



EXPLORE. DISCOVER. THRIVE.

**Mill River**

*Unified Union School District*

# **Mill River District Elementary After School Program Family Handbook**

## **Site Coordinators**

**Clarendon: Shannon Phillips** - [saphillips@millriverschools.org](mailto:saphillips@millriverschools.org)

Shannon's Direct Line at Clarendon: (802) 786-3940 ext 718

**Shrewsbury: Linda Macfarlane**- [lmacfarlane@millriverschools.org](mailto:lmacfarlane@millriverschools.org)

**Tinmouth: Lisa Barrett**- [lbarrett@millriverschools.org](mailto:lbarrett@millriverschools.org)

**Wallingford: Cheryl Maniery**- [cmaniery@millriverschools.org](mailto:cmaniery@millriverschools.org)

**Theresa Serr**- Mill River After School Programs Director [tserr@millriverschools.org](mailto:tserr@millriverschools.org)

Theresa's Direct Line: 802-786-6399

## MILL RIVER AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM FAMILY HANDBOOK

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**Please review this handbook, detach, sign, and return this page to your Site Coordinator.**

**I have read the Mill River After School Program Handbook and agree to follow the policies and procedures as described within.**

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Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

## **MILL RIVER OUT-OF-SCHOOL-TIME (OST) PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND PHILOSOPHY**

Mill River Out-of-School-Time Programs (After School and Summer Camp) are licensed by the State of Vermont's Department for Children & Families. Mill River Out-of-School-Time programs provide participants with a variety of recreational, enrichment, and academic activities that are fun and complement school and community experiences. We provide a safe, supportive environment that builds physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth and development.

We also recognize and value the importance of parents, guardians, and families to the health and thriving of our students. We include parents and caregivers as often as possible in decision-making regarding their child(ren)'s participation in the program. We also believe parents and guardians are our partners in supporting youth.

We value and embrace diversity, equity, and opportunity for all. No child shall be denied into the program because of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, disability, gender, or the parent's marital status or gender identification. Our programs create environments that are respectful, and reflect the diversity of families, cultures, and ethnicities of our families and communities.

Each child shall be treated equally with regard to respect, consideration, and opportunity to take part in all developmentally appropriate activities.

The Mill River Out-of-School-Time programs are administered by the program director, and supported by principals and administrative staff. Each program site is managed by a site coordinator, who works with a team of staff, most of whom are faculty at the school.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GENERAL DAILY SCHEDULE**

*Each school's program schedule is unique-this is an example to demonstrate the components typical to our programs. You can find your school's specific schedules and program information on your school's after school program website, and from your Site Coordinator. Please make an effort to not pick your child up until after the activity period is over.*

### **School Dismissal, Check In.**

*The following are the basic components of most programs*

**Snack** We follow the Child Adult Care Food Program nutrition standards to provide a healthy snack

**Outside/Green Space** Weather permitting, children will have a daily opportunity for playground and outdoor time. This is youth directed "green space" time, and important for gross motor development, building relationships and social skills, problem-solving, and supporting creative play

**Activities** Staff plan and lead a wide variety of activities each day. These offerings typically include STEM, Creative Art, Games, Cooking, Music, and Literacy. Staff can also share any activity that they believe would benefit the children. The children also have opportunities to suggest and plan activities. Activities are either signed up for in advance, or children can select daily.

**Centers/Individual Play** After the activities are completed, and children begin to depart, a variety of games, art supplies, and other more self-directed activities are available until pick up and program close.

**5:15 Program ends** Please ensure your child is picked up at 5:15 pm. If you are running late, you need to notify your Site Coordinator as soon as possible. **ProCare** provides an easy way to send a message directly to your site staff.

### **Snacks**

Snacks are provided daily. If your child has a food allergy, sensitivity, or other dietary need or restriction, please be sure to include this information on your registration form and to confirm with your Site Coordinator.

### **Field Trips and Special Activities**

Field trips, special activities, and events are often a part of program. Separate sign up and permissions are required in order for your child to participate in these activities. Please ensure that you review emails and documents in a timely manner so that your child does not miss out

on any additional activities.

