



Whitecourt & District

Out of School Care 2023/2024 PARENT HANDBOOK

BGC Whitecourt & District
4812 50th Ave.
PO Box 2053
Whitecourt, AB
T7S 1P7

Mission Statement

To provide a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.

Core Values

In our work with children, youth, families and communities, all Boys and Girls Clubs are guided by the following Core Values. These Core Values are the standard by which all Boys and Girls Club services are measured.

Belonging

We welcome everyone in a safe, accepting environment, based on belonging and positive relationships.

Respect

We ensure that everyone – children, youth, families, volunteers, staff – is heard, respected, valued and treated fairly.

Encouragement and Support

We encourage and support every child and youth to play, learn and grow to achieve their dreams.

Working Together

We work together with young people, families, volunteers, our communities and government.

Speaking Out

We speak out with children, youth and families so that we can make our world better.

Introduction

Welcome to the BGC Whitecourt & District! We are pleased that you have chosen us as a partner in caring for your child; whether it be when school is out, over the summer months, or during Professional Development Days throughout the school year. Working together with you, we will offer your child a fun, exciting and educational place to be, while providing you with the peace of mind knowing that your child is being cared for in a safe, nurturing environment under the supervision of qualified and enthusiastic staff members. Like you, we are interested in your child's whole development. To assist you in becoming familiar with BGC Whitecourt & District and ensuring that we develop a positive and open relationship with our families, we encourage you to read this Parent Handbook.

Program Hours of Operation:

Morning Care - 7:00am until bus pick up time

After School Care – 3:15pm until 6:00pm

PD Day Care – 7:00am until 6:00pm

Programming Information

Our purpose is to provide a fun, safe and comfortable environment where children receive quality out-of-school care. The program provides care for children ages 4.5-11 years of age. Please see the information below which outlines important components to our programming.

1. After School Program:

This program can accommodate 40 children. Planned activities are offered to children in order to enhance all developmental aspects of a child's learning and are presented in a fun way that sparks a child's interest. The After School Program also offers a nutritious snack while children attend.

2. Morning Care Program:

This program can accommodate 40 children. Children will be offered a nutritious breakfast every day, accompanied by fresh fruit, milk, and water. Children can enjoy an easy start to their school day and have many options available to them during the morning care program. Books, toys, coloring and drawing, or song and dance are just a few of the activities children can choose from to start their day. Please note that all children MUST be dropped off by 8:10am in order to ensure that we are able to catch the earliest bus departure at 8:20am.

3. PD Days:

This program is offered throughout the school year on non-instructional days and during Spring, Summer and Winter break. The full day camps can accommodate up to 40 children. Breakfast and an afternoon snack are included on PD Days.

Club Closure Days – Professional Development/Staff Training

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Out of School Care staff will have Professional Development Training where the program will be closed. The dates are below, and will be communicated in newsletters and monthly calendars:

- Christmas Break: December 25 to January 1
- Friday, March 15, 2024

Nutrition

We proudly offer breakfast and afternoon snacks during our Out of School Care program. Breakfast will be a rotating mix of healthy cereals, yogurt, fresh fruit, muffins, oatmeal, and toast with different topping options. If you feel that our breakfast foods will not accommodate your child's needs, we welcome you to bring your own breakfast to eat at our facility. We will also be offering afternoon snacks to children once they arrive at the Club from school. If your child has specific dietary or allergy restrictions please ensure you indicate this to staff on both the registration forms and in person. If you feel that your child requires a strict diet at all times, we welcome you to pack your child's breakfast and snacks for the duration of our program. Please be aware that we are a peanut-free facility.

Registration

We are here to assist you in completing the registration process and ensuring a smooth transition into our programs. Should you have any questions at all or require any assistance, please ask one of our friendly staff members. In order for registration to be finalized, you must complete a registration package and monthly calendar, which can be accessed on our website at bgcwhitecourt.com. Please allow 48 hours for all registration packages to be processed prior to you bringing your child.

Calendars

Parents are to fill out a calendar provided by the BGC in order to register their child for Out of School Care. These calendars play a vital role in the BGC program as they let the staff know how many children will be attending on any given day. They are an important measure to ensure your child's safety while in the care of the Club. These calendars must be submitted prior to your child attending our Club. **Please refer to our drop-in policy below to learn about drop-in options.**

Communication of Programming Information

There is always a lot going on at the BGC and we want to make sure that you know all about it! Please regularly check the following for updated program information.

