



CITY OF CAPE CORAL VPK AND PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS



PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

CITY OF CAPE CORAL PARK & RECREATION DEPARTMENT VPK AND PRESCHOOL PARENT INFORMATION GUIDE

Program Background

Parks and Recreation has provided quality VPK and childcare programs in Cape Coral for over 40 years. We provide safe, fun, recreational, and educational programs and activities for the youth within our population.

Our VPK and Daycare programs are age-appropriate enrichment programs operated by the City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department, which is licensed with the Florida Department of Children and Families.

- Four Freedoms Park VPK and Early Explorer's Program
License # C20LE6127
4818 Tarpon Court Cape Coral, Florida 33904
239-574-0804
- William Austen Youth Center VPK and Coral Cutie's Program
License # C20LE0066
315 SW 2nd Ave Cape Coral, Florida 33904
239-242-3950

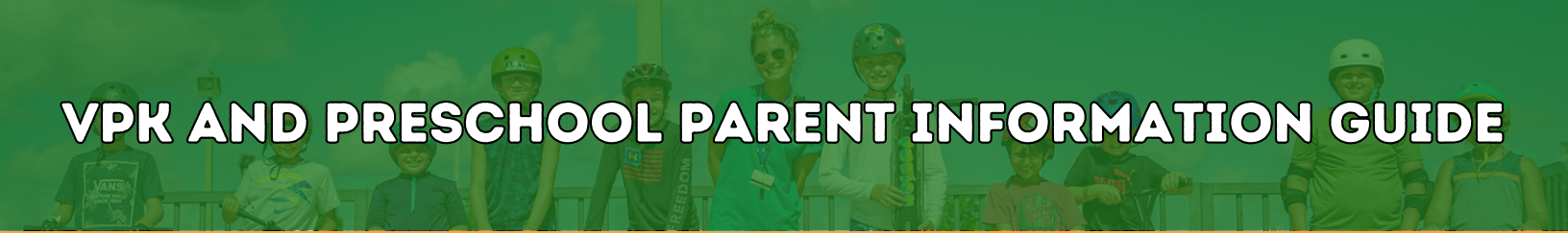


Program Purpose

Our programs have been designed to help your child reach their full potential. The program promotes the development of literacy and reading through an age-appropriate curriculum. Each class is led by experienced, qualified instructors in a center-based designed classroom.

Philosophy and Goals

- The program is designed to meet the needs of each student based on the understanding that every child learns and develops differently.
- We have created an environment and lesson plans that provide developmentally age-appropriate activities for every student. Our classrooms offer:
 1. Warmth, security, safety, and happiness.
 2. Freedom within set limits.
 3. Encouragement of creativity and self-esteem.
 4. Choices and responsibility.
 5. Encouragement of cooperation and self-control.
 6. Exciting activities.
 7. Development of the mind, body, and spirit.



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Ages of Children Served

- Our programs serve children ages 3 to 5 years old.
- VPK- Child must be 4 by September 1st of the current school year

Ratios

- Our programs abide by the guidelines set by the Florida Department of Children and Family Services.
- Children 3 years old: The ratio is one instructor per 15 children.
- Children 4 years old: The ratio is one instructor per 20 children.
- VPK Class: The ratio is 1 instructor per 11 children/2 instructors per 20 children.

Programs and Hours

- Four Freedoms Park
 - VPK Class A
Free Program through the State of Florida
M-F 9:00am-12:00pm
Ages 4 to 5 years (Child must be 4 by September 1st to receive a voucher for VPK)
 - VPK Class B
M-W-F 8:45am-2:00pm
Ages 4 to 5 years (Child must be 4 by September 1st to receive a voucher for VPK)
 - Early Explorers
Tu & Th 9:00am-1:30pm
Ages 3 to 4 years
Wrap-around care available to ALL classes- pre-registration required
- William Austen Youth Center
 - VPK
Free Program through the State
M- F 9:00am – 12:00pm
Ages: 4 to 5 years (child must be 4 by September 1st to receive a voucher for VPK)
Wrap around care available
- Coral Cutie's Child Care
 - M-F
Ages: 3 to 5 years
Hours: 6:30am – 6:00pm



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ADMINISTRATION

- The office provides administrative support and enrollment records, including accounting, payroll, training, quality control, supervision, purchasing, staff recruitment, and marketing.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT:

- Our facilities are multi-purpose with the main room being used for a variety of rentals programs ranging from 3 year olds to adolescence and seniors.
- All equipment is scaled to the child's level.
- A security system has been installed to ensure the safety of the child.
- The classrooms are set up with learning centers that the children can explore during center time.

