

Minneapolis Kids Parent Handbook



Community Education

SCHOOL AGE CARE

Minneapolis Kids

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Minneapolis Kids Parent Handbook Index

Accreditation..... 1
Behavior Guidance for Students 8
Bills..... 3
Child Abuse and Neglect..... 9
Children’s Belongings 5
Curriculum 6
Definition of Components 3
Emergency Drills 10
Emergency Information..... 10
Enrollment..... 2
Enrollment of Children with Special Needs 2
Enrollment of Children with Chronic Health Conditions 2
Field Trips 7
Group Size and Ratio 1
Holidays & Non-Service Days..... 4
Insurance 11
Late Pickup Procedures..... 9
Meals and Snacks..... 5
Medical Emergency or Illness..... 10-11
Medication 11
Mission 1
Non-school Days 4
Orientation..... 1
Outdoor Play 7
Parent Communication..... 7
Parent Information 7
Parent Grievance Procedure 8
Parent Participation..... 7

Minneapolis Kids Parent Handbook Index

Pet Policy 7
Policy for Release of Children..... 5
Program Closing due to Weather..... 4
Program Fees 2
Reporting Absences..... 4
Schedule Change 3
Sign In/Sign Out Policy..... 4
Spring Break 4
Staff 1
Summer Break..... 4
Update of Emergency Information..... 10
Winter Break 4
Withdrawal..... 3

Mission

The program mission is to provide quality, year round child care services for parents during periods when students are not involved in regular school programs. The goal of Minneapolis Kids is to provide a safe, enriching, educational and recreational program where children are encouraged to pursue interests, build friendships, develop leadership skills, independence, and confidence.

Staff

The Minneapolis Kids staff is responsible for developing a caring, compassionate and challenging environment committed to high quality and continuous improvement. Programming will be structured to fit the developmental needs, cultural diversity, and unique characteristics of each child. The staff will attempt to meet the individual needs of each student through positive experiences, curriculum, appropriate behavior expectations, freedom for individual choice, and provisions for health, safety, and nutritional requirements.

Accreditation

Minneapolis Kids adheres to accreditation standards through the Minnesota School-Age Care Alliance. Accreditation is a third-party endorsement of a program's ability to meet research-based quality standards. Accredited programs have completed a rigorous quality improvement process and have been assessed by a representative from the accrediting body to assure that they meet standards associated with the provision of high-quality care and education.

Group Size & Ratio

The staff to child ratio is 1:15. High Five groups are staffed at 1:10. Ratios are reduced during Field Trips. During program activities, group size does not exceed 30. Groupings for High Five do not exceed 20. Although classroom volunteers and visitors are welcome, only qualified staff working with children is counted in the staff to child ratios.

Orientation

Parents are encouraged to contact the site coordinator to set up a time for an individual orientation. Group orientation sessions are scheduled on a site-by-site basis. Parent visits are welcomed.

Enrollment

Minneapolis Kids provides school age child care for children ages 5-12 or students in High Five/Kindergarten through 6th grade. Eligibility ends upon start of the 7th Grade or when the child turns 13.

Children must be able to toilet independently.

Completed registration materials and the registration fee must be submitted prior to the child's starting date.

Enrollment in Minneapolis Kids program does not ensure a child of enrollment in any school.

The parent is responsible for arranging transportation between the student's home school and the Minneapolis Kids location.

Minneapolis Kids sites or components may be closed due to low enrollment. In this event, parents will be given a two-week notice.

Enrollment of Children with Special Needs & Chronic Health Conditions

When a contract is submitted to enroll a child with special needs, parents will be contacted for a pre-enrollment consultation to determine how Minneapolis Kids can meet the child's needs. The program will work with the family and other resource persons to develop a plan for serving the child before determining a start date.

The enrollment contract allows parents to identify chronic health conditions including allergies.

Program Fees

Minneapolis Kids is a non-profit program supported by parent fees. Fees must be paid in advance of service and follow the payment schedule. Contract terms are available upon registration. Financial assistance may be available to eligible families throughout Hennepin County. Funding may also be available through Hennepin County (612.348.5937).

Bills

Bills are generated electronically and will be forwarded upon completion of registration. Contract terms are available on website.

Parents are expected to pay their contracted fee whether or not their child is in attendance. There will be no refunds for absence due to illness, vacation, or school closings due to inclement weather.

Definition of Components

The **Before School** component runs from 6:30 am to the start of the school day.

The **High Five** component is for children enrolled in the district's half day High Five program. This component runs from the end of morning session until the end of the school day. Children may bring a bag lunch or purchase a school lunch. Lunch is not included in the fee.

The **After School** component runs from the end of the school day until 6:00 pm.