- Front Entryway Table
- Parent Information Board
- Our Facebook and Instagram pages
- www.bgcwhitecourt.com

Lillio App

Upon registration, your child's information will be added into our childcare app, Lillio. This app helps us to track child attendance and critical information regarding our children attending. This app is also used as a means of communication between staff and parents. The message center in the app is an easy and convenient way for parents to message all staff about any changes in their child's schedule or any prevalent

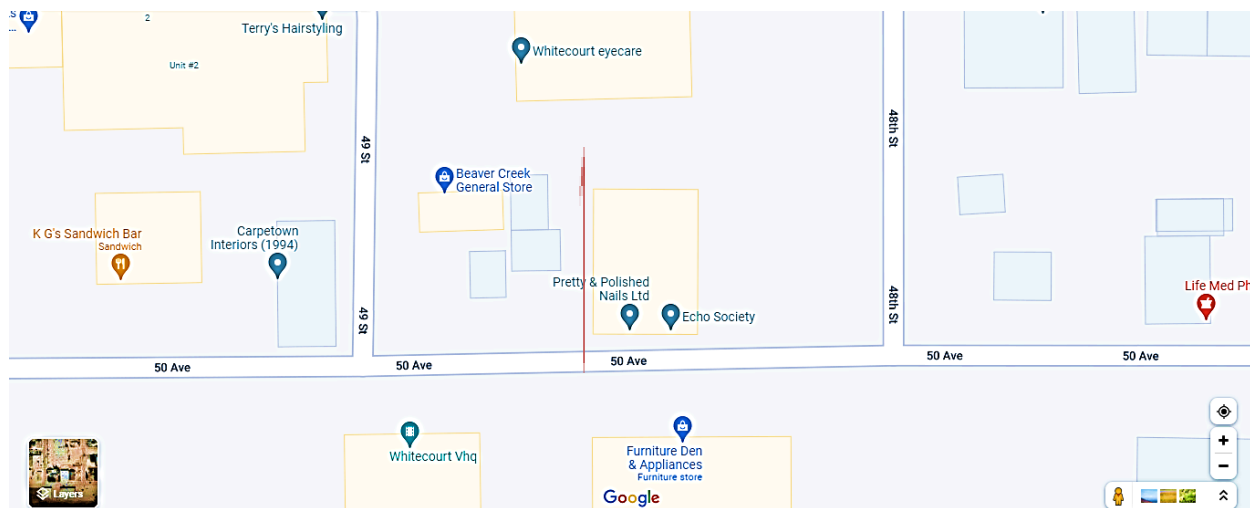
information that we may need to be made aware of. Please head over to your app store on your phone and download 'Lillio' to communicate with us and watch your child's progress.

Arrival, Departures, and Parking Policy

We care very much about the children in our care and your child's safety and security is of the utmost importance to us. We want to ensure that your child arrives at and departs from our program in the safest manner possible. Therefore, please be aware of our policies regarding arrivals and departures as follows. Children **must** be signed in and out of the program. Only those people authorized on the registration form will be allowed to pick up a child from the program. In case of emergency, a parent can give permission, verbally or written, for a third party to pick up their child. If staff members do not recognize the person picking up the child, they will be asked to show photo ID so that the staff members can cross reference the name to the alternate pick up list for that child.

Checking your child into the program can be done via the Lillio App. Checking your child out of the program can also be done via the Lillio App. Please see the Lillio information sheet for more information on how to do this.

BGC Whitecourt & District has created a designated drop off and pick up point for our families. Please ensure that you are **only** using the designated drop off and pick up location and **not** entering the private parking lot. Our adjacent neighbors offer a facility for adults with disabilities, so it is imperative that the handicap parking remain available at all times. In the event that you have a handicap tag for your vehicle, please notify our staff and we will ensure that handicap parking is available for you and your child. The designated drop off and pick up point is marked with a sign, and located in the alleyway between Beaver Creek General Store and our building. This is a one way alley; please enter from 50th Ave. and exit towards the Midtown Mall. Please see the map below for further details.



