

CAMP DISCOVERY

2020 Summer Camp Parent & Camper Handbook



Borough of West Chester
Parks and Recreation Department
401 E. Gay Street
West Chester, PA 19380
610-436-9010
parksandrecreation@west-chester.com



Charles A. Melton Center
501 E. Miner Street
West Chester, PA 19382
610-692-9290
camcinfo@meltoncenter.org



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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you for your interest in the new program, Camp Discovery, put on by the Borough of West Chester Parks & Recreation Department and the Charles A. Melton Center. Your support will allow this program to grow and benefit the youth of this community.

The goal of this program is to provide a safe environment for residents of West Chester to enjoy the summer together. We wish to provide an experience that will allow the children to develop their creativity and individuality, while receiving care and understanding from a concerned nurturing staff. We will have a focus on providing S.T.E.A.M. learning through fun, enjoyable activities put together by educational professionals.

We urge you to read this manual carefully and we ask that you contact us should you have any questions or concerns. We recommend that you go over the material in the handbook with your child and inform them of the rules and policies of the summer day camp program.

On the last page of this handbook, you will find the Parent/Camper Handbook Agreement Page. You must sign this page, notifying us that you and your child are aware of all the policies and procedures of Camp Discovery.

Respectfully,

The West Chester Parks and Recreation
&
The Charles A. Melton Center



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Camp Discovery Philosophy

Camp Discovery is a child-centered environment that positively impacts participants through social interaction and learning while offering opportunities for human development. We hope this camp inspires children to gain a greater appreciation for other individuals in a social setting and broaden their understanding of the environment and community in which we live. We encourage both, staff and campers to enjoy sharing their talents in sports, arts and crafts, music and being their own individual. Our desire is that every child takes home a smile, new friendship and positive memories that will last a lifetime.

Program Goals

- To develop self-discipline and self-motivation; awareness of abilities and increased self-control, self-confidence and self esteem
- To develop and encourage positive personal growth, respect for others, property, environment, supplies and equipment
- To develop a better understanding of group dynamics, group interactions, and teamwork
- To develop and refine recreational, artistic and creative skills; enjoy and reflect upon personal achievements
- To avoid possible problems by providing guidance in worthwhile activities that can occupy leisure time
- To have safe experiences with limits and supervision
- To learn more about S.T.E.A.M education practices
- To accept, respect, be responsive and understanding of individuals of varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds, habits and environments.
- To increase the individual's awareness of the local and the surrounding area and all that it has to offer them
- To provide a positive camp environment for campers to develop and maintain friendships



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Summer Camp Program Policies and Procedures

Camp runs from June 22nd to August 14th. There will be NO CAMP on Friday July 3rd.

Weekly Themes

Themes will be presented each week to add fun to all activities, education, games, crafts, activities, and more! By the end of the program your child will have made many new friends and have a new awareness of their West Chester Community. The program will incorporate these six basic values into each week: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

S.T.E.A.M

Camp Discovery is designed to immerse students in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) learning through hands-on and fun activities and field trips. Some of our topics of exploration will include robotics, coding, chemistry, animal science, and outer space. This STEAM work will help students develop their critical thinking skills, problem solving ability, and creativity while building the foundation for success in high school, college, and career.

Literacy

Camp Discovery will keep students reading throughout the summer! All students will have the chance to participate in an individualized literacy program called iReady each week. This program is designed to help students improve in the five domains of literacy (phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) and to work at their own pace and reading level in an interactive environment. Students will also have the opportunity for fun and engaging reading activities like storytimes, read alouds, and visits to the library to help foster a lifelong love of learning.

Food and Nutrition

Please send a water bottle with your child that can be refilled throughout the day. All campers must bring a lunch to camp everyday, unless otherwise notified. Please pack a healthy lunch for your child and do not send perishable food items. For the safety of your child and the rest of the campers No Glass Bottles Are Permitted!! Make sure to mark all belongings with your child's name.

A morning snack and afternoon snack will be provided to all campers.

Rainy Days

This program runs rain or shine. The Charles A. Melton Center provides a safe location for rain days. In the case of severe weather, which threatens the safety of the campers and staff, occurs during the camp day, campers will be transported to the Charles A. Melton Center (if not already there). We have no control over the weather, there will be no refunds for days when there is severe weather and camp must be canceled.

Extreme Temperatures

When there is an **excessive heat warning** camp will be held inside the Charles A. Melton Center for the camp day.



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Drop Off and Pick Up

We will have an assigned pick up and drop off area so that we can safely transition your child to and from camp. All parents and/or approved persons must park and physically sign your child in and out of camp each day. There will be no exceptions to this rule!

