and a staff member will accompany your child to their destination. Parents are to grant permission for emergency transportation at the time of registration. Parents are responsible for any medical or transportation cost incurred.

## MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend the A.C.E. Before and After Care Program. If such symptoms occur at any of our programs, the child will be removed from the group and you will be called to take him/her home.

Severe pain or discomfort	Difficulty breathing
Acute Diarrhea	Swollen joints
Episodes of acute vomiting	Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
Elevated Temperature	Stiff Neck
Sore throat or severe coughing	Blood in urine
Yellow eyes or jaundice skin	Skin rashes lasting longer than 24 hours
Red eyes with discharge	
Infected, untreated skin patches	

Once the child is symptom free, or has a physician's note stating that he/she no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, he/she may return to our programs.

If a child contracts any of the following diseases, please report it to us immediately. The child may not return to school without a physician's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others

### Table of Communicable Diseases

#### **Respiratory Illnesses**

Chicken Pox  
German measles\*  
Hemophilus Influenzae\*  
Measles\*  
Meningococcus\*  
Mumps\*  
Strep Throat  
Tuberculosis\*  
Whooping Cough

#### **Gastrointestinal Illnesses**

Giardia Lamblia\*  
Hepatitis A\*  
Salmonella\*  
Shigella\*

#### **Contact Illnesses**

Impetigo  
Lice  
Scabies

\*Reportable disease, as specified in N.J.A.C. 10:122-7 10 (a).

## DYFS-HOW WE REPORT/HOW CAN YOU REPORT

It is the A.C.E. Before and After School Program and The River Vale Educational Fund's legal responsibility to report to DYFS if abuse is suspected. The staff will report if the following occurs:

- Abuse is witnessed
- A child reports abuse
- A child says something to a child or adult eluding to abuse

If you suspect abuse to a child, it is your responsibility to call 877-NJ-ABUSE to report what you have seen or heard. A third party cannot make the report for you.



## **RULES AND CONSEQUENCES**

Our Before and After School Program is structured to provide your child a safe, supportive and positive environment in which to learn and grow. Your child's safety is our main concern. The following is a list of rules and consequences that we hope you will review with your child/ren.

### **MINOR INFRACTIONS TO THE RULES (NON-SAFETY)**

After minor infractions to the rules an initial warning is given for inappropriate behavior and an explanation on the given rule with emphasis on safety will be given to the child. In the case there is no resolution to a conflict or if inappropriate behavior is repeated the "Time Out" system will be used. The child will be separated from the group and sit out an appropriate amount of time to "regroup and think" then will be allowed to rejoin the group.

### **SAFETY INFRACTIONS**

Following a safety-related rule infraction, more immediate consequences will be imposed. Staff will intervene immediately, rules reiterated and a "Time Out" is likely to allow a child opportunity to reflect on the safety rules in question. Staff will discuss the importance of the safety rule with the child, assure understanding and allow the child to rejoin the group after an appropriate amount of time. If safety rules continue to be broken, parents will be involved as allies in reinforcing rules with children.

### **WILLFULL HARM INFRACTIONS**

A willful harm infraction, in which a child deliberately harms or tries to harm another child, will result in immediate consequences. Depending upon the seriousness of the violation, a child will be disciplined immediately and appropriately and may be suspended for one or more days by the Program Director. Parents may be asked to meet for a conference prior to the child's return to the Before and/or After Care Program to help ensure the child understands the program rules, as well as the consequences on non-compliance. A second incident or willful harm may result in expulsion from the program.

### **SUSPENDABLE OR TERMINABLE OFFENSES:**

Depending on the behavior and its frequency, the below will result in either: a written report or an immediate phone call to the parents for pick up from the program. If the below behaviors are repeated (will have written reports on file), your child will be suspended or terminated indefinitely from the program.

- 1) Destruction of property and inappropriate use of materials-throwing rocks, using materials as weapons, defacing school property, etc.
- 2) Running away from the school or staff members
- 3) Being away from the group without the staff members knowledge
- 4) Repeated refusals to take necessary time outs
- 5) Fighting or conflicts with other children/staff members (physically endangering others)
- 6) Engaging in inappropriate behavior-refusing to stop dangerous activities
- 7) Disregarding program safety rules-uncontrollable behavior
- 8) Repeated or significant infractions of any rule or expectation