



CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY, RECREATION AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Gray M Sanborn | Hunting Ridge | Jane Addams | Lake Louise | Lincoln | Marion Jordan
Pleasant Hill | Stuart R Paddock | Virginia Lake | Winston Campus Elementary



Parent Handbook

2026-2027 School Year

(UPDATED 06/29/26)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

C.A.R.E. CONTACTS

- 1 C.A.R.E. Site & Admin Contact Information

QUICK FACTS SUMMARY

- 2 Hours of Operation
- 2 School Non-Attendance Days | Half Days
- 2 After-School C.A.R.E. Photo ID Requirements
- 2 Mandatory Absence Reporting
- 3 Medication | EPI Pens | Inhalers
- 3 Schedule Change Process & Deadlines
- 3 Personal Electronics
- 3 ADA Accommodations
- 3 Tax ID Number

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- 4 Foreword
- 4 Schools Served & Eligibility Criteria
- 4 Separation from School District Operations

ENROLLMENT & REGISTRATION

- 5 Enrollment Procedures & Priority Registration
- 5 Eligibility & Site-Specific Restrictions
- 5 Schedule Change Process & Deadlines
- 5 Refund/Withdrawal Policy

TUITION & PAYMENTS

- 7 Tuition Structure & Billing Cycle
- 7 EFT Requirements & Payment Schedule
- 7 Late Payment Policies
- 7 Part-Time Option Additional Day Add-On Fee
- 7 Tax Statements | Dependent Care Forms | Park District Tax ID

PARENT COMMUNICATION

- 9 Parent Contact Update Procedures
- 9 Parent Communication from C.A.R.E.
- 9 Reachability Expectations During Program Hours
- 10 Emergency Contact Requirements

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

- 11 Hours
- 11 Escort Requirements for Arrival and Departure
- 11 ID Requirements
- 11 Absence Notification Requirements
- 12 How to Report Absences
- 12 Failure to Report an Absence Fee
- 12 Emergency Protocol for Unreported Absences

- 12** Consequences for Unreported Absences
- 13** Late Pick-Up Fee
- 13** Late Pick-Up Communication Expectations
- 13** Late Pick Up with No Parent Contact
- 13** Repeated Late Pick Ups

HEALTH & SAFETY

- 14** Medication | EPI Pens | Inhalers
- 14** Illness Protocols
- 15** Communicable Disease Protocols
- 15** Accidents & Medical Emergencies

FAMILY POLICIES

- 16** Joint Custody Documentation & Compliance
- 16** Mandated Reporting Policy
- 16** Non-Solicitation Policy
- 16** Parent Behavior Expectations On-Site

CHILD EXPECTATIONS & BEHAVIOR

- 18** Code of Conduct
- 18** Behavior Policy
- 19** Disciplinary Procedures
- 19** Zero Tolerance for Violence
- 19** Termination of Participation Guidelines
- 19** Student Attire
- 20** Toilet Training Requirements

ACTIVITIES & ENRICHMENT

- 21** Homework Policy
- 21** Activities at C.A.R.E.
- 21** Extracurricular Activities
- 22** Snack & Food Policy
- 22** Photography Permissions
- 22** Babysitting Policy
- 23** Personal Items & Electronics Policy

INCLUSION & ACCOMMODATIONS

- 24** Adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act
- 24** Accommodations and Support
- 25** Requesting Aides or Accommodations

SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE DAYS | HALF DAYS | SCHOOL CLOSINGS

- 26** School Non-Attendance Day Programs
- 26** Half-Day of School Coverage Options
- 27** School Closings
- 27** C.A.R.E. Parent Calendar

CONTACT INFORMATION

C.A.R.E. SITE CONTACT INFORMATION

Each C.A.R.E. site has its own phone number and email. Parents should program the site's phone number into their mobile devices to ensure calls are answered promptly.

LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL
Gray M. Sanborn	(847) 521-6111	GMSCARE@palatineparks.org
Hunting Ridge	(847) 521-6122	HRCARE@palatineparks.org
Jane Addams	(847) 521-6135	JACARE@palatineparks.org
Lake Louise	(847) 521-6144	LLCARE@palatineparks.org
Lincoln School	(847) 521-6147	LSCARE@palatineparks.org
Marion Jordan	(847) 521-6149	MJCARE@palatineparks.org
Pleasant Hill	(847) 521-6158	PHCARE@palatineparks.org
Stuart R. Paddock	(847) 521-6160	SRPCARE@palatineparks.org
Virginia Lake	(847) 521-6164	VLCARE@palatineparks.org
Winston Campus Elementary	(847) 521-6174	WCECARE@palatineparks.org

C.A.R.E. ADMIN CONTACT INFORMATION

The C.A.R.E. Admin Office can be reached for administrative questions, billing, registration, and program-wide concerns.

LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL
C.A.R.E. Admin Office	(847) 705-5132	care@palatineparks.org
C.A.R.E. Billing, Donna Orr	(847) 496-6240	dorr@palatineparks.org
C.A.R.E. Coordinator, Heidi Linehan	(847) 496-6299	hlinehan@palatineparks.org
C.A.R.E. Manager, Cathi Fabjance	(847) 496-6298	cfabjance@palatineparks.org

QUICK FACTS SUMMARY

HOURS OF OPERATION

- **Before-School:** Operates from 7:00 a.m. until the start of the school day.
- **After-School:** Operates from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m.

SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE DAYS | HALF DAYS

- **School Non-Attendance Days:** A [school day-off program](#) is offered for an additional fee on most school non-attendance days.
- **Half Days of School:** After-School C.A.R.E. does not operate on early dismissal (half) days at school sites. These days are not included in annual tuition due to staff development requirements.
- **Parent Calendar:** Refer to the C.A.R.E. Parent Calendar (available on the C.A.R.E. Program page on the Palatine Park District website) for the days when school and C.A.R.E. are closed.
<https://www.palatineparks.org/program/care-before-after-school/>

AFTER-SCHOOL C.A.R.E. PHOTO ID REQUIREMENTS

- **Required Identification:** A photo ID is required at every pick-up, including for parents/guardians. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, state ID, passport, or a clear photo of the ID on a mobile device.
- **Notification to Emergency Contacts & Person's Authorized to Pick-Up:** Please make sure everyone picking up, including parents/guardians, always brings a photo ID with them.

MANDATORY ABSENCE REPORTING

- **Afternoon Absence:** Parents must notify the C.A.R.E. Site Director if their child will be absent from the afternoon session. School attendance records are not shared with C.A.R.E.
- **How to Report:** Call, text, or email your C.A.R.E. site (contacts listed on [page 1](#)).
- **Deadline:** Notice must be provided no later than 30 minutes before the school day ends.
- **Failure to Report Fee:** A \$10 fee is charged for the first incident; each subsequent occurrence increases by \$5.
- **Service Termination:** Five unreported absences in a school year will result in dismissal from the program.
- **Morning Absences:** No notification needed for Before-School C.A.R.E.

MEDICATION | EPINEPHRINE PENS | INHALERS

- **Medical Information:** Parents must inform C.A.R.E. staff of all relevant medical needs; this information is not shared by the school district.
- **C.A.R.E. Medication Supply:** A separate supply of medication (e.g., inhalers, epinephrine pens) must be provided directly to C.A.R.E. C.A.R.E. staff do not have access to the school nurse's office after school hours.
- **Medication Dispensing Form:** A Medication Dispensing Form must be completed and submitted. This form can be found on the Park District website under the Registration Information tab and the Forms and Permits link. <https://www.palatineparks.org/forms-permits-faqs/>

SCHEDULE CHANGE PROCESS & DEADLINES

- **Schedule Change Request Deadline:** Schedule Change Forms are due by the **25th of the month** for changes to begin the following month.
- **Part-Time Option Day Changes:** Families enrolled in part-time options must select up to three attendance days; adjustments must also be submitted by the 25th.
- **Change Subject to Availability:** Schedule changes depend on space availability.
- **Fee adjustments:** Fee adjustments appear in the next billing cycle.
- **Schedule Change Form:** The schedule change form can be found on the Palatine Park District website C.A.R.E. Program page or at any of the Park District registration desks. <https://www.palatineparks.org/c-a-r-e-schedule-change-withdrawal-form/>

PERSONAL ELECTRONICS

- **Prohibited Electronics:** Personal electronics, including cell phones, smart watches, tablets, and gaming devices, may not be used during C.A.R.E.
- **Personal Electronics Brought to C.A.R.E.:** Devices must remain off and stored in backpacks.
- **Liability Disclaimer:** C.A.R.E. is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

- **Special Accommodations:** Accommodations may be available for children receiving special services at school.
- **Student Information:** Because student information is not shared between the district and the Park District, parents must notify C.A.R.E. staff of any support needs or requests.
- Additional details are available on [page 24](#).

TAX ID NUMBER

- **Palatine Park District Tax ID Number:** 36-6008763
- **Tax Statements:** End-of-year tax statements can be found by logging into your Park District Account.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

FOREWORD

Welcome to the **Children's Activity, Recreation, and Enrichment (C.A.R.E.) Program**.

The C.A.R.E. Program provides a safe and high-quality childcare environment through structured and unstructured activities such as homework time, arts and crafts, hands-on projects, music, outdoor play, and board games.

- Before-School C.A.R.E. runs from the first to the last day of school.
- After-School C.A.R.E. runs from the first full day to the last full day of school; half days are not included in the annual fees.

This handbook contains essential policies and procedures. Families are encouraged to review and keep it accessible throughout the school year.

SCHOOLS SERVED & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- **C.A.R.E. Locations:** C.A.R.E. operates before- and after-school programs at 10 District 15 elementary schools in Palatine.
 - Gray M Sanborn
 - Hunting Ridge
 - Jane Addams
 - Lake Louise
 - Lincoln
 - Marion Jordan
 - Pleasant Hill
 - Stuart R Paddock
 - Virginia Lake
 - Winston Campus Elementary
- **Eligibility:** Eligibility is restricted to children who attend the same school as the C.A.R.E. location they are applying to.
- **Transfers:** Transfers between C.A.R.E. locations are not permitted if the child attends school at a different location in the district during the day.