Children will only be released to those individuals whose names appear on the registration form. If a court order has been issued limiting custody of a child to one parent, a copy of the court order must be in our files. If a copy is not supplied to the office with your child's registration form, staff will be obligated to release the child to either parent if they are listed on the registration form.

If your child will be walking to camp each day, you must provide a written letter giving your child permission to sign in and out of camp each day. The note must specify what time the child will be arriving at camp and what time they are permitted to sign out of camp. If your child will not be attending camp, please notify the Head Coach so that they will not expect him or her. If your child will be riding their bike to camp, you must provide a lock. The child must lock the bike and will not be allowed to unlock the bike until it is time for them to depart camp for the day.

No campsite will accept children prior to 8:00AM. Camp ends at 4:00PM with the option of After Care from 4:00-6:00PM. If you are not enrolled in After Care, there is a **\$1.00 per minute/per child** late charge for parents who fail to pick up their child by their scheduled time listed on the registration form. You are required to pay this fee in CASH on the day of the late pick up. If the late fee is not paid, your child will not be permitted to attend the program until the fee is paid.

The Head Coach will wait 15 minutes before calling the parents. If no contact with the parents can be made the Emergency Contact will be called. If neither the parent's nor the emergency contact can be reached the Police Department will be called. Habitual lateness will result in your child being expelled from the program.

Financial Responsibilities

All camp tuition fees must be paid in full by May 22nd, No Exceptions! No Payments will be taken at the campsites. There are **no refunds** given for no shows, if you choose to withdraw your child or your child is suspended from the program.

Summer Camp Notifications

We will now be using the Alert Center on our website as the main communication for important information parents need to know. The Alert Center will allow our department to send important summer camp information to all summer camp parents and guardians as quickly as possible through email and/or text messages. We will send out alerts for camp location changes, estimate arrival times for bus trips due to traffic, and any other important information that parents should know.

Transportation

School buses and a certified driver will be provided for all bus trips. Summer Camp Directors and/or Head Summer Camp Coaches will also transport small groups of children via passenger vans for special trips. Counselors are not permitted to transport campers in their personal vehicles at any time for any reason. Due to the law changes children under the age of 8 or fewer than 80 lbs will be in a booster seat provided by the West Chester Parks and Recreation Department for our van trips or to transport the children during severe weather.



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Bus Trips

Camp T-Shirts MUST be worn on EVERY bus trip!! There are no exceptions to this rule. If your child is signed up for a camp trip and shows up without their shirt, the parent has two options:

- 1) pay **\$8.00** for an extra shirt for your child so they may go on the bus trip or
- 2) Go home, get the child's shirt and return back to camp prior to the bus departure.

Parents will be notified of place of departure and return time for each bus trip through the weekly newsletters dispensed the Friday before each week. Please drop your child off promptly the morning of a bus trip. Failure to do so may result in your child missing camp trip for the day. All lunches should be packed in a bag and made suitable for traveling and easy disposal. Please send a refillable water bottle on the bus trips spent outdoors. On certain camp trips days parents may send money for snacks and souvenirs. Children will be in charge of the money they bring.

Walking Trips

Children will walk to West Chester area businesses for walking trips during the summer program. They will walk within reasonable distance from their campsite. Camp Directors will schedule trips to local businesses in the Borough of West Chester to gain a greater appreciation of the community. Your child will be expected to walk to each of these businesses. Each Summer Camp Coach will carry emergency forms and basic first aid supplies to ensure the safety of your child during each trip.

Camper Supervision Ratios

The Borough of West Chester Parks and Recreation Department requires ratios of staff that are on duty with campers during the course of each day. In general, activities will meet the following minimums:

<u>Camper Age</u>	<u>Number of Staff</u>	<u>Day Campers</u>
5-7 years	1	5
8-10 years	1	8
11-12 years	1	10

Lost and Found

Any lost article of clothing or other items that are not claimed by the close of camp will be collected and taken to the Salvation Army.

Personal Property

Children will be responsible for their own personal belongings. We are not responsible for the loss or damage of any personally owned items. No personal items such as Cell Phones, CD Players, iPods, Tablets, Electronic Hand Held game, etc. may be brought to camp unless directed by the Head Coach. If your child brings an unapproved item to camp, it will be taken away and stored until dismissal time.

Shorts, shirts, hats or any other article of clothing that may in anyway convey the wrong message (Smoking, drinking, drugs, religion, and sex or any other inappropriate characters or logos) will not be permitted by campers or counselors.

No pets or animals may be brought to the summer program. No weapons or illegal substances are permitted at camp.



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Health/Emergency Accident

All participants are required to have their own health and hospitalization insurance. The Borough of West Chester or the Charles A. Melton Center will not be responsible for medical expenses due to any injury or illness incurred by a child enrolled in Camp Discovery.

