



Camp Fire

Light the fire within

Camp Fire Extended Day at GSMS Parent Handbook **2024-2025**



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Welcome!

Dear Families,

Welcome to the Camp Fire River Bend Extended Day Program at Good Shepherd Montessori School!

Parents, coordinators and program staff all make up the team providing quality care for your children. It is important that we all are familiar with each other's needs and expectations. The Parent Handbook has been compiled to explain Camp Fire's program philosophy, guidelines, and expectations. We encourage you to read through it and to feel free to call us with any questions.

In Camp Fire, our goals include providing opportunities for youth to participate in enjoyable activities, and making sure your child feels comfortable so that he/she can grow and thrive socially and intellectually. To make the transition from the school day to the extended day program smooth, we are committed to enhancing the connections between the school and our program staff. We will reinforce the school rules, and augment school-day lessons with fun activities.

Camp Fire staff participate in on-going professional development and are always striving to meet the needs of each child. Our on-site team consists of the School Year Program Director and Activity Leaders who look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Throughout the school year we will ask for your feedback. We look forward to being a part of your child's after school time!

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Our Mission: We connect young people to the outdoors, to others, and to themselves.

Our Vision: We envision a world where all young people thrive and have equitable opportunities for self-discovery, community connection, and engagement with nature.

Program Overview

Extended day services are available to all GSMS students.

Hours of Operation. This program starts at the end of the school day and runs Monday through Friday until 5:30 p.m. Extended day begins promptly at 3:10pm. If your child is picked up after 3:10pm, you will be charged for a drop in day, even if they only stay for a few minutes. If your child is not picked up by 5:30pm, a \$1.00 per minute, per child late fee will be charged. These late fees must be paid before your child may return to the extended day program.

Students may sign up for a regular schedule, or you can register your child and use Camp Fire for drop-in care. You can change your weekly schedule as needed.

Tuition and Fees (per child)

Annual Registration Fee	\$25.00
Regularly scheduled days	\$9.00 per day
Drop in days	\$12.00 per day
All Day Programs	\$35 per day
Half Day Programs	\$20 per day

In order to attend the Camp Fire program, students are required to have all of the registration paperwork completed in advance.

Approximate Daily Schedule

3:00 - 3:15pm	Check-in
3:15 - 3:30pm	Bathroom breaks, wash hands
3:30 - 4:00pm	Snack and Cleanup
4:00 - 4:15pm	Spark Time
4:15-5:30pm	Enrichment time (physical activity, recreation, outdoor time, enrichment activities, homework help, etc.)
5:30pm	Last Pickup

Parent Responsibilities / Expectations

1. Complete all registration paperwork and pay the registration fee prior to your child's first day of attendance.
2. You can reach our Program Staff at GSMS at 574-344-8514 during program hours (3-5:30pm). This phone is only turned on during program hours. If you need to reach us at any other time, you can call our office at 574-387-6095.
3. Notify us of schedule changes or cancellations **by Friday at 3pm** for the upcoming week. Refunds will not be issued if you cancel or make changes to the schedule after this time.
4. **We require every family to have a valid credit or debit card on file for billing.** If your card expires, it is your responsibility to notify us or update the card in Square. If your card is declined, we will charge a \$5 per week late fee until the invoice is paid. **Your student will not be able to attend Extended Day until we have received payment for the outstanding balance and have a valid card on file again.**
5. **All fees are due on Friday by 5pm for the upcoming week.** We will automatically charge your card for the upcoming week's tuition after 3pm on Friday.
6. Children may be picked up at any time prior to 5:30pm. If your child is not picked up by 5:30pm, a \$1.00 per minute, per child late fee will be charged.
7. We use the Procure system to sign students in and out. We reserve the right to ask for photo identification to verify that the person picking up your child is on the list of individuals to whom we are authorized to release your child. You **MUST** notify a staff member and sign your student out every day.
8. If your child has exhibited any symptoms of illness, or has a temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, they will not be permitted to stay at Extended Day. Please do not send your child to school or Extended Day if they are not feeling well. We are working hard to limit the spread of communicable illnesses and need your help to keep illness out of our community.
9. Cell phones, tablets and other devices must be turned off and stored in the child's backpack during the Extended Day program. If children need to contact their parents by phone, Camp Fire staff will initiate the contact using the Camp Fire phone.
10. The safety of your child is our first priority. Therefore, if the person picking up your child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, or unable to drive safely, the following procedures will be implemented: 1) Extended day staff will offer to call a taxi or another driver. 2) If the person insists on driving with your child, the staff person will call 911 to report the concern and provide information to ensure the child gets home safely.