**Before School Programs** Wallingford offers a Before School Program. Youth can be registered at that schools for both morning and after school programs, or one or the other. Registration and fee payment procedures are the same for both morning and afternoon care

**Hours:** 7:00 am to school start

**Cost:** \$5.00 per day

### **Termination of A Program**

If any Mill River program is terminated due to insufficient enrollment or other reason, any money paid by parents/guardians for the period after termination will be refunded.

### **Closure of a Program Due to Weather or other related emergency**

If program must be canceled due to weather or other emergent circumstances, families will be notified through ProCare and School Messenger.

If there is a need to close program early during the operating hours of program, families will be notified through ProCare; further instructions for pick up will be provided.

## **Mill River Elementary Schools**

### **Afterschool Registration Plans School Year 25/26**

#### **Financial Information**

- Afterschool programs no longer have a pro-rated, or daily rate.
- Families must choose one of three enrollment options upon registration.
- Families utilizing child care financial assistance will need to select a plan, but will not be billed.
- 2 week advance notice required for plan change; families can change their plans as often as needed.
- Fees are due by the 15th of each month for that month.
- If a child attends more than the maximum number of plan days, a charge will be added equal to the next plan rate. Days will not be prorated.
- There is no attendance/participation without a plan (child care financial assistance is the exception).

## Afterschool Plan Options:

### Full Time:

- Unlimited days per month
- Monthly rate based on maximum number of program days each month
- Snow/weather or other school closure days will be credited off following month
- No refunds for other absences or non-attendance

**Full Time Fee Schedule**

|                               | Aug/<br>Sept | Oct.  | Nov.  | Dec,  | Jan.  | Feb.  | Mar.  | April | May   | June |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| <b>Max #<br/>Days</b>         | 22           | 20    | 16    | 14    | 20    | 14    | 19    | 16    | 20    | 7    |
| <b>Fee<br/>1st<br/>child</b>  | \$198        | \$180 | \$144 | \$126 | \$180 | \$126 | \$171 | \$144 | \$180 | \$64 |
| <b>Fee<br/>each<br/>add'l</b> | \$154        | \$140 | \$112 | \$98  | \$140 | \$98  | \$133 | \$112 | \$140 | \$49 |

### Part Time

- Up to 12 days per month
- **\$108 per month** first child, **\$85** each additional child (Aug/September are combined, and June is \$64/\$50).
- No refunds for non-attendance or absences

### Drop In

- Up to 4 days per month
- **\$48 per month**

Minimum plan required for registration

**Holidays and Early Release Days:** There will be **no program on school holidays, early release days, and break periods.** These are important times for our staff to spend time with their families, and to receive required trainings.

[Mill River District Calendar 23/24](#)

**Registration is online.** Use the link below to navigate to the After School website. Each school has its own page on the website. Please ensure you are registering for the correct school.

You will need to also download the ProCare App on your phone or other device. You will use ProCare to sign your child out of program, and to send and receive important information, as well as for billing.

[Mill River After School Program Web Site](#)

**Registration forms** must be completed and approved by the Program Director, or Site Coordinator, prior to any child's attendance. **If your child's information is incomplete, they will not be able to attend.**

Following are the areas commonly missed by families when completing the registration form. State licensing code requires the following information to be on every child's registration form (please do not leave these areas blank):

**2 emergency contacts-** these are not necessarily people that will pick up your child, or make decisions for you, but people who know how to find and contact you in the event of an emergency. If you put yourself down as emergency contact, your child's form will be rejected.

**Parent's place of work** and number to be reached.

**Immunization records** are required to be in your child's after school file, which is separate from your child's school day file. Please make sure that you provide a copy of your child's immunization records to the Site Coordinator prior to your child's first day at program

**Payment is due by the 15th for the current month.** Payment is made online. If you do not have a bank account or credit card, and need to pay with cash or a cashier's check, please let us know. If you experience any difficulty with your ability to pay, please reach out to your Site Coordinator or the Program Director.

If you miss 2 payments, your child will be suspended from program until a payment plan is in place, or payment is received.

### **Late Pick Up Fees**

In the event that your child is not picked up by the program's closing time of 5:15 PM, a late fee of \$5.00 for the first fifteen minutes and \$1.00 for each additional minute will be charged. If we do not hear from you or cannot reach you within 30 minutes after the program closes, one of your emergency contacts will be called to pick your child up.

