

2019 SUMMER

P.A.R.K.

PARENT

HANDBOOK



GROVE CITY
PARKS AND RECREATION
3226 Kingston Ave.
Grove City, OH 43123
GroveCityOhio.gov

LOCATION INFORMATION

OFFICE

Grove City Parks and Recreation

- Office: Kingston Center, 3226 Kingston Ave., Grove City, OH 43123
- Mailing: 3226 Kingston Ave., Grove City, OH 43123
- After-hours Drop Box: 3226 Kingston Ave., Grove City, OH 43123
- Phone: 614-277-3050
- Fax: 614-277-3090
- Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday

SUMMER P.A.R.K. SITES

Richard Avenue Elementary School

- 3646 Richard Avenue, Grove City, OH 43123
- Cellular Phone: 614-571-9623
- Operation Hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday

Highland Park Elementary School

- 2600 Cameron Street, Grove City, OH 43123
- Cellular Phone: 614-571-9624
- Operation Hours: 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday

Dear Parents:

We would like to welcome you to the Summer P.A.R.K. Program. The City of Grove City Parks and Recreation Department is proud to sponsor this all-day childcare program to serve the citizens of Grove City. P.A.R.K. operates from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. beginning Monday, June 10, and ending Friday, Aug. 9, 2019. The program is not in session Thursday, July 4 and Friday, July 5 in observance of Independence Day.

This handbook is prepared for your convenience to inform you of our policies and procedures and to answer many questions you may have about our program. We ask that you keep this handbook in a place where it will not get lost so you can refer to it from time to time to confirm certain dates and policies.

It is our intention for the Summer P.A.R.K. program to operate as smoothly as possible and, with your participation and cooperation, we are sure it will. We hope you will find our program both convenient and satisfying.

If you have any questions, please call the Parks and Recreation Department at 614-277-3050.

Sincerely,

Megan Williams

Amanda Gehres

Megan Williams & Amanda Gehres
Recreation Supervisors

Summer P.A.R.K. Program Philosophy

The Summer P.A.R.K. program is not intended to be an extension of school. We feel that after a long year of highly structured schoolwork, children need an opportunity to choose from a variety of activities that are planned to be fun and enriching while allowing for spontaneity.

The program is developed taking into consideration that our children are of different developmental stages. The activities we choose are as easy or complicated as the person participating allows. Although our basic program is structured in a larger sense, it allows children to make choices within that structure. We hope to teach each child to make intelligent and responsible decisions concerning allocation of his/her time that will continue after he/she leaves our program.

Summer P.A.R.K. Program Goal

The primary goal of the Summer P.A.R.K. Program is to provide a fun, safe, secure, enriching and affordable place for children to attend during the summer.

Additional Program Goals

- Encourage development of self-esteem by providing an environment where children can learn about themselves, build self-worth and experience success.
- Encourage individual expression and new ideas and good decision-making skills.
- Provide for the personal satisfaction of the participants.
- Provide opportunities for physical exercise to enhance coordination and health of participants.
- Promote team play, sportsmanship and character-building ideals.
- Provide opportunities in which participants meet new people and develop social skills.
- Provide safe facilities conducive to stimulating an atmosphere of free play and individual recreational activity.
- Promote good communication skills and develop active listening skills.
- Promote acceptance of personal differences and appreciate the efforts of others.

The Summer P.A.R.K. Program is:

- A support for parents.
- An informal environment where children can learn about themselves and others.
- A place for children to develop skills and form friendships.
- A place to experience accomplishments and build a sense of self-worth.
- A recreational program that encourages children to be active and have fun in connection with the State of Ohio Academic Content Standards.

Summer P.A.R.K. Program

Policies and Procedures

1. Registration

Registration must be completed prior to your child attending the program. **Registration is not accepted at the P.A.R.K. sites.** Transactions must take place through the Grove City Parks and Recreation Office in the Kingston Center, 3226 Kingston Ave.

2. Enrollment Policy

It is unlawful for the program to discriminate in enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. It may be, however, necessary to produce documentation so we may verify the child's age or current status in school. Once a child is enrolled in the Summer P.A.R.K. program, his/her place is held until the tuition payment deadline.