Our Philosophy

We are youth-centered

- * Youth take an active role in determining program content.
- * Progressive skill-building builds confidence and leadership.
- * Youth take on leadership roles.

We are welcoming and inclusive

- * Our programs provide co-educational activities for all youth.
- * Youth find a safe and inclusive place to explore who they are.
- * Youth develop assets that are essential to the process of building character and maturity.

We build youth and adult partnerships

- * Youth and adults work together to design, implement, and evaluate what they want to do.
- * Youth form lasting relationships with adults.
- * Young people have opportunities to be involved in positive activities with parents, family members, and other caring adults outside the family circle.

Camp Fire's Partnership with GSMS

Camp Fire's ideal of giving youth an opportunity to lift their voice, and discover who they are aligns with GSMS's goal of nurturing the character and uniqueness of the child. Camp Fire's goal of helping youth find their Sparks fits with the GSMS goals of inspiring wonder and creating joy in learning, and nurturing curiosity and enthusiasm for discovery.

Camp Fire programs are welcoming and inclusive of all youth, and like GSMS, Camp Fire strives to seek and celebrate diversity in our programs. Camp Fire seeks to provide opportunities for parents, program leaders, and youth to work cooperatively in our programs.

Camp Fire program leaders are trained to be Spark Champions, and to show caring and respect for all youth participants, while fulfilling our promise to help youth find their sparks, lift their voices, and discover who they are.

Program Principles

In order to accomplish our purpose, Camp Fire's youth development programs are based on four principles:

1. The program provides a group experience where youth learn social interaction skills and make individual and/or group decisions.
2. The program provides an environment that builds self-esteem, teaches personal life skills, enhances health, and promotes social responsibility.
3. The program is designed and implemented to reduce gender-role, racial, and cultural stereotypes, and to foster positive intercultural relationships.
4. The program is designed to be fun, and provide a friendly atmosphere wherein learning takes place.

Staff Qualifications

Camp Fire staff are trained to provide quality care and programming to the youth they serve. All program staff must have on file a health history form. All staff must be trained in CPR and First Aid.

Background Checks. A criminal history clearance is completed for all employees. This information is maintained in the Camp Fire River Bend office, and is available by request. The criminal history clearance includes the following checks, all of which are updated annually:

- Criminal History Background Clearance
- CPS Central Registry Clearance (for employees over age 21)
- National Sex Offender Registry Clearance

All employees and volunteers must sign an annual voluntary disclosure statement. The statement indicates they agree and understand:

- That child abuse and neglect are against the law
- The Camp Fire River Bend policies regarding child abuse and neglect
- Their responsibility to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect
- Their responsibility to report to Camp Fire and to the school any investigations of themselves for child abuse and neglect
- That they have not been convicted of a felony involving harm or threatened harm
- That they have not been convicted of child abuse or neglect

Supervision Ratios. Camp Fire staff adhere to the State of Indiana guidelines for School Age Child Care. Our goal is an adult/child ratio of 1:12 or better, and not to exceed the State Licensing requirements of 1:15 for School Age Care.

Staff Training

All staff receive training prior to working with youth in our programs. This training includes information about Camp Fire's mission and goals, policies and procedures, behavior management and discipline guidelines, child abuse reporting requirements, emergency procedures, and risk management and safety guidelines.

The orientation also includes training on developmental characteristics of school-age children, training on diversity and inclusion, information on Camp Fire's THRIVE approach to youth development, and program implementation and evaluation goals.