SEPARATION FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

- **Park District Program:** The Park District rents space from the school district for the C.A.R.E. program. They operate as entirely separate entities.
- **Student Information is Not Shared:** Student information - including attendance records, absences, medical details, or IEP/504 Plans - is not shared between the two organizations.
- **Necessary Information from Parents:** Parents are responsible for reporting absences directly to C.A.R.E. staff and keeping them informed of any relevant medical information.
- **Medication Must be Provided to C.A.R.E.:** If a child requires an EPI pen, inhaler, or other medication during C.A.R.E. hours, parents must provide a separate supply specifically for C.A.R.E. **C.A.R.E. staff do not have access to the school nurse's office after hours.**

ENROLLMENT & REGISTRATION

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES & PRIORITY REGISTRATION

- **Advanced Priority Registration:** Families currently enrolled in C.A.R.E. receive priority registration for the following school year.
- **New Registration for Siblings:** Priority registration also applies to siblings entering the program for the first time.

ELIGIBILITY & SITE-SPECIFIC RESTRICTIONS

- **Enrollment Eligibility:** Enrollment eligibility is limited to children who attend the same school as the C.A.R.E. location they are applying to.
- **Transfers:** Transfers between C.A.R.E. sites are not permitted if the child attends a different school within the district.

SCHEDULE CHANGE PROCESS & DEADLINES

- **Schedule Change Procedure:** Schedule changes must be submitted on a Schedule Change/Withdrawal Form.
- **Form:** Available online or at Palatine Park District registration desk.
<https://www.palatineparks.org/c-a-r-e-schedule-change-withdrawal-form/>
- **Deadline:** Requests submitted by the 25th of the month take effect on the first of the following month, if space allows.
- **Fees:** A \$10.00 processing fee applies to all schedule changes.
- **Approval Requirements:** Requests that add before- or after-school sessions require approval from the C.A.R.E. Coordinator; removals simply take effect at the next billing cycle. 0
- **Part-Time Schedule:** Families in part-time enrollment must choose three consistent days. Any changes must be submitted by the 25th of the month prior.

REFUND/WITHDRAWAL POLICY

- **Withdrawal Procedure:** Families must submit a Schedule Change/Withdrawal Form by the 25th of the month for the withdrawal to take effect on the 1st of the following month.
- **Form:** Available online or at any Park District registration desk. <https://www.palatineparks.org/c-a-r-e-schedule-change-withdrawal-form/>
- **Refunds:**
 - **Fee Adjustments:** Dropping will not affect the monthly fee for the month in which the change is submitted. *Billing adjustments begin the following payment.*

- **No Prorating:** C.A.R.E. fees cover direct operating costs such as staffing, facility use, and supplies. *Fees are not prorated for missed days.*
- **Suspensions:** No refunds are issued for days missed due to suspension from the program unless a student is placed on a pause exceeding 3 days.
- **Refund Method:**
 - **Refund to Account:** Approved refunds will be issued as a household credit, unless another method is requested.
 - **Refund to Original Form of Payment:** A \$5 fee applies to refunds issued back to the original method of payment.

TUITION & PAYMENTS

TUITION STRUCTURE & BILLING CYCLE

- **Days Paid For:** C.A.R.E. Program tuition is based on:
 - **Before-School C.A.R.E.:** 174 before-school attendance days.
 - **After-School C.A.R.E.:** 171 after-school attendance days.
 - **Half Days:** After-school C.A.R.E. on half days is not included in annual tuition.
- **Installments:** Annual tuition is divided into ten equal monthly installments, regardless of the number of program days in the month it is billed. The monthly installment is determined by the schedule selected during registration.

EFT REQUIREMENTS & PAYMENT SCHEDULE

- **Payment Method:** Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) is required for all families.
- **Payment Dates:** Payments are automatically withdrawn on the 1st of each month, August through May.

LATE PAYMENT POLICIES

- **Declined Payments:**
 - **Follow-Up Requirements:** If an automatic payment is declined, families must contact the Park District immediately to resolve the balance.
 - **Program Suspension:** Accounts not paid by the 15th result in suspension
 - **Fees:** A \$25 late fee applies to declined or late payments.
 - **Program Termination:**
 - Accounts unpaid by the last day of the month may result in termination for the school year.
 - Five late payments in one school year will result in program dismissal.

PART-TIME OPTION ADDITIONAL DAY ADD-ON FEE

- **Adding an Additional Day or Before or After School Session:** If you need to occasionally add a morning or afternoon (outside of your child's regular schedule), please coordinate directly with your C.A.R.E. Site Director.
 - **Booking:** Requests for extra days must be approved in advance and are subject to space availability.
 - **Fees:** You will be billed the Additional Day Fee by the Park District.

TAX STATEMENTS | DEPENDENT CARE FORMS | TAX ID

- **Tax Statements:** If you need an account statement or tax statement, you can download that information by logging into your park district account.
- **Dependent Care Claim Forms:** Dependent care claim forms can be submitted to care@palatineparks.org.
- **Tax ID #:** 36-6008763

PARENT COMMUNICATION

PARENT CONTACT UPDATE PROCEDURES

- **Parent Information Updates:** Parents must keep all contact information up to date throughout the school year to ensure timely communication.
- **Location of Updates:** If your contact information changes during the school year, it is your responsibility to update both your [ePACT](#) account and your [Park District](#) account.
- **Current Email Address:** Families should verify that the Park District has a current and accurate email address on file.