3. Hours of Operation

a. Summer P.A.R.K. is open Monday, June 10 through Friday, Aug. 9, and operates Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

b. There is no Summer P.A.R.K. Thursday, July 4 or Friday, July 5.

c. *If your child is ill or not going to be at Summer P.A.R.K. for any reason, call the P.A.R.K. site and leave a message on the site's voicemail to inform your child's P.A.R.K. leaders.*

Please note: If a child does not arrive at Summer P.A.R.K. by 9 a.m., it is assumed he/she will not attend that day. Staff will not call parents.

d. If a field trip or event is planned away from the Summer P.A.R.K. site and your child has not arrived by the trip's departure time, you will need to make other childcare arrangements for your child for that day. It is not possible to delay a trip for late arrivals.

4. Tuition Payments

a. All tuition is to be paid per the tuition schedule in one of the following ways:

(1) By mail to 3226 Kingston Ave., Grove City, Ohio 43123.

(2) In person at the City of Grove City Parks and Recreation office in the Kingston Center, 3226 Kingston Ave., between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

(3) By credit card: call 614-277-3050 or stop in the office.

(4) In the drop box at the Kingston Center after hours, seven days per week.

(5) Visit <http://bit.ly/gcpReg> and search for "PARK." Before registering for any program online, you must contact the Parks and Recreation office to establish an online ID with username and password. If you previously have registered online for other Grove City programs, use that information.

b. Reimbursements are not made for child absences or vacations.

- c. **P.A.R.K. tuition** is \$1,284 and must be made by paying the \$100 non-refundable deposit and four installments of \$296: (1) by Friday, May 17; (2) by Friday, June 7; (3) by Friday, June 28; and (4) by Friday, July 19. Refunds for scheduled payments are not given once the program begins.
- d. All payments must be accompanied by the tuition payment slip provided by Summer P.A.R.K.
- e. If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, a \$25 processing fee is added to the amount of the check. If a check is returned a second time, all future payments must be made by cash or money order.
Please make checks payable to: The City of Grove City
- f. Tuition for the P.A.R.K. program is tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Please remember to keep your receipts. If you pay by mail, a receipt will be sent to you. Our tax identification number is 31-6400-527.

5. Behavior Management

The Summer P.A.R.K. behavior management policy was established with the knowledge that children need clear limits, set in ways that do not negatively influence their self-esteem. Limits are set to protect each child from hurting himself/herself and others, and damaging equipment or facilities. The leaders set guidelines and use various techniques for group management. The goal is for each child to become a problem solver and conflict resolver.

Our P.A.R.K. environment is designed to promote success, allowing for much freedom within limits. Children need to explore the limits of each setting. Just as your children test you, they will probably test us sometime during the program to define our personal and P.A.R.K. site limits. When children do test the limits, we allow the child several chances to change the behavior.

Behavior management is the slow process of helping a child see the sense and experience the success of acting a certain way. Behavior management helps children develop self-control and respect for themselves, other people and the community, but should never harm, shame or frighten a child. All employees are required to treat children with respect, and use discipline as a learning opportunity.

- a. Behavior problems are managed through conflict resolution techniques such as leader/child discussion, redirection, offering of choices, removal from the situation, loss of privileges, and, in severe situations, dismissal from the program.
- b. Behavior problems are managed according to the following steps:
 - (1) Leader/Child Conference
 - Verbal correction
 - Redirection of child's actions
 - Offering choices
 - Offering solutions
 - Removal from the problem situation

If the behavior is consistent, habitual or is a case of a severe inappropriate action:

- (2) Leader/Parent Conference

(3) Leader/Parent/Supervisor Conference

A child at the final step may have appropriate consequences established such as loss of privileges, suspension or dismissal from the program. Severe behavior problems could result in immediate dismissal from the program. If a child cannot adjust to the program setting and behave appropriately, the parent or guardian may be asked to find alternate care.

6. Lunch/Snacks/Beverages

- a. All children are to bring their own lunch, snacks and drinks from home. Due to allergy concerns, we do not allow sharing of food or drinks among the children. Carbonated/soft drinks and hard candy are not permitted.
- b. Since we have set daily “lunch time” and “snack times,” all children must bring both lunch and snacks. Please pack snacks separately from lunch items.
- c. All children are required to sit with the group during lunch time and snack times.
- d. We ask that you and your child please avoid sugary foods for snacks. Snack should be nutritious and encompass at least two food groups. Ohio Department of Education and Department of Job and Family Services guidelines require nutritious snacks.
- e. Water is always available for your child. We strongly encourage that your child bring a water bottle, taking it home for daily cleaning.
- g. There is no access to a refrigerator: send foods in small coolers or pack items requiring no refrigeration.

