

**GROVE CITY PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**Programmed After-school**  
**Recreation for Kids!**

**2019-2020**  
**BEFORE SCHOOL**  
**P.A.R.K.**  
**PARENT**  
**HANDBOOK**



**GROVE CITY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
614-277-3050 • Kingston Center, 3226 Kingston Ave., Grove City, OH 43123  
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# LOCATION INFORMATION

## OFFICE

### Grove City Parks and Recreation

- Office: 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 (Allow 24 hours)
- Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday
- To leave a voicemail message for the P.A.R.K. Recreation Supervisors, call 614-277-3063 or 614-277-3064.

## BEFORE SCHOOL P.A.R.K. SITE

- Operation Hours: 6 a.m. to when buses transport (latest is 9:15 a.m.), Monday through Friday when the South-Western City School District is in session.
- Contact: **Before School P.A.R.K. cell phone 614-419-9910**  
One leader will wear the cell phone at all times during Before School P.A.R.K. hours. This is how parents contact staff at the site or leave a message during non-staffed hours.
- Cell phones are turned on only during Before School P.A.R.K. hours (6-9:15 a.m.). A message can be left at any time.
- Before School P.A.R.K. serves the following Grove City area schools:
  - (1) Bolton Crossing Elementary School
  - (2) Buckeye Woods Elementary School
  - (3) Highland Park Elementary School
  - (4) J.C. Sommer Elementary School
  - (5) Monterey Elementary School
  - (6) Richard Avenue Elementary School
  - (7) Hayes Intermediate School
  - (8) Holt Crossing Intermediate School
  - (9) Park Street Intermediate School



Dear Parents:

Welcome to Before-school P.A.R.K. (Programmed After-school Recreation for Kids) held at the Kingston Center. The City of Grove City Parks and Recreation Department is pleased to provide this school-age childcare program for your family. We are delighted to be able to provide care for your child before he/she attends school each day. Our program begins the first day of school and ends the last day of school.

Before-school P.A.R.K. operates from 6 a.m. until the time children are transported to their designated school sites. Buses begin transporting elementary students at approximately 7:40 a.m. Intermediate students begin transportation at approximately 8:15 a.m. Your child must be present at the program before this time to avoid errors in transportation. If there are any changes with bus numbers or times, parents will be notified with an updated schedule.

This handbook was prepared for your convenience to inform you of policies and procedures and to answer many questions you may have. We ask that you keep this handbook in a convenient place. **You are responsible for reading and understanding the information in this handbook.** Our goal is for the program to run as smoothly and efficiently as possible. With your participation and cooperation, it will continue to be a quality childcare program.

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

Sincerely,

*Megan Williams*

*Amanda Gehres*

Megan Williams

Amanda Gehres

Recreation Supervisors

# Before School P.A.R.K. Program Policies and Procedures

## I. Enrollment

### 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. A \$30 non-refundable registration fee must accompany each registration (fee covers both before- and after-school options for a single child).

### 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 P.A.R.K. program, his/her place is held until the tuition payment deadline. Only those children enrolled in a South-Western City School District elementary or intermediate school located in the corporation limits of Grove City can be enrolled in the program.

## II. Tuition

### 1. Tuition Payments

- a. Tuition for the 2019-2020 school year is \$95 per child per month for elementary students and \$107 for intermediate students, regardless of the number of weeks or days off from school in that month.
- b. The P.A.R.K. program provides you with Tuition Payment Slips. You have until the tuition payment deadline to pay.
- c. 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. Pay by fax to 614-277-3050; allow 24 hours for receipt.
  - (4) In the drop box at the Kingston Center after hours, seven days per week.
- d. Make checks payable to: **City of Grove City.**
- e. If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, a \$25 processing fee is due in addition 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.
- f. Reimbursements are not made for child absences, vacations, school holidays or inclement weather days.