Any child exhibiting signs of illness will be isolated until he or she leaves the premises. Parents will be notified and, if deemed necessary by staff, will be asked to pick up their child immediately. Situations involving care beyond basic first aid may require your child to be transported by EMS to the hospital emergency room. A staff member will accompany your child until the parents or their designee assumes responsibility.

Health/Emergency Accident

Summer Camp Coaches are required to review registration forms of all children within the first 24 hours of your child's arrival at camp. Particular attention will be paid to allergies, diet restrictions and any other pertinent health conditions. Please keep staff updated and verify any new health conditions while your child attends camp.

Staff members will not dispense medications, nor will participants be permitted to take medications during the program with exceptions being made on a case-by-case basis. All medications will be collected in the first twenty-four hours of a child's arrival to the program. Medications must be in the original bottle accompanied by a physician's note detailing instructions for disbursement. Coaches will keep a daily report of all collections and time of administration of medication during your child's enrollment.

Medical Procedures and Emergencies

The Camp Director and Head Summer Camp Coaches are trained in First Aid and CPR.

1. In case of a minor injury or illness, the staff member notifies the Camp Director and assistance is sent.
2. Incident report forms will be filled out by the staff member present at the time of the incident and a copy will be given to the parent once it is signed.
3. In case of emergency, 9-1-1 is called, and then the parents and the Supervisor are notified. The child is released to the parents or taken to the hospital, depending on the situation.
4. If by calling the numbers provided on the registration forms the parents couldn't be located, the emergency contact will be called.
5. A staff member will accompany the child to the emergency room at the hospital and take the child's registration form if a parent cannot be located. The incident report is recorded and a copy is given to the parent.
6. If the parent arrives at the program site prior to the ambulance departure, the responsibility of accompanying the child to the hospital will be relinquished to the parent.



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Communicable Diseases

1. Please notify the Camp Director in the case of communicable diseases. (Chicken Pox, Lice, Ringworm, etc.) spread to your child. We will notify all parents if deemed necessary.
2. All children will be observed as they enter the program for signs of communicable diseases. The staff is trained in recognition of signs of communicable diseases.
3. The following precautions will be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease.
 - a) Staff will notify the parent of the child's condition.
 - b) A child with any of the following conditions will be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent.
 1. Diarrhea
 2. Severe coughing causing the child to become red in the face or to make a whooping sound
 3. Difficult or rapid breathing
 4. Yellowish skin or eyes
 5. Conjunctivitis
 6. A temperature of 101 degrees in combination with any other sign of illness
 7. Untreated infected skin patches
 8. Stiff neck
 - c) A child with any of the following signs of illness will be immediately isolated from other children but not discharged without further observation or discussion with parent. The child will be carefully watched for addition of symptoms listed in the above section and will be discharged from the program by decision of the Head Summer Camp Coach and parent should these symptoms become obvious.
 1. Unusual spots or rashes
 2. Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
 3. Elevated temperature
 4. Vomiting
 5. Evidence of lice, scabies or other parasitic infections
 - d) A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease will be:
 1. Cared for in an area away from other children
 2. Within sight and hearing of a staff member at all times
 3. Observed for worsening condition
 4. Discharged to parent upon decision of Head Summer Camp Coach

Child Abuse

All staff has gone through a thorough hiring process, including a background check. All staff has been trained to identify child abuse. All staff members associated with the summer camp program are Mandated Reporters of child abuse.

Non-Discrimination Clause

The Borough of West Chester Parks and Recreation Department and The Charles A. Melton Center, in the determination of the eligibility of admission, does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion or national origin. The Borough of West Chester Parks and Recreation Department and The Charles A. Melton Center will make reasonable accommodations to provide equal access to all programs and services.



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Discipline

We will use assertive discipline guidelines when dealing with the children. Children displaying unacceptable or disruptive behavior will be instructed by the staff to take a "time-out" and be isolated until acceptable behavior is restored. "Time-Outs" are 5-10 minutes in length. Corporal punishment is forbidden.

A discipline report will be written whenever a child's unacceptable behavior has not been corrected following the Time Out. A copy of the discipline report will be given to the parent. A child exhibiting disruptive or unacceptable behavior may be expelled from the program if all alternate methods including parent involvement have failed. If a child is expelled from the program due to disciplinary problems they will not be permitted to participate in the program for a period of one year and no refunds will be issued.