On **Non School Days**, enrollment is optional and on a first-come, first-served basis. Field trips are often planned on these days. A signed permission slip is required for each trip. Children should bring a bag lunch and beverage unless otherwise noted.

Please note that all components are not available at each site.

Schedule Change & Withdrawal

A schedule change is defined as: adding or subtracting one or more components, or changing the number of days/weeks for the school year or extended period of time. Minneapolis Kids does not swap days or credit for incidental days missed.

Schedule changes require a two week notice and are made by contacting the main office. Two weeks' notice is required when cancelling service. Full fees are due until the two week period is complete.

Non-School Days, Winter Break, Spring Break & Summer

Minneapolis Kids is open and provides care on non-school days at designated locations. Parents must register in advance.

Holidays & Non-Service Days

Fees are not charged when Minneapolis Kids is closed for holidays. Minneapolis Kids closes for staff development and site preparation before and after the summer session.

Minneapolis Kids is also closed the following days: Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday following, Christmas Eve Day and Christmas Day, New Year's Eve Day and New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday, President's Day, Memorial Day, and Independence Day.

Program Closing Due to Weather

Minneapolis Kids is closed whenever Minneapolis Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather.

There will be no refunds for school closing due to weather.

Sign In/Out Policy & Reporting Absences

Parents or an authorized person must sign the child in and out and make contact with a staff person. Parents will identify those authorized to pick-up upon registration and may update this entry at any time.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify Minneapolis Kids when his/her child will not be in attendance, even for one day. If a child does not arrive after school and the program has not been notified, staff will start looking for the child. Parents and others listed on the emergency card will be called.

Policy for Release of Children

Minneapolis Kids will not release a child to any person not identified on the emergency contact list. Parents will confirm their list of emergency contacts at registration and may update this entry at any time.

If a person other than the parent or designated person is picking up the child, Minneapolis Kids staff must be notified. In emergencies, a parent must call to inform the Minneapolis Kids staff that another authorized person will pick up the child. The person will be asked to show photo identification.

Parents who have an individual who is unauthorized (not allowed) to pick up their child will indicate that information upon registration. If the unauthorized person is the child's parent, a court order must be provided. A copy of the court order will be kept on file at the location. Minneapolis Kids will release their child to either parent unless a court order has been received.

Meals & Snacks

Minneapolis Kids provides a nutritious after-school snack. The school lunch program is not in operation on non-school days; children should bring a bag lunch and beverage from home.

Children's Belongings

Label all clothing and belongings. A "lost and found" is available at each location. Unclaimed items are periodically donated.

All items and belongings should be labeled with the child's name.

Curriculum

Minneapolis Kids curriculum places a primary emphasis on development of social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and recreational skills that are developmentally appropriate for school age children. Programming is based on the following developmental stages:

- Acquiring a sense of industry, mastery, and completion of tasks.
- Developing a sense of competence in controlling the physical environment; having a wide variety of opportunities to develop a full range of competencies, and being successful.
- Mastering a variety of human interactions—being interactive in social situations, not just an observer.
- Developing responsibility for one's own actions, setting limits, and understanding natural consequences.
- Respecting the rights and property of others, forming friendships, and using community resources responsibly.

A written daily schedule includes a balance of staff directed, youth led, and choice activities.

Activities such as stories, music, and games are offered at group time. Clubs, guest speakers and field trips enhance programming.

Located in school buildings, the sites are able to offer access to gyms and playgrounds as well as libraries and computer labs. Sites provide a number of interest centers to encourage and supports self-initiated learning such as dramatic play, hands on science, arts and crafts, building and manipulative play, puzzles and games.

Children are provided with opportunities to form relationships with community partners and are offered activities that enhance their engagement in the community.

Pet Policy

Parents will be notified if any animals—or classroom pets—will be present for programming purposes.

Outdoor Play

Children will spend time outside every day, weather permitting. Children should dress properly for active play. Extra clothing on cold days (i.e. hats, mittens, and warm coats) as well as boots and snow pants for snowy weather are necessary.

Field Trips

Signed permission slips are required for off-site Field Trips. Enrolled children are expected to accompany the group on scheduled field trips.

Field Trip busses are provided by the Transportation Department of the Minneapolis Public Schools.

Parent Information, Communication & Participation

A parent information board is located at each site near the sign-in. Monthly newsletters are posted on the parent board and include information about programming, special events and field trips.

Parent conferences are available upon request; contact the Site Coordinator.

Parental involvement in Minneapolis Kids is valuable to the continuing success of the program. Parents are encouraged to share their time and talent, accompany children on field trips, and visit the program. We welcome and invite your suggestions and participation in events and activities. Parents are encouraged to support program accreditation by completing school year and summer evaluations. Volunteers are needed to serve on the accreditation stakeholder team.