PARENT COMMUNICATION FROM C.A.R.E.

- **Phone Calls:** Staff must be able to reach a parent/guardian regarding safety issues, unreported absences, or urgent needs. Parents are strongly encouraged to save the site phone number to their contacts. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
- **Emails:** Important program information is sent through both ePACT and the Park District registration system.
- **Texts:** Time-sensitive reminders may be sent through ePACT or the Remind app (e.g., registration deadlines, door changes, emergency closings).
- **In Person:** Information that is handed out at your child's C.A.R.E. site will be delivered to the person signing your child out of the program. *This includes disciplinary notices, late pick-up notices, and correspondence from the site, park district or C.A.R.E. administrative office.*
- **Important Information:** Failure to maintain accurate contact information can result in missed communication that affects program participation.

REACHABILITY EXPECTATIONS DURING PROGRAM HOURS

- **Reachability Requirements:** Parents/guardians must be reachable within **30 minutes** during all times their child is attending the program.
- **Failure to Respond:**
 - Calls from C.A.R.E. staff must be returned within 30 minutes. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
- **Suspension or Termination of Services:** Continued inability to reach a parent/guardian may result in suspension or termination of services until updated contact information is provided.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

To ensure the safety and well-being of all participants, accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information is required for every child enrolled in the C.A.R.E. Program.

- **Account Setup:** Parents will receive an email invitation from ePACT Network to create an account and complete their child's emergency profile. *Children will not be permitted to attend the C.A.R.E. Program until the ePACT profile is fully submitted.*
- **Account Updates:** All updates must be made in ePACT (<https://www.ePACTnetwork.com/>) as needed, including changes to:
 - Home, work, and cell phone numbers
 - Email address
 - Home address
 - Medical information
 - Authorized pick-up contacts
- **Submission Deadline:** The profile must be submitted at least one week before the child's start date, or the start may be delayed.
- **Required Information:** The emergency profile must include:
 - Phone numbers where a parent/guardian can be reached during program hours.
 - Contact information for a local emergency contact who can pick up your child if needed.
- **Emergency Contact vs Authorized Pick-Up List:** To ensure your child's safety and smooth transitions during pick-up, please review the following guidelines:
 - **Emergency Contacts:** Individuals listed as emergency contacts are authorized to:
 - Pick up the child if parents cannot be reached.
 - Make emergency decisions if necessary.
 - **Authorized Pick-Up List:** Individuals listed on the Authorized Pick-Up list are authorized to:
 - Includes individuals permitted to pick up the child during normal program hours only.
 - Individuals must be listed in ePACT.
- **ID Requirements:** Families must instruct Emergency Contacts and individuals authorized to pick up a child from the program that they will need to present an ID each time they pick up at C.A.R.E.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP PROCEDURES

HOURS

- **Arrival (Drop-Off):** Begins at **7:00 a.m.** Parents should not arrive earlier, as staff preparation is underway.
- **Departure (Pick-Up):** Ends promptly at **6:00 p.m.** Staff are not available to stay past closing time; if a family needs to speak with C.A.R.E. staff and need an extended discussion that would go past 6:00 p.m., they may need to request a meeting at another time.

ESCORT REQUIREMENTS FOR ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

- **Arrival (Drop-Off):**
 - Children must be escorted into the building by a parent/guardian or authorized adult.
 - C.A.R.E. staff members must check the child in.
 - C.A.R.E. staff are not able to get a child from the car. They must be walked in by a parent.
- **Departure (Pick-Up):**
 - Children are released only to adults listed in ePACT as individuals authorized pick-up the child.
 - All children must be checked out of the program by C.A.R.E. staff.
 - Children may **not** leave the building or program area unescorted under any circumstances.
- **Limited Visitation:**
 - To protect everyone's privacy and safety, drop-off and pick-up should be completed promptly. Extended visits are not permitted.

ID REQUIREMENTS

- **Photo ID:** A photo ID is **required** at pick up every day, including parents and guardians.
- **Pick Up Restrictions:**
 - **Parent or Legal Guardian:** If a parent or legal guardian does not have permission to pick up the child, legal documentation must be submitted to the C.A.R.E. site or Park District. See [Page 16](#) for additional information.
 - **Other Restricted Individuals:** All other individuals who are restricted from picking up a child must be listed in ePACT.

ABSENCE NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- **Before-School C.A.R.E.:** Notification is not required if a child will not be attending before-school C.A.R.E. on a given day.

- **After-School C.A.R.E.:** Families must inform the Site Director at least **30 minutes before school dismissal** if their child will not attend the afternoon session.

HOW TO REPORT ABSENCES

- **Call:** Call the C.A.R.E. site where your child attends. Voicemail is accepted any time of day.
- **Text:** Send a text to the site's mobile number.
- **Email:** Email the C.A.R.E. site directly. Do not email C.A.R.E. Administration.
Contact information is listed on [page 1](#) of this handbook.

FAILURE TO REPORT AN ABSENCE FEE

Failure to report absence fees are not in place to be punitive; they reflect our commitment to child safety and program integrity. When a child is unexpectedly absent, staff must initiate a time-sensitive safety response that impacts the entire program. Timely communication from families is essential.