PARENT ACCESS:

- Our facility always has an open-door policy.
- When signing your child in/out, always check in at the front desk. Your child's safety is our number one concern.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT:

- Staff is hired to serve as role models and enhance all areas of child development (emotional, physical, intellectual, creative, and social).
- Staff encourages the children to participate in recreational activities to enhance the development of their skills.
- Staff participates in regular meetings to formulate and coordinate the curriculum.
- All staff is required to be CPR and First Aid certified and is required to participate in childcare training programs.
- Staff members are required to keep their training up to date and at the standards to coincide with the Florida Department of Children and Families (45-hour mandatory training and CDA certification preferred).
- Staff are required to continue to complete trainings every year after the 45 hours mandatory training is complete
- VPK lead instructors must have their CDA, (FCCPC) and all certifications needed through The Department of Children and Families.

STAFF/CHILD INTERACTIONS:

- Each facility has a full-time Supervisor, two Recreation Specialists, one Preschool Director and classroom instructors.
- Staff follows established guidelines to ensure continuity of daily routines, smooth operation, and stability of the program.



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STAFF/PARENT INTERACTIONS:

- Staff and parents enjoy a close relationship, which is built through personal day-to-day communication during parent pick-up or drop off. Staff are required to avoid sending emails, text, and/or personal communication to parents of any kind.
- An outline of the program schedule will be distributed to the parents concerning events and daily curriculum at the beginning of each session.
- A variety of the children's classwork and projects are taken home on a day-to-day basis. Projects are put in the child's folder for easy pickup at the end of the day.
- Parents are encouraged to offer suggestions and concerns to the staff at any time as needed.

ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION:

- Due to staff preparations, childcare must be paid in advance for the week or for the month.
 - **Monthly** payments are to be paid by the 15th of the prior month.
 - **Weekly** payments are to be paid by Wednesday afternoon for the upcoming week.
- \$15 late fee will be applied to your account if fees are not paid on time.
- We accept cash, checks, Visa/Master Card, Discover, and American Express. Checks should be made payable to the City of Cape Coral. Driver's license number needs to be written on the check.
- VPK vouchers will be accepted prior to the school year starting or until spaces are filled.

WAITING LIST:

- We try to accommodate all parents who are interested in enrolling their child into our program.
- If the program is full, your child's name will be put on a waiting list and as space becomes available, starting at the top of the list, the child's parent will be contacted.

SUMMER PROGRAM:

- Four Freedoms Park and the William Austen Youth Center will continue childcare during the summer.

VACATION AND HOLIDAYS:

- Our school will be closed on Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving break, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Presidents Day, Memorial Day and Independence Day. *Closures are subject to change
- If your child is in VPK, please see calendar for Non-VPK days.
- The William Austen Youth Center Preschool is closed the week before the new school year starts to allow our staff to prepare their classrooms for the new year.



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ABSENTEEISM:

- If your child is not going to be attending childcare, we ask that you notify the staff by calling the front office.
 - Four Freedoms Park 239-574-0804
 - William Austen Youth Center 239-242-3950
- Refunds or credits are not given for any days missed. There is no daily rate for care.
- If your child is enrolled in the VPK program, you are required to sign and follow the attendance policy.

DROP-OFF AND PICK UP

- Upon entering the building, children should be signed in by their parent/guardian using either their full signature or fingerprint if using Procure. Please do not write mom/dad or use initials, as these are not acceptable. Anyone picking up or dropping off is required to properly sign the child in/out.
- Please have your children put his/her belongings in the cubbyhole assigned to them.
- At dismissal time, please sign your child out on the sign-out sheet/Procure.
- When picking up your child, please check their folder daily, which is located in the hallway (Four Freedoms, or classroom (Youth Center), and make sure to take home all of your child's belongings.
- Folders include the child's artwork and any parent information sheets. (Flyers, letters etc.)
- If someone other than a parent is picking your child up, please notify your child's instructor, and that person must be listed on your child's enrollment form, as well as showing valid photo I.D. upon pick up.
- Additions to pick up list must be in person we do not take them via phone
- All children should be present by 9:00am each day. If your child will be absent or running late you **MUST** call by 9:00am and report absence.
- VPK ONLY - Person dropping off or picking up must sign the child in/out and document time. On the last day of the month, a parent must sign the VPK attendance sheet that will be turned into the state. This sheet must be signed upon arrival.
- This attendance sheet is very important – this is how the Center receives payment for the VPK services.