- g. All tuition payments are due on the 15th of the month for the following month. If the 15th falls on a weekend or holiday, the tuition is due the next business day. **Tuition payments must be accompanied by a tuition coupon slip and are due by:**
- (1) Thursday, Aug. 15 for August/September
  - (2) Monday, Sept. 16 for October
  - (3) Tuesday, Oct. 15 for November
  - (4) Friday, Nov. 15 for December
  - (5) Monday, Dec. 16 for January
  - (6) Wednesday, Jan. 15 for February
  - (7) Tuesday, Feb. 18 for March
  - (8) Monday, March 16 for April
  - (9) Wednesday, April 15 for May/June
- h. Once a child is enrolled in the program, his/her spot is held until the tuition payment deadline as indicated above. **Any payment not received by the due date may result in your child being dropped from the program.** A non-refundable registration fee of \$30 will be required to re-enroll your child. Registration of children on the waiting list(s) begins the day following the tuition due date.
- i. 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.
- j. A written notice is required if you need to withdraw your child. Refunds will only be issued if you withdraw your child prior to the start of the month. Once the month has started full or pro-rated refunds will not be issued.

### III. Attendance

#### 1. Attendance Record

A sign-in sheet is located at the program site. A parent or guardian must sign in the child each day. If the parent/guardian does not sign in the child, the leaders assume the child is not there for the day.

#### 2. Inclement Weather Days

- a. Before School P.A.R.K. operates only on days when the South-Western City School District is in session.
- b. P.A.R.K. is not held on scheduled holidays or other days off such as for teacher in service. Please refer to the school calendar for a list of the closed days so you are prepared to find alternative care now.
- c. P.A.R.K. is not held on inclement weather days. Tune in to the local radio and TV stations to hear the weather and school-closing reports. P.A.R.K. does not issue refunds for calamity days.
- d. In the case of a delay to the start time for school due to fog or snow, our program still operates from 6 a.m. until the buses are able to transport the children to their designated sites. Our leaders remain at the program site until all children have left.

## IV. Illness Policy

1. If your child exhibits any of the symptoms listed below at the before-school program, the following procedures are followed:
  - a. An ill child is isolated from the rest of the group within sight of the leaders and provided with a place to rest.
  - b. A parent/guardian is called immediately to pick up the child.
  - c. A leader waits with the child at the program site until a parent/guardian arrives. It is imperative to react quickly to a call from our program. Our leaders have other commitments after the before-school program.
2. A child is considered ill if he/she displays any of the following symptoms:
  - Diarrhea (passing abnormally loose stools three or more times within a 24-hour period).
  - Severe coughing causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
  - Difficult or rapid breathing.
  - Yellowish skin or eyes.
  - Eyes exhibiting redness, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes or burning/itching.
  - Temperature of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness. Temperature is taken via axillary method with a digital thermometer.
  - Untreated skin ailments such as infected patches, unusual spots or rashes.
  - Unusual dark urine or gray or white stool.
  - Stiff neck with an elevated temperature.
  - Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
  - Vomiting more than one time when accompanied by another sign or symptom of illness.
  - Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infestation.
3. Any child exhibiting the above symptoms is isolated from the rest of the group within sight of the leaders, provided with a cot and observed carefully. The parent/guardian is called immediately to pick up the child within 30 minutes.
4. A sign is posted at the school informing parents of exposure to a communicable disease when appropriate. A communicable disease chart also is posted at each site.

## V. Emergency Pickup

1. If you are contacted by P.A.R.K. staff or the program supervisors during the before-school hours for the immediate need to pick up your child from P.A.R.K. due to an illness, injury or any other circumstance that jeopardizes the safety of your child or that of any other P.A.R.K. participant, staff member or parent, it is imperative that you adhere to this request. Please have arrangements in place to be able to accommodate such situations in a reasonable period of time.
2. If you are unable to pick up your child or cannot get to the program site within a reasonable time period, it is your responsibility to have alternate persons available to pick your child up.
3. Please be mindful of the stress this may place on your child or the P.A.R.K. staff as they care for your child and the other participants in the program.
4. Thank you for your cooperation, understanding and taking responsibility in these situations.

## VI. Daily Activities

### 1. Breakfast

- a. Breakfast is included for no extra cost and is provided to the children daily. It is available from approximately 6:30 a.m. Arrive by 7:15 a.m. to be assured of breakfast.
- b. A variety of breakfast items are provided such as fruit, milk, juice, toasted English muffin, open-faced bagel, Pop Tarts, a variety of cereals, cheese sticks or breakfast pizza.

### 2. P.A.R.K. Activities

Your child is provided with a variety of activities ranging from rest, quiet activities and homework time to arts, board games, free-play activities to programmed recreational activities. The activities are chosen taking into consideration that children are at different developmental stages and abilities.

### 3. Clothing and Personal Belongings

Send your child dressed appropriately and comfortably, ready for warm or cold, rain or shine! When the weather is colder, children should have a warm coat, head covering and gloves.