EMERGENCY PROTOCOL FOR UNREPORTED ABSENCES

When a child does not arrive as expected and no notice has been received, staff must initiate an emergency protocol to ensure the child's safety. Staff must:

1. Contact the school office to verify attendance or early pick-up.
2. Hold the buses from leaving to check with transportation to confirm the child was not placed on a bus, potentially causing delays for all student bus riders at the school.
3. Attempt to reach parents/guardians using the contact information on file. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
4. Contact emergency contacts if parents/guardians cannot be reached.
5. If we are still not able to confirm the location of the child after 15 minutes, and all of the above steps have been followed, the Park District will request a law-enforcement welfare check.

This protocol requires immediate attention from multiple staff members, diverts supervision away from other children, and disrupts the program. Your cooperation in reporting absences promptly helps us maintain a safe, efficient, and focused environment for all participants.

CONSEQUENCES FOR UNREPORTED ABSENCES

- **Failure to Report Absence Fees:**
 - **First unreported absence:** \$10.00 fee
 - **Each additional occurrence:** Fee increases by \$5.00
- **Termination of Services:** After **five unreported absences** in one school year, families will receive formal notice, and the child will be dismissed from the C.A.R.E. Program for the remainder of the year.

LATE PICK-UP FEE

- **Late Pick-Up Fee Policy:** While we understand that occasional delays may occur due to traffic, weather, or other unforeseen circumstances, a late fee will be charged for every instance of late pick-up—regardless of circumstance.
- **Late Pick-Up Fee Structure:** Fees help cover additional staffing and operational costs required when the program remains open past scheduled hours.
 - \$10.00 for the first 10 minutes after 6:00 p.m.
 - \$1.00 per minute for each additional minute.
 - Late fees are based on the school’s official clock.
 - Charges will be applied to the credit or debit card on file.

LATE PICK-UP COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

- Parents should call the site as soon as they know they may be late. Site phone numbers are listed on [page 1](#) of this handbook.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to arrange an alternative pick-up person if they cannot arrive by 6:00 p.m.

LATE PICK UP WITH NO PARENT CONTACT

- If a child is still at the site after 6:00 p.m. and no parent contact has been received, staff will:
 - Attempt to reach parents and emergency contacts.
 - Contact local authorities if no one is reached within 30 minutes.
- **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**

REPEATED LATE PICK-UPS

If a household accumulates five late pick-ups in one school year, it may result in termination of services for the remainder of the school year.

HEALTH & SAFETY

MEDICATION | EPINEPHRINE PENS | INHALERS

If medication must be administered while at the C.A.R.E. Program, please see the requirements below:

- **Medication Stored at School:** C.A.R.E. **does not** have access to medication stored in the school nurse's office.
- **Medication Supply:** Parents must provide a **separate supply** of any medication needed during C.A.R.E. hours (e.g., inhalers, epinephrine pens).
- **Medication Dispensing Form:** A completed Medication Dispensing Form is required before staff can store or supervise medication use. (<https://www.palatineparks.org/forms-permits-faqs/>)
- **Prescription:** Medication must arrive in its original or pharmacy-labeled container.
- **Proper Labeling:** Medication is to be brought to the C.A.R.E. site in its original container or one properly labeled by the pharmacy or physician.
- **Side Effect Information:** Parents must provide printed information about possible medication side effects.
- **Written Directions:** The parent must provide clear and concise written directions for administration of medication.
- **Injections:** Children requiring injections must be able to **self-administer**. Staff may supervise but cannot calculate dosages or administer injections unless it is an auto-injector.

ILLNESS PROTOCOLS

- **Communicable Infection:** Children may not attend C.A.R.E. if they have a communicable illness or fever.
- **Notification:** Parents must inform C.A.R.E. staff when their child has been diagnosed with, or exposed to, a contagious condition so other families can be notified.
- **Keeping Children at Home:** A child should stay home if symptoms require more individual care than staff can provide without impacting the program.
- **Child Illness at C.A.R.E.:** If a child becomes ill during the program, parents must pick up their child within **45 minutes** of notification. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
- **No Nurse on Duty:** No nurse is available during C.A.R.E. hours; staff cannot isolate sick children or provide medical care beyond basic assistance.
- **Delayed Parent Pick Up:** Repeated failure to pick up an ill child promptly may result in suspension or termination of services.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PROTOCOLS

- Children may be sent home or required to receive evaluation and treatment from a healthcare provider, depending on the illness.
- Families may be notified of exposure when applicable; local health authorities may also be notified if required.
- C.A.R.E. follows School District 15's Communicable Disease Management policies.
- Children must remain home based on the following guidelines:

DISEASE/SYMPTOM	EXCLUSION FROM C.A.R.E. UNTIL
A fever of 100 or greater	24 hours fever free
Vomiting	24 hours symptom free
Diarrhea	
Undiagnosed rash	
Communicable diseases (i.e., chicken pox, measles, strep throat, etc.)	See School District Policy
Strep infections	Completion of 24 hours of antibiotic treatment

ACCIDENTS & MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

MINOR INJURIES

- In the event of a minor injury while attending the C.A.R.E. Program, the staff will perform basic first aid, and parents will be notified when they arrive.