If a child is picked up late more than 3 times in a month, they will be suspended from program.

### **Absences and changes of attendance/enrollment**

Parents/Guardians are responsible for notifying your program if your child will not be attending on a day enrolled.

**If a child misses 3 or more days without notice, they may be dropped from**

program.

If you need to cancel, change or edit your enrollment, please inform your Site Coordinator prior to the change.

**Program is open** to students attending a Mill River Unified Union School District Elementary school, as well as homeschoolers, and students referred by social service agencies.

**Wait lists** are maintained on a first-come, first-serve basis. Capacity is limited by our license, by staff availability, and other factors affecting the delivery of safe, and quality programs.

\*The Vermont State Child Care Subsidy Program is administered by Vermont Achievement Center: 802-775-4365. All forms, documentation and decisions are solely the responsibility of that office. The program director and site coordinators are able to help with filling out the forms and explaining the process to you.

### **Release of Children and Signing Out**

Parents/Guardians (or their specified designee) of children are required to pick up their child by the closing time listed in this document. All programs must receive written authorization regarding alternative arrangements if a parent/guardian will be unable to pick up their child. The parent/ guardian/designee is responsible for **checking in with one of the staff** at the time of the pick up **and signing out** (signature and time) for the day.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **Health History**

When you register your child, all health information must be completed. It is especially important that staff are aware of allergies, medications, and other information needed to insure your child's wellness and safety during the program.

### **Illness or Medical Emergency**

All Site staff have current First Aid and CPR (within 3 months of hire).

**A child will not be admitted to program with any of the following symptoms:** Fever over 100, vomiting/diarrhea, inflamed or matted eyes, undiagnosed rash, harsh cough, severe cold, sore throat, head lice/nits. If a child enters program with the above conditions, or becomes ill during program, parents/guardians will be notified and required to pick the child up as soon as possible.



**For minor first aid needs** (bumps, scrapes, and comfort care), not requiring obvious and immediate next level medical care, staff will provide first aid and notify parents upon pick up of the injury and the care provided.

**For injuries and illnesses that may require additional medical care**, staff will administer first aid, and families will be notified immediately to pick the child up, or call 911 if the family prefers or requests this.

**For any life threatening illness or injury**, staff will first call 911 (emergency services), provide first aid, and then immediately call and notify the parents/guardians.

### **Medication**

If your child will need to take or have access to medications during the after school program:

- Complete the “medication authorization” form
- Provide the medication, in its original prescription container, to the Site Coordinator
- We cannot access medications you might have in the nurse’s office during the school day. Please make sure to provide separate medication to the after school program
- Inhalers, epi-pens, and other life saving medications may stay with children, depending on age. It is **vital that you provide an action plan** from your child’s physician if they require life saving medication

Please note that staff are unable to take medication without either the original container with prescription label on it, and without the medication authorization form.

### **Bathroom/Toileting**

Participants must be toilet trained and able to use the bathroom and provide independent self care.

### **IEP/504 Plans and Accommodations**

If your child requires any supports during the school day to be successful, it is critical that information is shared with the Site Coordinator. We strive to provide service to any student who might need our care, and the success of that effort requires:

- Collaboration with school day support services to share information

regarding accommodations and strategies for success

- A plan of care to be transparent about the needs of the child and the supports program is able to provide
- A potential delay in participation if a one on one or other aid is required for the child's ability to participate successfully in program, as these staff will need to be resourced and may not be immediately available

Our goal is your child's wellness, growth, and individual success. It is our purpose for every child to learn, grow, and benefit from participation in the program. Your collaboration with us allows us to serve your child, and engage any resources that might be available to serve that purpose.

### **Supplies to send with your child everyday**

**Please pack the following supplies in a backpack with your child's name on everything.**

- Proper shoes for running and playing
- Extra set of clothes (socks especially)
- Outdoor gear- we play outside! Winter gear- snow pants, jackets, gloves, hat etc.

**IMPORTANT:** Staff cannot apply lotion type sunscreen or bug spray to your child if you do not select that authorization on the registration form. Please instruct your child how to apply themselves.

### **Removal or Discharge From Program**

Mill River may dismiss your child from the program:

- For behaviors that hurt others, or themselves
- For bullying behaviors and social aggression
- For destruction of property or disruption of program
- For leaving program site and supervision, including departing from any field trips or off site activities.