If your child brings personal belongings to the program, he/she is solely responsible for those items. The Grove City Parks and Recreation Department is not responsible for any damaged or lost items.

### 4. Medication Administration

The P.A.R.K. 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 authorization forms and must give the medication to the P.A.R.K. leaders.

### 5. Electronic Media Policy

Electronic game devices including, but not limited to, Nintendo DS, Gameboy Advance and PSP, and other expensive electronic devices such as cell phones and MP3 players are not permitted at the P.A.R.K. program. Watching television or other videos during any Grove City Parks and Recreation program is not permitted. Program philosophy dictates that activity choices for program participants shall be creative, active and imaginative and provide enriching programming in a safe, fun environment.



## **VII. Walking Permission**

### **1. Walking to School**

Participants who are students at J.C. Sommer Elementary School and Park Street Intermediate School are escorted by P.A.R.K. staff as they walk to school. In case of severe weather, J.C. Sommer students may be transported to their school by the Evans Center bus. If your child attends either school, please sign the appropriate Walking Permission Slip enclosed and submit it to the P.A.R.K. staff.

## **VIII. Parent Access**

1. The parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the P.A.R.K. program shall be permitted unlimited access to the program during the operating hours for the purposes of contacting the child, evaluating the premises or the care provided. Upon entering the premises the parent or guardian should notify the P.A.R.K. staff of his/her presence.
2. Please remember that P.A.R.K. cannot deny non-custodial parent access to the child. Under the laws of the state of Ohio, both parents have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. An enrolling parent who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the Emergency Medical Form must file an official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody). Absent that document, the P.A.R.K. program may provide access to the child to either parent, provided that the parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.
3. Parent concerns, opinions and suggestions are always welcome. Parents who need assistance with concerns or questions about the program may contact the P.A.R.K. leaders, recreation supervisors or the City of Grove City Parks and Recreation Office.
4. Conferences with P.A.R.K. leaders or recreation supervisors are available upon request of the parent.

## **IX. Request to Separate P.A.R.K. Participants from One Another.**

1. P.A.R.K. 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 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.
2. We are aware that in a group atmosphere children seek out friends, may make new friends, but also naturally face some conflicts with their peers. Keep in mind that conflicts are how children learn to deal with adversity and cope with disappointment.
3. In situations where ongoing personality conflicts do occur, 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 or keeping two children separated greatly restricts their ability to provide quality care for the remaining children participating in the program.

## **X. Behavior Management Policy**

1. The 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 established to protect each child from hurting himself/herself or others and damaging the 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.
  2. Our P.A.R.K. environment is designed to promote success, allowing for much freedom within the limits. Children need to explore the limits of each setting. Just as your child tests you, each child will probably test us sometime during the year, 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:
    - 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
        - Redirect child's actions
        - Offer choices
        - Offer solutions
        - Removal from the problem situationIf the behavior is consistent or habitual or is a single 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.
3. 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.

## **XI. Emergencies and Safety Policies**

1. Emergency Medical Forms must be filled out completely by the parent or guardian before the first day of the program. These are kept on site.
2. **All children need to have at least two emergency contacts written on their Emergency Medical Forms. These people should be no more than 30 minutes away from the site.**
3. Actions for emergencies follow the procedures as stated on the Emergency Medical Form.
4. 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.
5. Children will be transported to the source of emergency medical or dental care by parent or guardian or by medical providers only depending on the seriousness of the accident.
6. Additional Safety Policies
  - a. No child is to be left unattended or unsupervised. Children may use the restroom or get a drink unsupervised with the leaders' permission 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.
  - b. The staff has immediate access to a working telephone at all times. Each site has a department-issued cell phone that one staff member has on or near him/her at all times.
  - c. Fire drills are held randomly on a monthly basis. Tornado drills are also discussed.
  - d. The Parks and Recreation Department and staff are required to immediately notify the local public children services agency when they suspect that a child has been abused or neglected.
  - e. An injury report is completed and filed when injuries occur. A parent will be asked to sign this form and will be given a copy of the report.
  - f. During colder weather children are expected to be dressed appropriately for outside play including a warm coat, head covering, gloves and other necessary clothing.

***The P.A.R.K. program follows licensing guidelines set forth by the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. The guidelines are available on request from the Recreation Supervisor.***