Volunteers

There are a number of volunteer opportunities within the Camp Fire program. Volunteers may assist staff in planning and delivering academic enrichment, youth development programs, and recreational activities.

Volunteers must be screened by the State Police and the Department of Human Services for any history of criminal activity or child abuse or neglect before they are cleared to work in the program.

All volunteers must participate in an orientation prior to working in the program. This orientation includes training on mandatory reporting requirements for child neglect or abuse, Camp Fire policies and procedures, and an on-site orientation.

All volunteers working in the Camp Fire Extended Day Program will be supervised by Camp Fire River Bend staff at all times. No volunteer shall be left alone with youth participants.

Upon arrival, volunteers must sign in with the Site Director and receive their work assignments. Volunteers must sign-out with the Site Director at the completion of each day.

For more information about volunteer opportunities please contact the Camp Fire office at 574-387-6095.

Food Service and Nutrition

Camp Fire will provide a small snack option to all children each day. It is important that snack each day provides either a protein+healthy fat or protein+carb combination. The type of snack can greatly affect the mood and atmosphere of our community and it is a key element of our program. Below are examples of snacks that may be provided.

Healthy Fats and Proteins

- * Avocado
- * Sun Butter
- * Cheese Slices or Cubes
- * Full Fat String Cheese
- * Full Fat Cottage Cheese
- * Full Fat Greek Yogurt
- * Full Fat Yogurt
- * Turkey
- * Chicken
- * Ham
- * Sunflower Seeds

Fruits

(fresh or frozen, unsweetened)

- * Grapes
- * Berries
- * Cucumbers
- * Tomatoes
- * Kiwi
- * Mango
- * Apples or Applesauce
- * Raisins
- * Dried Cranberries
- * Clementines
- * Freeze-Dried or Dehydrated Fruit
- * Olives
- * Lychees

Carbs

- * Black Beans
- * Chickpeas
- * Hummus
- * Muffins (made with applesauce, whole wheat flour, coconut oil)
- * Cereal Mix (whole wheat, no sweetened cereals)
- * Whole Wheat Pitas
- * Whole Wheat Crackers
- * Whole Wheat Goldfish
- * Snap Pea Crisps
- * Rice Crackers
- * Whole Wheat Pretzels
- * Air Popped Popcorn
- * Unsweetened Granola

Vegetables

- * Peas
- * Green Beans
- * Broccoli
- * Cauliflower
- * Carrots

Discipline Policy

Camp Fire will align with the discipline policies of Good Shepherd Montessori School to provide continuity for the children in the extended day program. To encourage self-control, self-esteem, and cooperation, staff will use positive methods of discipline.

When warranted, staff will intervene in a positive, non-threatening manner. Children are encouraged to develop their own solutions to problems and will be provided guidance to develop successful alternative behaviors.

Our goal for children is to help each child develop the internal control needed to manage him/herself. We use the following positive guidance techniques:

- Staff model appropriate behaviors.
- Staff set clear and reasonable limits that protect the child's safety.
- Staff acknowledge appropriate behavior.
- Staff encourage verbalization and problem solving by providing positive suggestions, focused on respecting the rights of others and the environment.

Camp Fire staff will set high expectations. The need for discipline is often the result of low expectations for appropriate behavior.

Staff are trained to use language that is age-appropriate and that youth can understand. They are encouraged to be aware of the developmental abilities of the youth they are working with, and adjust their language accordingly. Staff are encouraged to get down on the student's level and look them in the eye when speaking to them.

Staff are also trained to avoid creating situations that cause temptation. Examples of temptation-creating situations would be letting wrong behavior slip by as if unnoticed, ignoring the rules themselves, leaving youth unsupervised, or keeping valuables in the open.

In general, a first offense is acknowledged by a verbal warning; the second by a written warning and a discussion with the youth about the consequences of continuing the behavior. At this point a parent should be notified.

A third warning requires a meeting with the parent or guardian, and the final step may be either suspension from the program for a specific period of time (a number of days, a week or weeks) or for the duration of the program. These steps might vary depending upon the severity of the misbehavior.

