After-School Program
Parent Handbook
2019- 2020

Hello and welcome to Great Explorations 2019- 2020 After-School Program! On behalf our Great Explorations Team we are so very excited to spend the school year supporting your family. Our most important priorities are your child’s safety and providing a quality experience. We will strive to make this school year a memorable one for both you and your child.

At Great Explorations our mission is to stimulate learning through creativity, play and exploration. Throughout the school year, we will provide students with opportunities for learning and exploration in a relaxed, fun and playful environment.

Please read through the information below and contact me if you have questions. Below my signature I've listed important phone numbers and email addresses, keep these handy and please make sure to notify our team in advance if your child will be absent. To our new families, welcome, and to those of you returning, thank you, and welcome back!

Rachael Allen
Director of Education
Rallen@greatex.org
727.821.8992 ext. 215

Who to contact:
Child does not need picked up from school: afterschool@greatex.org
Finance questions and documents: finance@greatex.org
Immediate need to reach a staff member: Cell: 727.831.1150
Great Explorations main number: 727.891.8992
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1. Medical

Injuries
While we take great care in ensuring that children are safe, accidents may occur when children are in play. Our licensed After-School staff are First Aid/CPR certified and will provide appropriate assistance to any child who is hurt. Great Explorations has the following procedures in the event of an injury:

1. An accident report will be filled out for children who have been injured at the center, including any injury that leaves a visible mark or causes the child any discomfort. The original form should be signed by a caregiver at pick-up to remain on file, a copy of the report will be available.
3. Head and neck injuries will be reported to you immediately. In most cases, parents will not need to remove the child, but will be informed in case of later symptoms.
4. Should a severe injury occur which requires immediate medical attention the parents and EMS will be contacted. The Director or designee will determine the severity of the injury and contact the appropriate parties.

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent/guardian or the child’s physician. Depending on the nature and severity of the injury, we will contact you by phone, note, or in person. If your child is injured in our care, our first step is to administer first aid; first aid kits are available in each classroom.

Occasionally, two children may have an incident involving hitting or other “rough-housing". The staff will address the situation and fill out an accident report for both children. Please be aware that rough-housing is a normal part of learning. In order to maintain confidentiality, staff members cannot discuss any child or their behavior with anyone except the child’s parent or guardian.

Illness Policy
We understand that children occasionally get sick and that your child’s illness is understandably a matter of great concern. However, if your child exhibits symptoms of short-term, contagious diseases that can be transmitted through casual contact, please keep your child at home or remove your child from the school as soon as possible. These symptoms consist of the following:
1. A temperature over 101 degrees (with ear thermometer) accompanied by:
   a. A cough
   b. An earache or a draining ear
   c. Sore throat
   d. Lethargic behavior
2. Diarrhea or vomiting within the last 24 hours.
3. Conjunctivitis, or Pinkeye, indicated by redness, burning and a thick discharge. The child will be excluded from school until symptom free. Even if the child is on prescription drops, the child cannot attend school as long as he/she are exhibiting symptoms, as the drops are only effective for the bacterial type infection.
4. A cough accompanied by rapid or restricted breathing or wheezing.
5. Runny nose with clear discharge which has just begun. The child will be excluded for two days, because this is when a cold is contagious or may be an early sign of measles or chicken pox.
6. Rashes that the parent cannot identify or that have not been diagnosed by a physician.
7. Contagious diseases. Some of these include: measles, chicken pox, mumps, roseola, etc. If a doctor diagnoses an infection and places the child on an antibiotic, the child should remain home until they have been on the medication for at least 24 hours.
8. Lice or nits in hair. The child must be completely clear of both prior to re-entry.

The director will call you if it seems that your child is developing a health problem. We hope that such early communication can facilitate the resolution of health problems as they occur and thereby prevent the spread of illness. In order to ensure the safety of all the students, please keep your child out of school for 24 hours following the last incident of illness. Children who are sent home must be fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) prior to re-entry. While we do our best to ensure the health and safety of all of our students, please remember that in a group setting children often contract illnesses.