MAJOR INJURIES

- When additional care may be needed, staff will attempt to contact parents or emergency contacts immediately.
- If a parent cannot be reached and the injury requires more than first aid, staff will call emergency services; the child may be transported by ambulance. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls.** **C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
- A C.A.R.E. staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and remain until a parent, or emergency contact arrives.
- Families are responsible for all emergency medical service charges.

INSURANCE FOR ACCIDENTS & INJURIES

- The Park District does **not** provide accident or medical insurance for participants.
- Families are encouraged to maintain adequate personal health insurance coverage.

FAMILY POLICIES

JOINT CUSTODY DOCUMENTATION & COMPLIANCE

To ensure the safety and well-being of every child in our care, families with legal custody arrangements must follow these guidelines:

CUSTODY DOCUMENTATION

- Families with custody orders affecting pick-up or visitation must provide legal documentation to the C.A.R.E. Manager.
- Parents must update C.A.R.E. if custody orders change or expire.
- Staff must release a child to a parent with court-ordered legal custody, regardless of visitation schedules.

UPDATES REQUIRED

- Families are responsible for notifying C.A.R.E. of any changes or expiration of custody orders. Updated documentation must be submitted promptly.

MANDATED REPORTING POLICY

- All C.A.R.E. staff are mandated reporters required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Failure to report, or interference with a report, is prohibited by law and may result in legal consequences.

NON-SOLICITATION POLICY

- Soliciting, distributing materials, or conducting outside business is prohibited on school or Park District property during program hours.
- Prohibited activities include canvassing, requesting contributions, selling merchandise or services, distributing petitions, or any similar conduct.

PARENT BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS ON-SITE

- **Parent Behavior Expectations:** Any parent/guardian or authorized person picking up or dropping off a child must not engage in:
 - Physical aggression toward children, staff, or other adults.
 - Verbal abuse, threats, or inappropriate language.
 - Possession or use of alcohol or illegal substances.
 - Attempting to pick up a child while impaired.

- Smoking or vaping on school grounds.
 - Bringing pets onto school grounds.
- **Suspected Alcohol or Drug Use:** If a parent appears impaired, staff cannot release the child and may contact local authorities for the child's safety.

CHILD EXPECTATIONS & BEHAVIOR

CODE OF CONDUCT

The C.A.R.E. Code of Conduct is designed to maintain a safe, respectful, and enjoyable environment for all. Additional rules may be introduced by staff as needed.

- **Behaviors that may result in disciplinary action include, but are not limited to:**
 - Bullying, threatening, obscene, or disrespectful behavior.
 - Physical or verbal aggression toward staff, peers, or others.
 - Inappropriate language, including profanity or sexually explicit remarks.
 - Damage or misuse of program property or equipment.
 - Actions that endanger the health, safety, or welfare of self or others.
 - Possession or threat to use weapons (real or look-alike).
 - Lying.
 - Theft.
 - Elopement from the program area.
 - Possession of illegal or controlled substances.
 - Disruptive behavior or emotional outbursts that interfere with the program.
 - Repeated disregard for program rules and expectations after reasonable intervention.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

- **Behavior Expectations:** To ensure a safe, positive, and enriching experience for all participants, children in the C.A.R.E. Program are expected to:
 - Demonstrate respect toward staff, peers, facilities, and equipment.
 - Follow program rules and respond appropriately to staff instructions.
 - Participate safely and cooperatively within the group setting.
- **Partnership with Families:** We view families as essential partners in helping children develop appropriate behaviors. If challenges arise, we may reach out to collaborate on strategies that support your child's success.
- **Staff to Child Ratio:** C.A.R.E. maintains a defined staff-to-child ratio to ensure safety and supervision. To participate successfully within this ratio, children must:
 - Stay with the group without requiring continuous one-on-one supervision.
 - Respond to verbal redirection and guidance from staff.
 - Allow staff to support all children in their care, not just one child at a time.
 - If a child's behavior or needs exceed what can be safely managed within our staffing structure, we may need to pause care and work with families to determine next steps.
 - If a child may benefit from additional behavioral support or accommodations, families are encouraged to review the [ADA/Special Accommodations section](#) on [page 24](#) of this handbook.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Our goal is to maintain a safe and supportive environment while helping children learn from their actions. C.A.R.E. staff will respond to behavioral incidents based on severity and frequency.

- **Possible Consequences Include:**
 - **Verbal Warning:** Staff redirect behavior and explain expectations.
 - **Written Warning:** Incident report shared with parents. Multiple reports may lead to suspension or removal from the program.
 - **Suspension:** A child may be suspended for up to three program days. Suspensions begin on the next scheduled day of attendance. No refunds are issued for missed days due to suspension.
 - **Early Dismissal:** If a child's behavior poses an immediate safety or emotional risk, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child within 45 minutes. Repeated failure to do so may result in termination of services. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
 - **Removal from Program:** In cases of severe or repeated behavior, a child may be permanently removed from the C.A.R.E. Program.
- C.A.R.E. reserves the right to evaluate each situation individually and assign consequences accordingly.

ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE

- Any physical or verbal abuse, threats, or violent behavior toward staff, participants, or volunteers may result in immediate suspension without prior warning.
- All threats will be taken seriously and may lead to permanent dismissal from the program.

TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

- C.A.R.E. reserves the right to terminate a child's participation at any time, with or without prior notice, based on the nature and frequency of behavioral concerns.
- **Termination may occur under the following circumstances:**
 - The child's needs exceed what the program can safely support.
 - Behavior consistently disrupts the group or poses safety risks.
 - The child cannot function within the staff-to-child ratio.
 - A parent or guardian engages in inappropriate or disruptive behavior toward staff or participants.
 - A family accumulates five unreported absences or five late pick-ups in a single school year.

STUDENT ATTIRE

To ensure safety, comfort, and full participation in C.A.R.E. activities, children must be dressed appropriately for both the weather and the day's activities.

FOOTWEAR FOR ACTIVE PLAY

- **Closed-Toe Footwear:** Children should wear gym shoes or closed-toe footwear to participate in active games and gym activities. Flip-flops or unsafe footwear may prevent children from using playground equipment or participating in gym play due to safety concerns.

OUTDOOR WEATHER GUIDELINES

- **Outdoor Play:** C.A.R.E. participants go outside regularly during fall and winter months, so children must be dressed for inclement weather.
- **Snow Play:** When snow is present, in order to play in the snow, children must wear snow boots, gloves, snow pants, and a hat to play in the snow; Children without proper snow gear will be restricted to shoveled areas of the playground.

TOILET TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

- **Toilet Training Requirements:** All participants in the C.A.R.E. program must be fully toilet trained to attend C.A.R.E.
- **Toileting Accidents Requirements:** In the event of a bathroom accident, parents/guardians will be notified and must bring a change of clothes within 45 minutes of being contacted. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**
- **Independent Dressing Requirements:** If a child has a change of clothes available, they must be able to change and clean themselves independently. Staff are not permitted to assist in the restroom stall while the child is changing.

ACTIVITIES & ENRICHMENT

HOMework POLICY

- **Homework Encouragement:** Staff will remind and encourage children to begin homework during designated homework time, if requested by the family.
- **Child Responsibility:** Children are responsible for choosing to use this time for homework; staff will not force participation.
- **Homework Support:** Staff provide general guidance but cannot offer one-on-one tutoring or check assignments for accuracy due to group supervision ratios.
- **Goal:** Promote independence while offering a structured environment for work completion.

ACTIVITIES AT C.A.R.E.

- C.A.R.E. provides a variety of structured and unstructured recreational activities designed to support creativity, exploration, and social development.
- Activities may include:
 - Arts and crafts projects
 - Hands-on enrichment activities
 - Music and movement
 - Outdoor play
 - Board games and group games
- Daily activities are planned by staff to offer variety and support child choice.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

ON-CAMPUS PROGRAMS

- Children may participate in extracurricular programs held on the school campus.
- Parents must complete an extracurricular activity permission form and submit it to the Site Director before the child's first day in the extracurricular activity.
- Staff running the extracurricular program are responsible for returning the child to C.A.R.E. at the end of the activity.
- C.A.R.E. staff cannot escort children to or from activities.

OFF CAMPUS PROGRAMS

- Once a child signs out and leaves the school grounds, they may only return if signed back in by a parent or authorized adult.

SNACK & FOOD POLICY

- **Snacks from Home:** Children may bring snacks from home to eat during program hours.
- **Special Treats:** Sites may occasionally offer a special treat or snack. Staff will inform families ahead of time about the planned treat, allowing parents to decide if they would like their child to take part.
- **Allergies or Restrictions:** Parents should notify the Site Director of any dietary restrictions or allergies so appropriate precautions can be taken.

PHOTOGRAPHY PERMISSIONS

- **Marketing Photos:** Park District staff may take photos or videos during C.A.R.E. for marketing or promotional use.
- **Photo Waiver:** Parents provide permission for photos during the registration process through the standard photo waiver. Families who wish to update their preferences should contact the C.A.R.E. Admin Office.

BABYSITTING POLICY

- **Permitted with Conditions:** C.A.R.E. staff may babysit for families outside program hours under specific conditions.
- **Memorandum of Understanding:** Both the staff member and the family must sign a Memorandum of Understanding outlining responsibilities.
- **Scheduling:** Arrangements must be made outside of C.A.R.E. hours; staff may not discuss or coordinate babysitting while on duty.
- **Transportation:** Staff may not transport children unless:
 - They are listed as an authorized pick-up contact in ePACT, and
 - A transportation Memorandum of Understanding has been signed and submitted.
- **Liability:** The Park District is not responsible for any issues arising from off-site babysitting arrangements.
- **Program Oversight:** C.A.R.E. reserves the right to require a staff member to end a babysitting arrangement if it negatively affects the program or relationships within it.

PERSONAL ITEMS & ELECTRONICS POLICY

To maintain a safe, focused, and inclusive environment, personal items and electronics should be kept at home unless specifically approved for use.

ITEMS NOT PERMITTED

- Personal belongings such as toys, dolls, trading cards (including Pokémon cards), and sports equipment should **not** be brought to C.A.R.E.
- Items brought from home can cause distractions, conflicts, or become lost or damaged.

ELECTRONICS NOT PERMITTED

- Children may not use personal electronic devices during program hours, including:
 - Cell phones
 - Smart watches
 - Tablets
 - Gaming devices (e.g., Nintendo Switch)
- These devices must remain **off** and stored in the child's backpack for the entire program.