Acceptable consequences of rule breaking include:

- quiet time / time out
- restriction from activity
- conference with program director
- conference with parent/guardian

At no time is discipline to include depriving a child of sleep or food, placing a child alone without supervision, or subjecting a child to hazing, ridicule, threat, corporal punishment, excessive physical exercise, or excessive physical restraint. No child is ever to be physically punished.

Our program cannot accommodate participants who display chronic or severely disruptive behavior. Such behavior may be grounds for dismissal from the program. Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity, which may include, but is not limited to:

- Behavior that requires constant attention from the staff.
- Behavior that is destructive in nature.
- Behavior that continually ignores or disobeys.

Students may be dismissed without warning from Camp Fire Programs for behavior that inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children or staff (i.e., verbally or physically threatening behavior, fighting, etc.).

General Health Care Plan

The following health and safety precautions are to be followed:

Youth, Staff, and Volunteer Hand Washing

- Use warm water and soap
- Rub your hands together, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, and under nails for at least 20 seconds
- Rinse well under warm running water
- Dry hands with paper towel or automatic hand dryer
- Throw paper towel away

Children should wash hands

- Upon arrival at the program
- Before eating or helping with food preparation
- After using the restroom
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose

Staff & Volunteers should wash hands

- Before starting work/entering classroom
- Before preparing or serving food
- Before eating and drinking
- Before and after dressing an injury
- Before taking or giving medication
- After contact with blood or bodily fluids
- After using the restroom
- After handling pets or animals
- After coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose

Cleaning and Sanitizing Surfaces, Equipment, and Materials

1. Wash surface or article with warm water & detergent
 2. Rinse surface with clean water
 3. Submerge, wipe, or spray the surface or article with a sanitizing solution
 4. Let the article or surface air dry
- Program staff must ensure that the proper cleaning process takes place daily before snack or any other food can be served (wash, rinse, sanitize) and program staff must clean off tables after food is served.
 - Toys and equipment will be cleaned weekly using the above process.

Handling Bodily Fluids

- Nonporous (e.g., latex) gloves must be worn by staff when they are in contact with spills of blood or other visibly bloody bodily fluids.
- Spills of bodily fluids (e.g., urine, feces, blood, saliva, nasal discharge, eye discharge) must be cleaned and disinfected immediately in keeping with professionally established guidelines (e.g., standards of the Occupational Safety Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor).
- Any tools and equipment used to clean spills of bodily fluids must be cleaned and disinfected immediately. Other blood-contaminated material must be disposed of in a plastic bag with a secure tie.

Universal Precautions Against Communicable Disease

Because diseases can be transmitted through many different channels, the best way to prevent their spread is with a comprehensive approach. The way to prevent the spread of illness is the same for any infection, providers need to understand and use universal precautions against disease.

The single most important way to prevent infection is hand washing. Eighty percent of common infections are spread by hands. Washing hands at least five times a day has been shown to significantly decrease the frequency of colds, flu, and other infections. It is recommended that child care workers wash their hands with a liquid disinfectant soap for several minutes at the beginning of their program. Other universal rules of hygiene:

- Clean and sanitize toys, utensils, and equipment frequently.
- Use disposable gloves when handling bodily fluids.
- Make certain that open sores on both children and staff are always covered.
- Require a physician's approval before a child with skin eruptions can attend program.

Health and Wellness of Participants

Medical information forms are to be completed by parent/guardian and will be kept on file at GSMS. Reliable emergency contacts should be listed on the enrollment form.

The health history must list all medical conditions and/or allergies to ensure staff has the most updated information in case of an emergency. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep records current to reflect any changes as they occur, including telephone numbers, work location, emergency contacts, child's health status, new allergies, new medications, etc.

Camp Fire staff will secure medical treatment for children in the event of an emergency. Camp Fire staff will notify, by phone or in writing, parents / guardians regarding any incidents, including illnesses, or injuries.