Medication Policy
If your child requires medication during After-School hours, please speak with the Education Director regarding necessary paperwork and instruction for administration of medication prior to beginning of the school year. Medication will be dispensed only with physician and parent authorization. Great Explorations will administer oral medication to students in cases of chronic conditions or if the medication is prescribed by a physician and must be administered during After-School hours.

Prescription drugs will be dispensed by administrators only if a medical authorization is signed by the parent(s) and if the medicine is in the original container with the prescription label. Injections (with the exception of epi-pens) and over-the-counter medication cannot be administered by our staff.
2. Policies and Procedures

Emergency Closing Procedures
Great Explorations Educational Programs follow the Pinellas County School Board’s policies for closing of our Camps, After-School and Preschool Programs. When possible, parents will be alerted about closing at pick-up the day prior. If an unexpected emergency closing occurs due to severe weather, parents can find out by calling the Great Explorations main phone line (727.821.8992). An automated recording will alert parents if Preschool, After-School or Summer Camp programs are closed. Please note that the museum may stay open for guests accompanying their children even when childcare programs have closed.

Evacuations
In the unlikely event that emergency personnel require evacuation of Great Explorations Children’s Museum, a sign will be posted on the doors of the museum and guardians will be contacted via phone.

Drop-Off & Pick-Up
Sign Out
1) Parents enter the museum through the Gift Shop entrance of the museum before 4:30 or through the lobby doors labeled “Emergency Exit Only” from 4:30-5:30 p.m.
2) If entering through the gift shop, please use the designated landline to dial extension 402 and notify the After-School Staff that you are picking up a child. Our classrooms are locked at all times, staff are trained to not answer the door for knocking parents, calling through the gift shop is necessary for pick-up before 4:30pm.
3) Any adult picking up a student MUST show a picture I.D. and be on the pick-up list for the child. No Exceptions. Parents can add names to the child’s pick-up list during pick up any day of the week or by emailing: afterschool@greatex.org. Full names including address must be provided and match the provided photo ID.

Late Pick Up:
1) For any child picked up after 5:30 p.m., we reserve the right to charge $5.00 for every minute after 5:30. The child will not be allowed to return to After-School until the late pick-up fee is paid.

Discipline Policy
We are governed by the disciplinary regulations of the Pinellas County License Board for Children’s Centers. These regulations state:
“Children’s centers must ensure that age appropriate, constructive disciplinary practices are used for children in care. All childcare personnel must comply with the children’s center written disciplinary policy. Such policies shall include standards that prohibit children from being subject to: • Discipline which is severe, humiliating, or frightening • Discipline associated with food, rest or toileting • Spanking or any other form of physical punishment.”
Our Programs discipline policy follows the practice of “social learning through guidance”. The team at Great Explorations views negative behaviors as opportunities to teach children constructive and effective ways to cope and work with others. Our goal is to teach responsibility through conflict resolution.

After-School Staff will abide by the following procedures for handling discipline:

1. Staff will give personal verbal correction and re-direct the child into an appropriate behavior at the first incident.
2. If the behavior does not resolve, the staff will talk with the child outside of the classroom or away from the group. The Director will be notified, as will the parent/guardian at pick-up.
3. If the same misbehavior continues the After-School Staff will notify the Director, who will remove the child from the activity for a limited amount of time. The Director will speak with the child and return the child to their group once the child appears calm and able to participate safely with peers. The Staff will fill out an Incident Report, which will be given to the parent/guardian at pick-up to sign acknowledging awareness and an action plan.
4. If the attitude and actions of the child have shown improvement and the misbehavior, disruption, or disrespect continues, the Director will be notified immediately and the child will be dismissed from After-Care for the remainder of the day, week, or possibly for the school year.

We want your child to be successful here. Please detail anything we can do to help your child on the After-School Enrollment Record form.

Great Explorations reserves the right to withdraw a child at any time should extreme behavior occur, or should the Director determine that the environment is not appropriate for the child’s needs. No refunds will be given for missed days regardless of circumstance.
3. Caregiver Responsibilities

Outside Toys
During After-School programming the use of personal toys will not be allowed Monday-Thursday. On Fridays children will be permitted to bring and play with personal toys between the hours of 4:00-4:30.