ELECTRONICS POLICY

- If a device is brought to the program, it must stay turned off and remain in the child's backpack.
- Cell phones or smart watches may only be used in an emergency or with explicit approval from the Site Director.
- Devices used without permission may be held by staff until pick-up.

CHROMEBOOK USE

- Chromebooks may only be used for **homework assignments** that require them.
- Recreational or non-academic use of Chromebooks is not permitted during C.A.R.E. hours.

TRADING CARDS

- Children may not use or trade Pokémon cards or any similar collectible cards during program hours.
- Cards must stay inside the child's backpack for the duration of the program

RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOST/DAMAGED ITEMS

- C.A.R.E. is **not responsible** for personal items that are lost, damaged, or stolen.
- Families are encouraged to label all belongings and avoid sending valuables or sentimental items.

INCLUSION & ACCOMMODATIONS

ADHERENCE TO THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

- **Commitment to ADA Compliance:** The C.A.R.E. Program complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and all federal, state, and local laws regarding accessibility and inclusion.
- **Goal:** Our goal is to ensure every child can participate safely and successfully in the program.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORT

- **Individualized Review:** Each child's needs are reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations.
 - Considerations include social, emotional, behavioral, medical, and physical support needs.
- **Special Services at School:**
 - Because student information is **not shared** between the School District and the Park District, families must provide relevant details directly to C.A.R.E. staff.
 - Parents are encouraged to share:
 - IEP or 504 plan information.
 - Behavioral intervention strategies that work well at school or home.
 - Medical or therapeutic support needs.
 - Any accommodations that may help the child succeed in a group setting.
 - Providing this information helps staff create a consistent and supportive environment.

USE OF SCHOOL-BASED STRATEGIES

- When appropriate, C.A.R.E. staff may implement strategies from the child's school behavior plan to help promote consistency between environments.
- Adaptations will be applied within the limits of staffing ratios and program safety requirements.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT THROUGH NWSRA

- If additional support is necessary to facilitate your child's successful participation, they may be eligible for assistance through our partnership with the Northwest Special Recreation Association (NWSRA).
- Accommodations vary based on individual needs. **Available Accommodations May Include:**
 - Behavioral strategies and tools
 - Adaptive equipment
 - Additional support staff based on assessed needs

REQUESTING AIDES OR ACCOMMODATIONS

- Families should provide detailed information about accommodation needs at the time of registration.
- Failure to disclose important information may limit the program's ability to support the child.
- Failure to disclose relevant details may limit our ability to effectively support your child. By sharing this information, you help us create the best possible experience for your child within our program.

SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE DAYS | HALF DAYS | SCHOOL CLOSINGS

SCHOOL NON-ATTENDANCE DAY PROGRAMS

- **School Day Off Program:** A C.A.R.E. School Day-Off Program is offered on many days when school is not in session and C.A.R.E. is closed.
- **Registration Reminders:** Reminders to enroll are emailed to families and posted on the Park District website.
 - Information is sent to the email address on the Park District account and to emails listed in ePACT.
- **Registration Deadline:** Monday, two weeks prior to the school day-off program date.
- **Program Min/Max:** Min: 15 students, Max: 40 Students.
 - Programs not meeting minimum enrollment will be cancelled, and registration fees will be refunded.

HALF DAY OF SCHOOL COVERAGE OPTIONS

After-school C.A.R.E. on half days of school is not included in the annual C.A.R.E. tuition, as the C.A.R.E. space is used by the school district for staff development and many staff C.A.R.E. staff members also work for the school district and are required to attend district institute programming and cannot provide coverage across all 10 locations.

- **Before-School C.A.R.E.:** Operates as usual on half day of school. The Before-School annual fees are billed for 174 school attendance days divided into 10 equal installments.
- **After-School C.A.R.E.:** After-School C.A.R.E. is **not offered** at school sites on half days due to staff development and building usage.
 - After-School C.A.R.E. tuition does not include half days, as staff and facilities are not available districtwide.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

EMERGENCY WEATHER SCHOOL CLOSINGS

- **C.A.R.E. Closing:** C.A.R.E. is closed whenever school is closed due to inclement weather or emergency conditions.
- **Credits for Fees:**
 - No credit is issued for days that the school district later schedules as make-up days.

- If school is cancelled and an **e-learning day** is held, parents will receive a credit for that day's missed C.A.R.E. session.

UNFORESEEN FACILITY CLOSINGS

- **Emergency Facility Closings:** C.A.R.E. may close due to building-specific emergencies, including:
 - Power outages
 - HVAC failure
 - Water main breaks
 - Gas leaks
 - Other facility safety concerns
- **Parent Notification:** Parents will be notified by text through ePACT or by phone.
- Families must arrange for pick-up within **45 minutes** of notification. **We strongly encourage parents to enter the site phone number into their mobile phones so that parents answer when the site calls. C.A.R.E. Site contact information can be found on [page 1](#) of this handbook.**

C.A.R.E. PARENT CALENDAR

- **C.A.R.E. Parent Calendar:** The annual **C.A.R.E. Parent Calendar**, including important dates and program closures, is available on the C.A.R.E. page of the Palatine Park District website.
<https://www.palatineparks.org/program/care-before-after-school/>
 - Parents should review the calendar regularly for school day-off and half-day registration deadlines.