LATE PICK UP PROCEDURES:

- A \$1.00 per minute penalty will be charged if children are still present past program hours.
- Late fee payment is due upon child pick-up, and if not paid, childcare will be under review.
- If more than two late pick-ups occur, your child's enrollment will be under review.
- If your child has not been picked up within a half hour of closing time, the Cape Coral Police Department will be notified, and the Florida Department of Children and Families will be contacted.
- We ask that you notify the office if you are running late due to an unforeseen circumstance.



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CURRICULUM:

- Each center uses a specialized curriculum:
 - Four Freedoms Park uses Learning Beyond Paper & Big Day PreK.
 - William Austen Youth Center uses the Creative Curriculum and Creative Pre-K.
- The City of Cape Coral's goal is to provide a well-defined, high-quality program designed to meet the physical, social, emotional, creative, and intellectual needs of all enrolled children.
- The children will explore different centers (Art, Literacy, Science, Dramatic Play and Blocks) with activities that are planned around weekly themes.
- Hands-on learning is the best way for the young child to learn, and this is incorporated into all aspects of our program.

LESSONS:

- Child Care Staff are responsible for planning monthly schedules, as well as class activities that are age-appropriate.
- Staff rotates centers on a regular basis and plans separate activities that coincide within the weekly theme.
- There are often special activities such as guest speakers, creative stations, community presentations, field trips and holiday parties.

NAPS:

- The City of Cape Coral incorporates nap time during the program at both locations, Four Freedoms Park and William Austen Youth Center.
- VPK ONLY -Your child will be given a resting period after the VPK program has ended.

FEES:

- VPK (9:00am-12:00pm) is free with a voucher funded by the State of Florida per student
- Four Freedoms Park Wrap Around Care: \$60 for M-W-F and \$90 for M-F (Meals are not included)
- Lunch Bunch is from 12:00pm-2:00pm: \$40 M-F (Meals are not included)
- Early Explorers is from 9:00am – 1:30pm Tu & Th \$35/day(based on how many days in the month. Payments are required to be paid by the month for Early Explorers)
- William Austen Youth Center Wrap Around Care: \$120 for M-F (Includes breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack)
- Coral Cutie's childcare: \$130 per week (includes breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack)
- The City of Cape Coral accepts checks, cash, Visa/Master Card, Discover and American Express. Credit or debit cards are accepted by phone. Checks must be made payable to the City of Cape Coral, and the Driver's License # must be written on the check.



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***Please note that the fees and schedules outlined in this manual are subject to change at any time throughout the year due to various factors. We will make every effort to notify existing customers of any changes in a timely manner.**

INSUFFICIENT PAYMENT:

- Returned Check Fees:
- Check Amount Fee
- \$0-\$50.00 \$25.00
- \$50.00-\$300.00 \$30.00
- Further payments for programs will not be accepted until the returned check and service fee are paid. A child may not attend until the returned payment is paid.
- Upon return of a second check, program fees must be paid in cash, money order, Visa, Mastercard, or American Express for a minimum of one year.
- In the event that a credit card is declined twice, program fees must be paid by cash, check, or money order. Restitution for insufficient payments must be made at City Hall Cashier's office.

CAMP PROGRAMS

- Cancellations must be requested in writing seven (7) or more days prior to the start date to receive a credit or refund. If there is a waitlist and the campers spot is filled prior to the start of any given camp week, camper may receive a partial or full refund.
- Refund requests made after camp begins, due to medical conditions, life-altering situations, etc. will result in a pro-rated credit or refund based upon the number of days attended. Each request will be reviewed on an individual basis.