A plan may be discussed for your child's return to the program. Depending on the severity of the incident, your child may not be eligible to return until a behavior intervention/reparation plan is in writing and signed by necessary parties.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

In general, it is the responsibility of each participant to contribute to a safe and productive camp environment by demonstrating respect and consideration for fellow participants and adults. This includes complying with all policies and rules of conduct of Mill River and its programs.

*Children are expected to behave appropriately, respectfully and responsibly; to learn, play, problem solve both independently and cooperatively; and be interested in exploring new things from the available activities.*

### **Positive Interventions: Helping Youth Make Good Choices:**

Our staff believe that all children want to do the best they can. Staff use proactive language to support and encourage participants and maintain a safe and positive environment.

Participants are expected to show:

- Respect for self;
- Respect for others;
- Respect for property;

Sometimes children have a behavior plan during the school day developed to address specific student needs. Please let your Site Coordinator know if the school has implemented a plan for your child so we can extend that plan during program.

### **The Following Strategies Are Used In Guiding Participant Behavior:**

- Reinforcing statements: staff let participants know they are seeing the desired behavior previously taught to students- “I’m noticing that most of you are lined up and ready to go outdoors.”
- Reminding statements: reminds children of the rule they already know- “What can you do to make it feel safe and friendly as we line up for outdoors?”
- Redirecting statements: used when the participant’s behavior is inappropriate; firm and non-negotiable- “It’s time to line up now.”

### **Take a Break (time away from the group):**

When a child does not respond to reminders or redirection from staff and their behavior is starting to make it difficult for adults to lead the group, or for the activity to continue, they will be instructed to take a short break. Time away from the group gives the child an

opportunity to calm down and gain self control so they can rejoin the group. Depending on individual circumstances, participants may also lose a privilege or participate in reparation or “fixing the problem”. Participants who require repeated use of time out due to inappropriate behavior will be directed to meet with the Site Coordinator for a short conference focused on developing a behavior contract.

The following behaviors require that the parent be called to pick up their child:

- Child willfully hurts another person or themselves;
- Child is physically aggressive with camp staff or other adults;
- Child willfully destroys property or supplies;
- Child leaves the group to wander the building and refuses to return to the group;
- Child is non-compliant or leaves the group while outside, off-site, or on a field trip; child will go home immediately and a meeting with parents/guardians will be scheduled prior to the child’s return.

A plan will be discussed for your child’s return to the program. Depending on the severity of the incident, your child might return to program the following camp day. For incidents of a serious nature, your child may be dismissed indefinitely from the program, or not be eligible to return until a behavior intervention/reparation plan is in writing and signed by necessary parties.

### **Responding to Complaints of Bullying or Harassment:**

#### **Bullying:**

The Out-of-School-Time programs do not permit or tolerate bullying by participants or staff. Bullying means any overt act(s) directed against a participant by another individual or group of individuals which:

- occurs on camp property or at a camp sponsored event;
- is intended to ridicule, humiliate or intimidate an individual(s);
- is repeated over time.

Bullying is a form of dangerous, disrespectful behavior that may involve a range of misconduct that will warrant a corrective action and/or discipline. Behaviors that do not rise to the level of bullying may still be subject to intervention/discipline.

**Individuals attending out-of-school-time programs will adhere to the following rules:**

- We will not bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will make it a point to include students who are left out.
- If we know somebody is being bullied, we will tell afterschool staff and an adult at home.

**Program staff will take the following steps regarding bullying behavior:**

- intervene to stop the bullying behavior/activity immediately if observed or reported to them;
- the Site Coordinator will talk to the individuals involved separately;
- individuals who engage in bullying behavior will be reminded about program rules, what behavior is expected and what it looks like, and discuss sanctions that will be imposed for future bullying behavior;
- reassure the individual who has been the target of bullying that everything possible will be done to prevent a recurrence;
- make other individuals aware of the consequences of bullying behavior;
- the Site Coordinator will telephone the parents of all individuals involved in the incident/activity as soon as possible;
- the Site Coordinator will notify the Afterschool Program Director of the incident;
- staff will continue to monitor the behavior of the participant engaging in bullying behavior and the safety of the participant who was subjected to bullying behavior;
- if the situation doesn't change, the individual engaging in bullying behavior will be dismissed from program.