A physician's written permission is required under the following conditions:

- Any possession or use of an inhaler or epinephrine injector
- Any medication that must be administered

Children who are sick should be kept at home. The state's current communicable disease chart of recommendations for exclusion of sick children from the center and their readmission shall be followed.

A child shall not be accepted or allowed to remain at the extended day program if the child has a 100.4F degree or higher temperature, or other potentially contagious symptoms such as, but not limited to: a rash, diarrhea, vomiting, a sore throat, or discharge from the eyes.

Emergency Procedures

Inclement Weather Plan. In the case of severe weather (e.g., snowstorm, ice storm, dangerous wind chills, heavy fog), if school is cancelled, Camp Fire will adhere to the Good Shepherd Montessori decision regarding cancellation. In other words, if school is canceled, Camp Fire is also canceled. If school is open, Camp Fire Extended Day will be open from 3:00 – 5:30 PM. Should school be closed early due to severe weather, Camp Fire Extended Day will not be open.

Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Warning. If Camp Fire Extended Day is in session when a watch or warning is issued, the program stays open. The staff takes safety precautions as outlined in the school's policies.

Tornado Watch. Youth remain in care and the staff takes safety precautions. Youth will be released to parents or other authorized adults upon request.

Tornado Warning. All youth and staff members remain in the building and take shelter in designated areas. Youth will be released to parents or other authorized adults upon request.

Other Natural or Man-Made Disasters. Youth remain in care and the staff takes safety precautions as dictated by the circumstances. In general, staff and youth will shelter in place unless it becomes unsafe to stay in the building. If circumstances require, a lock-down procedure will be initiated. If safe to do so, youth will be released to parents or authorized adults upon request.

Fire. Staff and youth will proceed to the nearest exit and assemble in a safe area. Youth will be released to parents or other authorized adults upon request.

Contacting Parents / Guardians. If an emergency occurs during the Camp Fire Extended Day program, parents / guardians will be notified as soon as possible. Electronic communication (via email and/or texting service) will be used to communicate emergency information to parents. Our staff will prepare a written report of the incident and actions taken, which will be made available to parents upon request, as well as to any emergency personnel.

Camp Fire program staff are not authorized to speak to the media about any incident or emergency that may occur.

Confidentiality

All information collected on registration and health history forms will remain confidential, except for legal and administrative requirements involved in reporting concerns to Camp Fire staff. If information on the registration form is requested for other purposes, parents / guardians will be notified and written consent will be required.

Important Policies

Late Pick Up. The Camp Fire Extended Day program at GSMS ends at 5:30 pm. A \$1.00 per minute, per child, late fee will be charged to the card on file for any late pickups. .

Authorized Pickup. Each participant must have an authorized pick up form on file. Please provide written notification if you wish to add or remove authorized persons. All authorized persons (including parents) may be asked to show valid identification at pick-up each day.

If there are custody issues involving your child, please provide court documentation indicating who may or may not pick up your child.

No child will be allowed to leave the extended day program without being escorted by the parent/guardian, or person authorized by the parent/guardian.

Other Policies and Expectations

- Youth are expected to adhere to all school and Camp Fire policies.
- Camp Fire programs will adhere to the policies of the school as well.
- Youth participate in play and should dress accordingly.
- All items (clothing, school supplies, etc.) should be marked with the child's first and last name.
- Camp Fire River Bend is not responsible for loss of or damage to personal belongings.
- Parents are discouraged from allowing their children to bring personal toys, electronics, or devices to the Camp Fire Extended Day program.
- Cell phones, tablets and other devices must be turned off and stored in the child's backpack during the Extended Day program.
- If children need to contact their parents by phone, the site director will initiate the contact using the Camp Fire phone.



Our Promise

Young people want to shape the world. Camp Fire provides the opportunity to find their spark, lift their voice, and discover who they are. In Camp Fire, it begins *now*. **Light the fire within.**

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Camp Fire Extended Day programming is operated by Camp Fire River Bend, Inc., a chartered council of Camp Fire National Headquarters, Inc. Camp Fire welcomes all youth and their families, regardless of ethnicity, race, creed, gender identity or expression, social status, disability, or sexual orientation.