The Minneapolis Kids Parent Advisory Council is made up of a representative from each location. The Council acts as an advisory and support group to Minneapolis Kids staff to meet the goals of the program. Meeting dates will be posted. Child care is provided.

Parent Grievance Procedure

Parents are encouraged to give input regarding the operation of the Minneapolis Kids program. If a parent has a concern about the program, the following process has been established to ensure the concern is addressed:

- Discuss the concern with the site coordinator at the Minneapolis Kids location.
- If the concern is not resolved within one week, contact the Program Manager and submit a written description of the concern. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue within five working days.
- If the concern still remains unresolved, submit a copy of the concern to the Director of Community Education.

Abusive behavior and/or verbal threats by parents toward program staff, children or other parents will be cause for immediate termination.

Behavior Guidelines for Students

In order to promote a safe, stimulating environment for all children and staff, each site will have a positive engagement plan that include Minneapolis Kids behavior expectations. The Minneapolis Kids policies on discipline are consistent with the Minneapolis Public Schools Discipline Policy.

Should a child display behaviors which jeopardize the safety of themselves and others, the staff will contact the child's parent or guardian, and request that the child be removed from the program for that day. An additional suspension may follow. Upon return, a family conference will take place to develop a plan for improving behavior. Repeated suspensions could result in termination of care.

The Minneapolis Kids program provides a quality experience for most children. However, it may not be the most appropriate child care experience for every child, or for the same child at different stages of his/her development. When it is determined that a child's needs cannot be met in Minneapolis Kids, or that a child poses a threat or danger to themselves, others, or property, care will be terminated.

Children who have been suspended from school may not attend Minneapolis Kids during the period of suspension.

Child Abuse & Neglect

State law requires Minneapolis Kids staff to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

Late Pick Up Procedures

All children must be picked up by closing time at 6:00 pm. If you know you will be late, please make arrangements for someone else to pick up your child before closing and inform staff at the site. Repeated late pick-ups will result in termination of service.

Staff is required to remain with children until they are picked up. Unless the staff has been notified by you, at 6:00 pm they will begin calling emergency contacts listed on the enrollment form.

Late fees will be charged according to the following schedule:

1. Following the first incident a late fee of \$1 a minute will be assessed for picking a child up after 6:00 pm.
2. Following the second incident, a late fee of \$1 a minute will be assessed for picking a child up after 6:00 pm.
3. After the third late pick-up, a fine of \$25 plus the fee of \$1 per minute will be assessed. Parent will be notified that future late pick-ups could result in termination of service.
4. After the fourth late pick-up, a fine of \$25 plus the fee of \$1 per minute will be assessed. Parent will be notified that this is their final notice; that the next late pick-up will result in termination of service.
5. Service will be terminated after the fifth late pick-up.

Update of Emergency Information

Enrollment information must be kept current.

Parents may update information on their enrollment contract at any time regarding:

- Parent(s)/guardian home address and phone numbers.
- Persons authorized to pick up the child at the location.
- Persons to contact in a medical emergency if parent cannot be reached.

Parents will be asked to verify information regarding their child's health needs.

Emergency Drills

The program conducts emergency drills.

Medical Emergency or Illness

Children who are ill will not be able to participate in the program.

A child should not come to Minneapolis Kids (and will be sent home) if they have or have had:

- A fever of 100 degrees F (orally) or higher in the past 24 hours WITHOUT fever-reducing medication.
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- An undiagnosed skin rash

Parents are expected to pay their contracted fee whether or not their child is in attendance.

Parents need to notify Minneapolis Kids staff of any contagious diseases (i.e. strep throat, head lice, chicken pox, etc.). When a contagious disease has been reported, a notice will be posted.

If a child becomes ill at Minneapolis Kids, whenever possible, the child will be isolated from other children. If school is in session, the school nurse or health aide will be consulted. Parents or emergency contacts will be notified to pick up the child as soon as possible.

In the event of a medical emergency or accident, Minneapolis Kids staff will administer first aid. When necessary, 911 will be called and the child will be transferred by ambulance to a medical facility. Staff will immediately make every effort to notify the parent or persons on the emergency card. The parent or guardian is responsible for all medical charges.

Insurance

Medical insurance coverage for children is the responsibility of the family.

Medication

Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the Site Coordinator of any special needs or medical conditions that impact their child's health, well-being, or involvement in activities. If your child may need to receive either prescribed or over-the-counter medication while attending Minneapolis Kids programming, you must complete an authorization form before any medication can be dispensed. Medication must be in its original packaging or prescription bottle. All medication will be securely stored on-site.

Signed parent permission is needed for sunscreen and insect repellent.



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