CLASSES/PROGRAMS

- Refunds, credits or makeup options will be given for cancellations due to weather, instructor illness, facility condition, or other circumstances beyond our control. If applicable, these will be issued on a pro-rated basis.
- A credit or refund will be issued for withdrawal requests made prior to attending a class or program that requires pre-registration.
- Should a participant miss a scheduled class/program, there may be a makeup opportunity. If the makeup opportunity is not convenient or there is not a makeup class available, no credit or refund will be given.
- Refund requests made after class/program begins, due to medical conditions, life-altering situations, etc. may result in a pro-rated credit or refund based upon the number of classes/programs attended. Each request will be reviewed on an individual basis.



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ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS:

- Facility Enrollment Form (provided by office).
- Copy of the Florida Certificate of Immunization Form #680, Student Health Examination Form #3040 (provided by your child's physician).
- All forms must be turned in by the first day of class or the child will not be able to attend.

PROGRAM DISCIPLINARY POLICY:

- To reduce discipline problems in our program, the Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department places great emphasis on positive relationships between students, staff and parents. Our parents and children should be aware of the following discipline policy.
- It is the practice of the Parks and Recreation Department to empower supervisory staff with the authority to suspend persons from participating in its functions and activities because of poor sportsmanship, misconduct, or blatant disregard of the established and posted rules. Persons exhibiting behavior worthy of suspension may be immediately expelled from the facility and program.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS WILL RESULT IF:

- Any staff member, participant, or program guest is not treated with respect.
- A child inflicts harm on another child, causing injury.
- There is defacing, abuse, vandalism, tampering, or stealing of any property of others, the facilities, or Cape Coral Parks & Recreation. This includes all classrooms and equipment within a building, a school, all outdoor equipment, all Parks and Recreation equipment, all outdoor living habitats and wildlife. Parents/guardians will be financially responsible for damages caused by your child.
- There is use of profanity, foul or abusive language, or body gestures toward any person.
- There is fighting, hitting, or pushing of any person.
- Unauthorized departure from the grounds of the program.
- Child attempts to/or does open door(s) or leave class without permission or unexpectedly.
- A rock, stick, sand, or any other dangerous object is thrown.
- There is possession, use, or sale of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or weapons.
- Refusal to follow program policies.
- There is running or yelling in the classrooms, hallway, or any off-site trip locations.
- There is ball playing in the classroom or any interior hallways.
- A child leaves the group without permission.
- A child is chewing gum or eating candy without authorization.
- There is excessive talking, disruption, or not paying attention.
- Any health and/or sanitation-related incidences/accidents where students display that they are not sufficient in restroom care required by the preschool program will be addressed on a case-by-case basis where, if ongoing, can result in termination from the program due to health/sanitation risk avoidance required by DCF license practices. All health and sanitation-related incidents will be written up in the same manner as an incident/accident report and will be treated as an incident/accident.

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DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

- If any of these actions are taken by the child, staff will take these steps to correct the problem.

First Incident: The child will be reminded with a verbal warning of the rule they have broken, then they will be encouraged to use reasoning skills to help them solve the problem. The parent will be notified at the time of pick up.

Second Incident: All of the steps will be repeated from 1st incident. The child will then be redirected from the area and be given another activity to do. They will be encouraged to do activities such as reading in the cozy corner, complete a puzzle or any other quiet activities.

Third Incident: The child will be removed from the immediate area and taken to the Director.





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The Director will assign the staff to write up an incident report and the parent will be notified upon pick up, or by phone immediately if a suspension is being given.

*After three incident reports, the child can be suspended and/or removed from the program.

- Parents are notified of any discipline problems or positive changes in behavior.
- No child will be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating, or frightening.
- Discipline is not associated with food, rest, or toiletry.
- Physical punishment is prohibited.

***All Discipline decisions are subject to change and are at the discretion of the Childcare Director. Please also refer to the Behavior Management section.**

The Discipline Policy that is administered by the City of Cape Coral is in accordance with the Florida Department of Children and Families.

Disciplinary Actions To Be Used

The City of Cape Coral believes in using progressive disciplinary measures. Staff utilizes the following steps to ensure each participant is treated fairly.