7. Sign In/Sign Out

- a. For your child’s safety, each child must be signed in when dropped off in the morning and signed out at evening pick up. Initialing is sufficient. A child may not sign himself/herself in or out. Persons who are authorized to pick up your child must be at least 18 years of age.
- b. Sign in/sign out sheets are located in the Parent Corner at each site.
- c. Failure to comply with this policy could result in suspension from the program.

8. End-of-day Closing/Release of Child from Program

- a. Our program closes at 6 p.m. Parents should make every effort to pick up children by this time as our P.A.R.K. leaders have other commitments. If for any reason you will be delayed in picking up your child, please call the appropriate P.A.R.K. site to keep the leaders informed.
- b. There is a \$10 charge for children not picked up by 6 p.m. for any part of the first 15 minutes and \$1 for each additional minute after 6:15 p.m. This charge is assessed by the recreation supervisors.
- c. Picking up a child late for the third time is considered grounds for dismissal. This policy is strictly enforced.

9. Additional Safety Policies

- a. The person picking up a child must enter the building and/or inform the P.A.R.K. leader that the child is leaving.
- b. No child will exit the P.A.R.K. site alone.

- c. The P.A.R.K. leader must be notified in advance in writing if someone other than the persons listed on the Emergency Medical Form is going to pick up the child. A child will not be released to an unauthorized person. Please update your form promptly as needed.
- d. The P.A.R.K. leaders and the recreation supervisors must be notified in writing if there is a specific individual who should not pick up a child. If there are special custody arrangements for the child, the appropriate documentation must be on file.

10. Emergencies

- a. Emergency Medical Forms must be filled out by parent/guardian prior to the first day of the program and are kept on file at the P.A.R.K. site location.
- b. Procedures for emergencies follow procedures as stated on the Emergency Medical Form.
- c. If a medical condition is listed on the Emergency Medical Form, a Child Medical/Physical Care Plan Form must be filled out to inform and train the P.A.R.K. leaders of all necessary instructions to properly care for your child.
- d. Depending on the seriousness of the emergency, parents are notified immediately and emergency medical providers will transport children to the proper emergency medical or dental care facility.

11. Medications

- a. The program has a strict policy against administering any type of medication not prescribed by a physician. We will administer only personal prescriptions filled by a pharmacist with a label bearing the child's name and directions for administration. The parent must complete the proper Medication Authorization Form and must give the medication to the P.A.R.K. leaders.
- b. Sunblock for prevention of sunburn is permissible, however each child must have his/her own individual bottle, labeled with his/her child's name. We do not allow aerosol spray; all others sunscreen types are permissible.

12. Voicemail and Cellular Phones

- a. All sites have cellular phones which the P.A.R.K. leader carries with him/her at all times during program hours, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. This is your way of contacting staff at that site.
- b. Cellular phone numbers are as follows:
 - (1) Richard Avenue: 614-571-9623
 - (2) Highland Park: 614-571-9624
- c. You may leave a message on voicemail anytime, 24 hours a day. Messages left on voicemail are retrieved periodically throughout the day.

13. Parent Access

Any custodial parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the P.A.R.K. program is permitted unlimited access to the program during the operating hours for the purposes of contacting the child, evaluating the premises and the care provided. Upon entering the premises the parent or guardian shall notify the P.A.R.K. staff of his/her presence. (See 9.d. for custody issues.)

14. Parent Participation

Parent concerns, opinions and suggestions are always welcome. Parents who need assistance with concerns or questions about the program may contact either the recreation supervisors or the Grove City Parks and Recreation Office. Conferences with P.A.R.K. leaders or the recreation supervisors are available upon request of the parent.

15. Clothing

Send your child dressed appropriately and comfortably. Be ready for warm or cold and rain or shine!

16. Athletic Shoes

The P.A.R.K. program is designed to keep your child(ren) moving and active! We spend a lot of time on our feet playing and participating in physical activities, and it is much easier for children to be involved in all the activities when wearing appropriate shoes. We find that when your child(ren) arrive at P.A.R.K. wearing sandals or flip flops they lose the opportunity to play as much as the other participants and have difficulty joining in on all the fun.

Please have your children arrive to our program already wearing athletic shoes or please send a pair with them daily for active play and the opportunity to be involved in all the various activities planned for the entire day of P.A.R.K.

17. Personal Belongings

If your child brings personal belongings to the program he/she is responsible for those items. Grove City Parks and Recreation Department is not responsible for any damaged or lost items. All personal belongings must be taken home daily, including sunscreen, food, beverages and water bottles. No personal items can be stored at P.A.R.K.