Discipline Problem Procedure

We use a "Three strikes and you are out" discipline procedure. However, certain actions such as, but not limited to, fighting, bullying and stealing are grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

1. **A verbal warning to the child and a written warning will be issued to the parents.**
2. **Meeting with the parents and appropriate staff followed by a two-day suspension.**
3. **One-week suspension.**
4. **Dismissal from the program for a period of one year.**

Minor Violations – Those violations that relate to the behavior and do not endanger the safety of themselves or others. Minor Violations will be handled as follows:

First Offense

- Verbal Warning

Second Offense

- Call parents to pick up child
- Meeting with Parent
- 2-day suspension

Third Offense

- Call parents to pick up child
- Meeting with Parent
- 1-week suspension

Major Violations – Those violations that endanger the safety and well being of the child or other children or staff. (Example: pushing, shoving, physical fighting, throwing toys around staff or other campers, discrimination, leaving premises without permission.)

Three major violation are subject to immediate dismissal at the Camp Directors discretion. No refunds are given to dismissed patrons. Camp Directors and/or Camp Supervisors may be allowed to dismiss a camper prior to three strikes depending on the extremity of the offense.



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Important Notes

- ❖ Please contact the Parks and Recreation Department at 610-436-9010 or the Charles A. Melton Center at 610-692-9290 with any problems or concerns.
- ❖ Camp opens at 8:00A.M. do not arrive earlier, as you will not be able to drop your child off without signing them in.
- ❖ You must pick your child up by the designated time on your registration form. If you are going to be late please call the Camp Program Director and let them know. There will still be a late fee, however we can let your child know so they don't worry.
- ❖ Sneakers and socks are to be worn every day. NO SANDALS are permitted at camp!!
- ❖ Camp T-Shirts MUST be worn on all bus trips.
- ❖ Any special instructions must be discussed with the Head Summer Camp Coach
- ❖ Art related projects will be done weekly.
- ❖ Special activities will be taught to the children teaching them cooperative games and activities that will require teamwork and communication.
- ❖ If your child regularly attends camp and will not be attending due to scheduled vacations, please inform their Head Summer Camp Coaches.
- ❖ Any parent that wishes to help in any way please feel free to call the Camp Director or talk to the Head Summer Camp Coaches.
- ❖ On days with inclement weather, the summer program may show movies Rated 'G'. Please notify the Camp Director if there are any movies that you prefer your child not watch.
- ❖ This program will be run outdoors. Please apply sun block to your children before you drop them off. Please send additional sun block that can be applied by your child throughout the day.
- ❖ We will dispense a weekly newsletter every Friday to keep you aware of next week's activities!
- ❖ Parents MUST sign their children in and out EVERYDAY! If your child is not signed into the program by the parent, the child is considered absent for the day.
- ❖ If someone other than a parent is permitted to pick up the child from camp, then you MUST write a note to notify the Head Summer Camp Coach or Camp Director who will be picking them up. We will check for identification!
- ❖ The Camp Director, Head Summer Camp Coach, and Summer Camp Coaches will be trying their best to make sure that your child has a GREAT SUMMER!! Thank you for your cooperation and support.



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Camp Safety Rules

1. Safety First.
2. Follow directions.
3. Be respectful to other campers and counselors at all times.
4. Stay with assigned counselor at all times.
5. Respect Camp Property other people's belongings and camp equipment.
6. Use all equipment properly.
7. Ask for help with problems.
8. Provide help when others are in need.
9. No inappropriate or unnecessary physical behavior towards any camper or staff member.
10. Biting, fighting, hitting, kicking, pinching and pushing will not be tolerated.
11. Use nice words.
12. Treat people the way you want to be treated.
13. Remain quiet when others are speaking.
14. Ask first before going to the bathroom.



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Bus Safety Rules

1. Safety First.
2. Abide by camp safety rules.
3. Listen to directions.
4. Keep head, hands, arms and legs inside the bus.
5. Demonstrate appropriate behavior.
6. Once the bus starts to move, everyone must remain in their seat until the bus stops.
7. Everyone must sit 2 in a seat.
8. Do not sit on each other's laps.
9. Keep bus aisles clear.
10. Remember to take all personal belongings with you.
11. Exit from the main bus door.
12. Respect and thank the bus driver.
13. In case of emergency:
 - a. Duck your head and bend your knees if you are jumping out of the back of the bus.
 - b. Move at least 100 feet away from the bus.
 - c. Gather on the edge of the roadway with your counselor.
 - d. Evacuate a school bus that has stalled at a railroad crossing if a train is approaching.



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The 2020 Camp Discovery Parent Handbook Agreement must be completed when turning in your child's summer camp application. Please email this form to parksandrecreation@west-chester.com or turn it in with the application.

I, _____, have received, read and understand all of the information presented to me and my child in Camp Discovery Parent Handbook.

Camper's Name: _____

Camper's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____