- The situation will be documented and verbally discussed with the child/children involved.
- The child will be redirected to another activity.
- The child will lose time in an activity.
- Discipline reports will be issued for more severe situations and could include up to a five-day suspension from the program. Suspension lengths will be under the discretion of the Supervisor.
- Parents will be contacted.
- After suspension, the child will be brought back to the program on a probationary period. Further problems will
- constitute grounds for permanent dismissal.
- No refunds or credits will be issued for suspension periods.
- A one-to-five-day suspension may result at any time if the Supervisor feels it is warranted. Remember, removal from

The program will occur when all other efforts have been exhausted or if a serious offense has occurred. Under no circumstances will your child be spanked or receive any other kind of physical punishment.



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Appeal Procedure

If a person wishes to appeal a suspension, he/she has three (3) business days from receipt of the Notice of Suspension to submit an appeal to the Director of Parks and Recreation for review. Staff will submit all paperwork related to the event to the Parks and Recreation Administration Office. Staff may be requested to meet with the Director of Parks & Recreation should he/she require additional information or clarification.

Infractions/Consequences Behavior Chart

The intent of this section is to give Parks and Recreation staff a tool to enforce the rules by developing reasonable consequences for rule infractions or violations of the behavior management policy. The intent is also to educate the public that there is a consequence for rule-breaking behavior – especially behavior that adversely or violently affects another individual. These consequences should be reasonable but progressively serious depending upon the severity of the incident and the frequency of negative behavior from the same individual, group or team. Behavior Chart: (Applies to any Park, field, swimming pool, facility or center and any activity sponsored by City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department)

TERMINATION OF PRESCHOOL/VPK PRIVILEGES:

- It is the understanding of all the staff that each child is unique in their own way and staff will try to help a child to deal with their feelings and behavior in an appropriate manner.
- Any student who unexpectedly leaves the classroom or playground without permission from a staff member will be suspended or terminated.
- Any health and/or sanitation-related incidences/accidents where students display that they are not sufficient in restroom care required by the preschool program will be addressed on a case-by-case basis if ongoing, it can result in termination from the program due to health/sanitation risk avoidance required by DCF license practices.
- All health and sanitation-related incidents will be written up in the same manner as an incident/accident report and will be treated in such a way.
- Parent/Teacher conferences may be held to discuss your child's behavior.
- If all of our attempts have failed and the child has received three referrals, it is up to the discretion of the Facility Supervisor and Director to ask that the child no longer attends the program.
- Good attendance is important to ensure high-quality programs. The facility supervisor has the right to remove a child from the program if excessive absenteeism occurs.

***All Discipline decisions are subject to change and are at the discretion of the Childcare Director. Please also refer to the Behavior Management section.**

Infraction	Penalty
Engage in aggressive behavior that has resulted in physical violence against a game official, City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation employee.	Immediate removal from the game/meet or facility and suspension from all City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation facilities for a minimum of 6 months and up to 5 years.
Engage in aggressive behavior that has resulted in physical violence against another player, game spectator, or program participant.	Immediate removal from the game/meet or facility and suspension from facility or activity for a minimum of six (6) months and up to five (5) years for Adults; Children 1 day and up to five (5) years, depending on severity.
Physically threaten a game official (umpire, referee, or site supervisor), City of Cape Coral employee, or another player, spectator, or program participant with intent to cause harm.	Suspension for a minimum of 2 games/meets and up to 2 seasons or up to 6 months.
Verbally abuse a game official (umpire, referee, instructor, or site supervisor), City of Cape Coral employee, another player, spectator, or program participant with intent to cause harm.	Suspension for a minimum of two (2) games/meets and up to one (1) season or trespass from the specific facility or program for a minimum of two (2) operating days and/or up to six (6) months.
Refusal to abide by a game official's or facility staff member's decision either with abusive and/or argumentative language or other forceful action.	Immediate removal from the game/meet and suspension up to six (6) games/meets or immediate removal from the facility for a minimum of two (2) operating days and trespass from the facility or recreation program for up to three (3) months.
Illegal activity: Participating in illegal activity which includes solicitation of another to participate illegally activity that includes but is not limited to theft, vandalism or gambling in or about City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Facilities, games or sponsored activities. Intoxication or the appearance of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.	Immediate removal from the game/meet, facility, or activity and trespassing, and suspension that can vary from two (2) to six (6) months from the date of the incident.
Sublet a permit intended for individual, league/team or tournament use.	Loss of permit for the leagues/teams/person or individuals involved in unauthorized permit for one year.
Destruction of City equipment and/or removal of city equipment without city staff authorization will result in penalty. Examples include, but are not limited to, everything such as, move soccer goals, bat balls against fence, remove base anchors, lane lines, rims, chairs, tables, etc. without permission.	Loss of Permit for the leagues/teams/person(s) for one month and for up to one (1) year. This will also carry the penalty of payment for damages or replacement of damage property according to City specifications.***A Police Report will be filled out in all cases***
Failure to abide by permit requirements or any use permit.	Loss of permit for the leagues/person one month to one year.