No blankets, pillows or bedding of any kind are permitted at the P.A.R.K. program.

18. Electronic Media Policy

Electronic game devices including, but not limited, to DSI, PSP, I-Touch, Gameboy Advance and other expensive electronic devices including cell phones and tablets are NOT PERMITTED at the P.A.R.K. program. Also, television and video watching during any Grove City Parks and Recreation program is not permitted. The program philosophy dictates that activity choices for program participants shall be creative, active and imaginative and provide enriching programming in a safe, fun environment. The only exception to this policy may be a planned, off-site field trip to a movie.

19. Request to Separate P.A.R.K. Participants from One Another

The P.A.R.K program is designed to provide childcare for school-age children in a group environment, allowing children the opportunity to develop and improve social skills. It is our expectation that all the participants work on building their decision-making and cooperation skills, therefore making intelligent and responsible decisions concerning their own actions and reactions and actions toward one another.

In a group atmosphere, we are aware that children seek out friends, may make new friends, but also naturally face some conflicts with their peers. Keep in mind, conflicts are how children learn to deal with adversity and cope with disappointment.

We cannot uphold any request by a parent to keep specific children separated from each other during our P.A.R.K. program. Focusing so much of the P.A.R.K. leaders' attention on managing/keeping two children separated greatly restricts their ability to provide quality care for the remaining children participating in the program.

20. Field Trips

We take field trips during the summer, departing the P.A.R.K. site according to the provided schedules and always returning by 6 p.m. If your child is unable to attend a field trip, indicate this on the field trip permission slip form and please inform the P.A.R.K. leaders. We are not able to delay trips due to late arrivals, so please make other childcare arrangements as your child will not be able to attend the program the day of that trip. Detailed field trip information is posted at the Parent Table prior to each trip.

Your child needs to bring their lunch in a disposable bag for all bus field trips.

a. Walking Field Trips

We may go on several field trips within walking distance of the P.A.R.K. site your child attends. Some might be as close as across the street, next door or a nearby park. To make these short trips easier for the P.A.R.K. leaders and for you, we ask that you sign and return the Walking Field Trip Permission Form to be kept on file at the program site. You will be informed of the trip ahead of time.

b. Field Trips by Bus

We have scheduled several special field trips to a variety of places in and around central Ohio that require transportation. We transport the children by bus on these trips. The bus has a first aid kit and at least one P.A.R.K. leader is trained in first aid. You are provided a schedule of field trips and asked to sign a separate consent form for each trip. Any additional field trip information is provided at the site prior to the scheduled trip.

All field trip costs are included in your child's summer P.A.R.K. tuition fee. Field trips are designed to have no additional costs for parents. We do not permit participants to bring money to any scheduled field trip. The P.A.R.K. staff determines in advance if the participants should take snacks with them to a field trip location. Water is always available.

Children are required to wear identification bracelets on these field trips.

c. Field Trips to The Big Splash Family Aquatic Center

Each site goes to The Big Splash several times. Highland Park participants are transported by bus; Richard Avenue participants walk. You are given a schedule of these trips before the program begins and asked to sign consent form. Proper swim attire is required to enter the water at The Big Splash, so make sure your child is prepared. Visit BigSplash.GroveCityOhio.gov for more information.

On their first scheduled trip to The Big Splash, children are provided with rules and safety information for the facility. Each child is tested by The Big Splash personnel to designate individual swimming areas at the pool.

Children are required to wear color-coded bracelets to help all leaders and lifeguards identify swimming ability and the areas of the pool in which they can swim.

The Summer P.A.R.K. program follows licensing guidelines set forth by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The guidelines are available on request from the program supervisor. The following are examples of guideline information.

Safety Policies

1. No child is to be left unattended or unsupervised. Children may use the restroom or get a drink with the P.A.R.K. leader's permission unsupervised if the entire group within the program is indoors. If the entire group is outdoors/on the playground, there are group restroom breaks supervised by a P.A.R.K. leader.
2. The staff takes attendance daily and greets each child as he/she arrives at the program.
3. The program staff has immediate access to a working telephone at all times.
4. Fire drills are held monthly at varying times and a record of these are maintained at the site.
5. The fire emergency and weather alert plans are posted at each site.
6. Each child is accounted for on field trips. Each child wears an identification band on his/her wrist with Grove City Parks and Recreation contact information. Emergency forms are accessible at all times during the field trip. We use specialized transportation services and a certified, licensed bus driver for field trips.
7. A person trained in CPR, first aid, communicable disease detection and child abuse prevention shall be available at all times.
8. An injury report is completed when any injury occurs or when any staff member administers first aid. The injury report is filed at the recreation supervisor's office and a copy given to the parent.
9. The recreation supervisors and P.A.R.K. leaders are required to immediately notify the local public children's services agency when they suspect a child has been abused or neglected.