Please note we are unable to lock up personal items throughout the day. If you choose to send your child to school with toys, money, or electronics you do so at your own risk. Great Explorations is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Appropriate Attire
Parents should send their child in play clothes since spills and messes during art projects are inevitable. We make every attempt to protect children’s clothes from being ruined, however, occasionally paint and other products may find their way onto clothes and be difficult to remove. Great Explorations cannot accept responsibility for damage done by art supplies or other play activities.

To ensure the safety of all students, we require all children to wear closed-toed, rubber-soled shoes. Sandals, flip flops, boots, slippers and dress shoes are not appropriate attire for play at Great Explorations.

Communication
If caregivers have questions or concerns at any time they should notify the Assistant Director, Lonnie Hairfield, if concerns require additional support caregivers may contact the Education Director, Rachael Allen. Please let your child's counselor know at drop-off or pick-up if you would like to speak with the Lead or Director. If the Director is not available to answer questions or discuss pertinent information at drop-off or pick-up, a face-to-face meeting can be scheduled. The Director of Education can be reached Monday – Friday by phone at: 727.821.8992 x215, or by email at: rallen@greatex.org.

Please save these numbers to your phone, as we will utilize them to contact you if needed while your child is in after school care.
Museum phone: 727.821.8992
After-School Phone: 727.831.1150

Great Explorations After-School will utilize a "Communication Board" to notify parents of important information. The Communication Board will be located in the Great Room Classroom. It will be used to notify parents of important updates and daily schedules. Parents should check this board daily. It is the responsibility of the parents to read the Communication Board for any additional information.
4. Additional Information

Field Trips
During School’s Out Camps during the school year we may take a field trip to crescent lake park. Parents will be notified in advance if a field trip is to take place. Permission slips may be required.

Snacks
Students will be provided with one snack upon arrival to the museum. Please indicate any allergies on the Enrollment Record form so that we can provide snacks that meet the needs of your child. Students may also eat any leftover food they might have in their lunches at this time. On camp days’ caregivers are responsible for providing lunch and food for two snack times for your child. Please also send your child to camp with a re-usable water bottle.

Gift Shop
Children will not be allowed to go into the gift shop for beverage or merchandise purchases during After-School hours.

Movies during Child Care
Educational movies may be used on rare occasions in order to present material to students in a fun and diverse way. During the school year we will be taking time in our day to read chapter books together as a class and watch the corresponding movies once the book is complete. Some examples of book and movie choices include Mouse and the Motorcycle and Charlotte’s Web. Additionally, “G” or mild PG-rated movies may be used if outdoor time is canceled due to inclement weather. Movies will be appropriate for all ages attending the program.

Staff to Children Ratios
Great Explorations maintains a ratio of 1 staff member to every 20 children at all times. More often Great Explorations maintains a ratio of 1 staff member to every 10 children. Higher ratios happen in situations when one counselor is taking a child to the restroom, preparing materials for an activity, or on break. Florida Licensing requires ratios of 1:25 for elementary aged children.
5. Calendars

Full Day Care & Center Closed Calendar
Childcare is included in your monthly tuition on select Pinellas County “No School” days. Care is included from 7:30am-5:30pm on the following dates, however transportation is not provided. The first day of care will be provided on Wednesday, August 14th which is the first day of school. The last day of care will be Friday, May 29th which is the last day of school. School will get out two hours early on May 29th, Great Explorations will pick-up children from school at that time.

Full Day Care is available and included in your monthly tuition on the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 6th</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Professional Day: Camp Offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 17th</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Professional Day: Camp Offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 16-20th</td>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>Spring Break: Camp Offered</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23rd</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Professional Day: Camp Offered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 29th</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Professional Day: Camp Offered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our center will be closed and NO childcare will be provided on the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 12th &amp; 13th</td>
<td>Monday &amp; Tuesday</td>
<td>Summer Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2nd</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 25-29th</td>
<td>Monday-Friday</td>
<td>Fall Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 23-January 3</td>
<td>Monday-Friday (2 weeks)</td>
<td>Winter Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 20th</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 10th</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Center Closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25th</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
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