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Medication Policy

Parks & Recreation employees, volunteers, contractors, and representatives will not administer, dispense, distribute, or oversee the taking of any prescription or over-the-counter medications to or for participants. Parents/guardians are solely responsible for providing all medications, including daily, as-needed, and over-the-counter medicines.

Staff may not hold or store medications for participants, except as allowed under a separate written emergency care or accommodation plan approved by Parks & Recreation administration and consistent with applicable law.

Participant and Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Ensure all medications are taken before or after program hours whenever possible, so that medication is not required during program time.

When medication is necessary during program hours, a parent/guardian or other responsible adult designated by the parent/guardian must come to the site to administer the medication directly to the participant.

Inform Parks & Recreation staff of any medical conditions, allergies, or emergency medications (for example, inhalers or epinephrine auto-injectors) on registration forms or health forms required by Parks & Recreation. Participants with emergency medications are required to have a completed Health History and Emergency Care Plan, please ask a staff member for this document.

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LICE:

- Throughout the year, the preschool staff will periodically check your child for head lice.
- If we find that your child has head lice, we will notify you, and the child will need to be picked up from school.
- A child having lice will not be permitted back into the program until cleared by staff as having no nits on the hair shaft.

*No credit will be issued for a child who misses the program due to head lice. *

RESTROOM:

- The children are allowed to use the restroom any time, but we ask that they let a teacher know first.
- Children are required to wash their hands upon completion in the restroom. This is strongly enforced.
- Children are not permitted to wear pull-ups or disposable underwear.
- Children are required to be potty trained to attend the program. Accidents will be documented, and children may be suspended to be retrained before returning.

TOYS FROM HOME:

- On select dates the children will be allowed to bring toys/items from home for show and tell. The teacher will post the dates a week in advance. The toy/item from home will revolve around the theme selected by the teacher.
- We ask that this is the only time your child brings in a toy from home unless it has been cleared by the child's instructor.

PROGRAM ATTIRE AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS:

- When bringing in a change of clothes, nap time blankets and sheets, jackets or sweaters we ask that they be placed in your child's cubby and have their name clearly marked on them.
- Only closed-toed shoes will be permitted (preferably tennis shoes) as they are taken out onto the playground each day they attend, weather permitting.
- Please dress students according to the weather. Jackets are allowed to be stored in students cubby.





SUNSCREEN POLICY

The City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Department will, as a courtesy, agree to administer sunscreen to your son/daughter to help prevent the harmful effects of sun exposure.

The city of Cape Coral's policy on applying sunscreen is as follows:

Each child will be responsible for personally supplying and applying sunscreen to their skin. When necessary, a City of Cape Coral staff member will assist each child who may be unable to personally apply their own sunscreen. When a child needs such assistance, the staff member will apply sunscreen on only the exposed parts of the child's skin. Children will be requested to apply sunscreen along their suit lines. Also, the staff member will only apply sunscreen while another adult staff member is present.

Please initial the appropriate statement below:

_____ I give permission for the City of Cape Coral summer camp staff to administer sunscreen to my child in accordance with the policy above and the following conditions below:

I, as the parent or legal guardian of the above-named child, agree that, at certain times during the course of the summer, sunscreen may not always be necessary during all outdoor activities. I leave the decision to administer sunscreen to my child at the discretion of my child's summer camp director.

I, as the parent or legal guardian of the above names child, agree that a City of Cape Coral summer camp staff member may supervise the application of the sunscreen on my child, and when necessary, may actually apply the sunscreen on the exposed parts of my child's skin.