Management of Communicable Disease

1. One staff member is required to complete a six-hour training course in the prevention, recognition and management of communicable diseases including hand washing and disinfecting procedures.
2. All children are observed by a staff member trained in prevention, recognition and management of communicable diseases upon entering the program. Children who have the following symptoms or develop them at the program will be discharged and not permitted to attend until 24 hours after these symptoms are no longer present:
 - a. Diarrhea (pass abnormally loose stool three or more times within a 24-hour period)
 - b. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
 - c. Difficult or rapid breathing
 - d. Yellowish skin or eyes
 - e. Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning or itching of the eyes
 - f. Temperature of 99 degrees Fahrenheit taken axillary (under the arm)
 - g. Untreated infected skin patches
 - h. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
 - i. Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
 - j. Unusual spots or rashes
 - k. Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
 - l. Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness
 - m. Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation
3. Any child exhibiting the above symptoms at the program will be isolated from the other children (within sight and hearing of a leader), provided with a cot and observed carefully for any worsening condition. The parent or guardian will be notified of the necessity to pick up the child immediately. A sign at the school will notify parents if the children have been exposed to a child with a communicable disease or parasite.
4. The P.A.R.K. program has a policy against administering any medication to the children not prescribed by a physician. Proper medication authorization forms must be filled out and signed. Proper procedures must be followed.
5. A child who is mildly ill, “experiencing minor cold symptoms or does not feel well enough to participate in activities,” will be allowed to attend and will be observed for any of the above symptoms of a worsening condition. If any of the above symptoms occur, the procedures listed under number (3) are followed and the parent or guardian is contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible. However, even if the child is mildly ill, it is our policy that if the child is well enough to attend P.A.R.K., he/she is expected to participate in the program activities (e.g., going outside with the group).
6. The Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart is available at each site.

Summer P.A.R.K. Reminders

1. *Send a backpack or bag with your child each day.*

Pack it daily with the items your child will need: lunch and two snacks, sunscreen, clean water bottle and any other items from home. Don't forget swimming items on days your child is scheduled to go to The Big Splash. Electronic devices and bedding items are not permitted.

2. *Build a partnership with the P.A.R.K. staff.*

Introduce yourself and keep us informed of any important events that may affect your child: moving to a new house, pending vacation, ailing family members or other changes at home. All information shared with us is considered confidential and helps us understand and empathize with a child's stresses.

3. *Provide plenty of food.*

Every day at P.A.R.K., we eat a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. Although this seems like a lot of food, please remember that at P.A.R.K. the children are very active, spending lots of time outside, playing organized games, running on the playground and jumping rope. An afternoon snack is often most important as the children begin to tire and wind down. Even a bag of dry cereal or an apple will boost a child's energy. Taking home a tired, hungry child can be disastrous for parents too!

4. *Make your child's drop-off experience pleasant.*

Your child needs your full attention for these few minutes; avoid rushing in and out, and ignore your cell phone.

5. *Send your child to P.A.R.K. with comfortable shoes.*

If he/she insists on wearing flip flops, pack a pair of athletic shoes in the backpack. We often play group games, and it is hard to participate in platform shoes or strappy sandals. Comfortable shoes are especially important on any field trips that require a lot of walking.

6. *Make sure your child gets a good night's sleep.*

Tired children are less able to work successfully with friends, handle conflicts and keep up with the group's activities.

7. *Be ready to listen to your child's concerns.*

In any group setting there are frequent conflicts. Children often need to discuss emotional events with parents to help wind down. Avoid offering solutions; trust your child to learn to handle these situations with our help. Remember that the situation your child is sharing probably lasted less than five minutes. Be sure to keep staff informed of any on-going concerns that your child shares with you.

8. *Label all items from home.*

It can be upsetting when children bring similar items from home only to get them confused.

9. *Share any questions about the program with us immediately.*

We will be happy to answer questions or explain any policy or decision. Small frustrations that are not addressed can quickly grow into concerns.