**Harassment:**

Out-of-School-Time staff are committed to preventing discrimination against students and staff based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, disability, sex, sexual orientation and gender identity, to the extent required by law. In addition, retaliation is a form of unlawful discrimination that will not be tolerated. **Out-of-School-Time staff will work to promptly and effectively address all complaints of harassment in accordance with the procedures established by Mill River policy. Any participant,**

**parent, or staff member may report bullying/harassment to the Designated staff member as posted at camp.** The Afterschool Program Director and School Principal will be notified by the Site Coordinator immediately if an incident occurs during afterschool which may be defined as harassment to determine substantiation under policy guidelines.

### **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

Vermont law requires that all people working with children and families must immediately report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Vermont Department of Children and Families (DCF). *Our After School Program staff are mandatory reporters.* If a staff member suspects possible abuse or neglect, the site coordinator will be consulted promptly and a report made to the DCF. Parents/guardians will be notified at the time of the report unless doing so would put the child at risk.

Parents or guardians who would like to find guidance from trained professionals in the difficult and stressful task of raising children can call:

**PARENTS' STRESS LINE: 1-800-CHILDREN 1-(800)-244-5373 or 1-(802)-229-5724.**

The Parents' Stress Line is available in Vermont to parents, professionals, and community members for parenting support, resources and referrals. The Stress Line is open Monday - Friday from 9AM - 5PM.

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS**

**Parent/Guardian Freedom of Access** *please note that this is affected by the pandemic. While you have access to your child at any time during the program, you may not be able to join in the program due to Covid mitigation measures.*

The ASP Freedom of Access policy encourages parents/guardians to join their children at any time during after school hours. Parents and guardians have the right to access the program, and have full freedom to do so.

### **Conferences**

We are happy to discuss issues, concerns or special circumstances of your child's participation in Out-of-School-Time programs either by phone, email or in person.

### **Complaint Procedure**

If at any time a parent/guardian is concerned about the welfare of their child(ren) while in the care of camp, we ask that you immediately contact the Camp Director or

Program Director. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the Superintendent may be contacted to further aid in resolution of the matter.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT**

Program communicates information about the program's schedule and events in the following ways: Enrollment forms, weekly schedule and notes sent home with your student, informational bulletin board in the camp pick up area, and the Mill River Out-Of-School Program website.

### **Aquatic Safety Plan**

In the event that a field trip is taken for the purposes of swimming, or to an area where there is a natural body of water, the following safety protocol will be followed:

Written permission is required from each participant's parent/guardian prior to participating in a wading or swimming activity.

One lifeguard with current certification from a nationally recognized organization per 26 children is supervising.

Lifeguards do not count in staff/child ratios

| <b>Ratio</b> | <b>Age of youngest child in group</b> |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1:10         | 8 years and older                     |
| 1:8          | 6 and 7 years old                     |
| 1:6          | 5 years old                           |

If swim lessons are provided, they must be taught by a certified instructor.

First aid and emergency supplies will be in a backpack, the location of which will be made known to all staff supervising the group at aquatics.

Each child's swimming ability will be assessed by a person holding a valid ARC WSI certificate, or other current certificate issued by an approved certifying agency providing for equivalent levels of training.

This system of designating swimmers and non-swimmers will be documented, and kept on file. When all bathers are in water less than waist deep, swimming ability assessment is not

required. Swimmers using PFDs, water wings, or other floatation devices must remain in their swimming ability area. IE non swimmers using such devices must remain in shallow water.

A pinnie, t-shirt, or other group identification garment must be worn by all participants on the field trip at all times.

Non-swimmers will be restricted to areas where the water is less than waist deep on them, unless they are in a learn to swim program or if the shallow water is in a non-swimming area.

Staff members will supervise specific campers assigned to them.

A ‘buddy check’ will be conducted every 10 minutes to account for all swimmers.

Diving is only permitted in areas where minimum water depth is clearly marked. A one-meter board shall have a minimum depth of 10 feet, and be free from stumps, rocks, or other debris.

When participants are sharing swimming areas with other bathers, a visible system of identification will be in place to distinguish children in care. PFD of any kind shall not be used as identifiers.