I, as the parent or legal guardian of the above-named child, understand the City of Cape Coral is not responsible for my child(ren) receiving sunburn despite applying sunscreen.

_____ I have read the above policy and DO NOT GIVE PERMISSION for the city of Cape Coral summer camp staff to administer sunscreen to my child.

_____ My child will be bringing sunscreen to camp to use personally.



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PLAYGROUND POLICY

- Four Freedoms Park and The William Austen Youth Center playgrounds are public parks during certain hours.
- The playground is completely fenced in.
- Staff is stationed around the playground to keep a watchful eye on all children.
- For safety purposes and to avoid injury do not allow students to up the slide, head leading down the slide or laying prostrate or to allow multiple students going on the slide at one time.
- Staff is in full communication with the office at all times by radio.
- Children are asked not to walk up the slides. They need to come down them properly in a sitting position.
- When the class is ready to return to the classroom, the teachers will have them form a line to take attendance before returning to the building and then again once inside.

LOST AND FOUND:

- If your child should leave something at school, the instructors will place it in Lost and Found.

MEAL TIMES:

Four Freedoms Park

- We do not provide meals at Four Freedoms Park
- You will need to pack a healthy lunch along with a morning and afternoon snack
- You will need to provide a water bottle each day, labeled with first and last name per DCF.
- If you send in grapes or hotdogs, they must be sliced so that they do not pose as a choking hazard. Also, we ask that you do not send any candy to school.
- We do not provide refrigeration for keeping items cold or a microwave to heat items.
- Please inform teachers and staff of any food allergies

William Austen Youth Center

- Children will have breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks while in our care Monday – Friday
- You will need to provide a water bottle each day, labeled with first and last name per DCF.
- The center is on the USDA Food Program, so all food is provided here at school
- If you wish to provide food from home, you must have a doctor's note stating the reason. This is required for facilities on the USDA Food Program. We will still provide the child with our meal.
- We can provide refrigeration for lunches brought from home if necessary.
- Please inform teachers and staff of any food allergies



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BIRTHDAYS:

- Please inform your child's teacher in advance if you would like to bring in a cake or cupcakes for the child's class to celebrate their birthday.
- Cakes or treats must be store-bought.
- Be sure to ask if there are any students with food allergies

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION/CONFERENCES:

- Preschool staff likes to keep the lines of communication open between parents and staff.
- On the first day of each week, parents may view the lesson plan located on the parent information board.
- Look for any permission slips that need to be signed and returned, as well as when book orders are due back.
- If at any time you would like to speak to an instructor we ask that you do so after program hours. If this is inconvenient, we can make other arrangements so that your child's instructor's class can be covered so she is free to speak to you.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS:

- Students are given a basic evaluation two - three times a year. The first evaluation will be done at the beginning of the year, the second will be done end of December or beginning of January, and the third will be done during the last month of school. Daily reports will also be distributed. Please check your child's folder upon dismissal.

MONTHLY FIRE DRILLS:

- Fire drills are conducted each month and logged on a fire drill sheet that is posted in the preschool office.
- We also conduct an inclement weather drill and lockdown drill two times per year.
- The park is equipped with a lightning alarm. Our staff follows the lightning alarm and acts accordingly.

VOLUNTEERS:

- Our Preschools do not have volunteers on a regular basis, however we are looking for parents and their friends to share their talents and special interests with our preschool as guest speakers.
- If you or a friend or an organization that you belong to would like to be a guest speaker, please see one of the instructors.
- The children really look forward to having guest speakers!

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SUPPLIES:

- Parents will be given a supply list upon registration. These items will need to be brought to class with your child the first day of the program or can be dropped off in advance.
- On occasion, we might ask parents to supply a particular item for a specific craft that the children will be making.
- Donations of paper towels, napkins, tissues and wet wipes are always welcomed.

FIELD TRIPS:

Four Freedoms Park:

- Does not participate in Field Trips

William Austen Youth Center

- On occasion, the children in the VPK program will be going on field trips.
- The children are transported by City busses and children will be required to wear their seat belts and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Children are required to be 5 years old to ride in City busses.
- Over school breaks, our classes may walk to Sunsplash for a field trip. Parents will be notified in advance. Permission slips will be given.
- City of Cape Coral T-Shirts are required by all staff and children attending the field trip.
- T-Shirts are available for purchase during special occasions.

PHOTOS:

- By participating in these programs you will be asked whether or not to give permission for your child to be included in school pictures and to use photographs, video tapes, recording, or any other record of these programs for legitimate purposes.
- Also photos and videos will be taken with approved City of Cape Coral devices.





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VPK ATTENDANCE/TARDINESS POLICY

The City of Cape Coral Parks and Recreation Program locations, Four Freedoms Park and the William “Bill” Austen Youth Center, will be operating a Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program annually following the Lee County School District calendar.

Youth Center VPK Operation: Monday thru Friday 9a.m.-12p.m.

Four Freedoms Park VPK Operation 1: Monday thru Friday 8:45a.m-12p.m.

Four Freedoms Park VPK Operation 2: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:45a.m.-2:15p.m.

Attendance during the scheduled instructional days is of utmost importance to remain in the VPK program. Not only is (School) funding linked to attendance, but also the child’s success upon entrance into kindergarten. You will be required to sign and comply with the following policy on Attendance and Tardiness to remain in the VPK program.

Tardiness: The VPK program’s arrival time is between **8:40 and 8:55 a.m.** VPK arrivals should be signed in at the Pre-K Classroom.

At the **Youth Center**, the earliest arrival time is **8:55 a.m.**

At **Four Freedoms Park**, the earliest arrival time is **8:40 a.m.**

Once the day starts, all children are expected to be in place and ready to start their day. Arrivals after the scheduled time are disruptive to the group in progress and difficult for the arriving child as well. We understand that it is occasionally unavoidable to be “running late”, but more than twice a month will not be acceptable and could be cause for termination from the VPK program.

Late Pick Up: The VPK program ends at a scheduled daily time and is noted in the vpk enrollment packet. A late fee will be assessed if your child is not picked up by the appointed time as listed in the VPK parent manual.

Absence: Daily attendance in the VPK program is necessary for optimal learning. Any absences require a written note from the parent for one of the following reasons:

- Illness or injury of the child or the child’s family member which requires hospitalization or bed rest.
- Physician or dentist appointment; Infectious disease or parasitic infestation.
- Funeral service, memorial service, or bereavement upon the death of the child’s family member.
- Compliance with a court order (e.g., visitation, subpoena); Special education or related services for the child’s disability.
- Observance of a religious holiday or service.
- Family vacation, not to exceed 5 excused absences per program year.



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Please note: Unexcused absences of 5 consecutive instructional days will be considered a withdrawal from the VPK program at both locations. Withdrawals from the VPK program will not be eligible for re-enrollment. The VPK program will allow one documented 5-day excused absence during the school year period.

Documentation must be submitted in advance, explain the reason for the 5-day absence, and be dated and signed by the child's legal custodial adult.

Verifying your child's attendance and absences: The preschool staff will ask you for attendance confirmation at the end of each month. You will be given a form to review and confirm your child's recorded attendance for the month. Your signature on this form will not only verify the attendance, but also will direct the Early Learning Coalition to direct payment for the month's VPK program for your child to our VPK program, and that you continue to choose our program to provide your child's VPK program for the upcoming month. To participate in the VPK Program, I agree to comply with the terms of this Absence and Tardiness Policy. My signature below is acknowledgement of my review and acceptance of the terms of this policy.

Students Name

Printed name of legal custodial adult

Signature of legal custodial adult

Date

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REPORTING CHILD ABUSE, NEGLECT, ABANDONMENT AND ABUSE, AND EXPLOITATION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

The City of Cape Coral is mandated to report child abuse, neglect, abandonment and abuse, and exploitation of vulnerable adults.

Chapter 39 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.) mandates that any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, neglected, or abandoned by a parent, legal guardian, caregiver, or other personnel responsible for the child's welfare shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Florida Abuse hotline of the Department of Children and Families.

The bill also states that the knowledge and willful failure of a Person who is required to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect is elevated from a first-degree misdemeanor to a third-degree felony. As a result, the potential prison sentence is raised from 1 year to 5 years, and the potential fine is raised from a minimum of \$1,000.00 to a maximum of \$5,



EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE PAGE