Child Guidance Policy

Our staff apply a behavior management style that is consistent with helping the children develop control of their own behavior through guidance in a warm and caring way. Guidance and discipline will always be developmentally appropriate and based on an understanding of the individual needs of each child. Whenever possible, children are encouraged to settle conflicts and find solutions themselves. A staff member will get involved when necessary. When a child demonstrates inappropriate behavior or action, our goal is to remain as consistent as possible and, after a warning, work on a solution that is appropriate for the action. A cool down time will be suggested when necessary to help the child regain control. Our program will never inflict any form of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation, or emotional deprivation. Children will never be denied or threatened to be denied any basic necessity. Our program will never use any form of physical restraint, confinement or isolation.

Should unacceptable behavior persist, a meeting with the Program Manager and parent/guardian will be set up to discuss the issue and develop a plan for the participant moving forward.

Medication Administration Policy

Medication can only be given to your child by staff if an Administration of Medication form has been filled out and signed. We are unable to administer medication that is not prescribed by a doctor. All medication must be supplied by the parent/guardian. Prescribed medication received by staff must be in a pharmaceutical container with the original label from the pharmacy and must contain the following information:

- child's name
- medication name
- dosage amount
- frequency
- physician's name

Inhalers, epi-pens and insulin must be carried by the child and will be self-administered if they are over the age of 6. For children 6 years of age and under, staff will provide appropriate storage and assistance with the administration of inhalers, epi-pens and insulin.

Health Care/Supervision of Sick Children

Please do not bring your child to the program if they are not feeling well. Keeping your child home will help stop the transmission of colds and flus. The program will determine if the parent will be contacted to remove their child from care if they exhibit any of the following:

- Vomiting
- Fever (a temperature greater than 38°C or 100.4°F)
- Diarrhea
- a new and/or unexplained cough or rash

Staff will use visual observations to determine if a child is exhibiting any of the symptoms just listed. If, in the opinion of staff, a child is not well enough to be in care, the parents will be notified and requested to make immediate alternate child care arrangements. If these attempts are unsuccessful, the child's emergency contacts will be called. Sick children will be directed to a chair/mat/rug/couch/bathroom away from the other children either in the same room or in a separate room where they can quietly wait for their parent to arrive. **As per Alberta Health Services policies, a child may not return to the program until they are symptom free for at least 48 hours or if the parent has a physician's note. Please note that if your child is sent home sick, you will still be charged the full amount for child care.**

Emergency Evacuation/Fire Drills

The BGC Whitecourt & District will participate in fire drills on a consistent basis. Staff will ensure members are familiar with evacuation procedures. Fire evacuation plans are posted in the program facility by all exits. In the event that the children are evacuated from the program, parents would be contacted through home numbers, cell numbers and emergency contacts as soon as it is safe to do so. If the building is evacuated and re-admittance is not possible, the children will be moved to the front entrance of Midtown Mall as our muster point.

Payment Policies:

Client Fees and Parent Payments Policy

1. Morning Care, After School, PD Camps, and Summer Programs
 - a. All fees are due upon registration.

2. Any Subsidies approved by the Provincial Government will be deducted from the amount owing. A credit will be placed on file for families who have paid upon registration before the Provincial Government subsidy is applied.
3. If balance is not paid between the 1st and 5th of each month;
 - a. A reminder email or telephone call will occur requesting payment be made to the Club. All reminders must be recorded by the Financial Administrator
 - b. If payment is not received within 30 days of the 1st, the Club will send out an overdue invoice notice
 - c. A 2% interest fee will be added to all accounts over 30 days
 - d. After 45 days of an overdue account, the Financial Administrator and Program Manager in consultation with the Executive Director will have the right to suspend or terminate service until the account is cleared
 - e. Alternative payment arrangements can be made, but must be approved by the Executive Director
4. If a suspension or termination occurs, the Board of Directors will be notified
5. If payment is not received within 90 days, the account will be sent to collections

Please note that refunds are never given, only credits on account.

Credits on Account Policy

Credits must be used by the end of the calendar year they were earned in. Any credits earned after October 31st can be carried over into the new year. The policy will remain the same for children who are aging out of the program. Parents must take responsibility for their credits on file and must use them accordingly. Credit reminders are given on monthly invoices. Credit inquiries can be made at any time by contacting the Financial Administrator at (780) 778-6696.

- Payments are made by cash, cheque (made out to Boys & Girls Club of Whitecourt & District), and email money transfer
 - E Transfers can be sent to etransfers@bgcwhitecourt.com – the security question will be “what do we have at the BGC?” and the security answer should be “fun” or “funfun”, if your bank requires more than 3 letters
- NSF Cheques are subject \$25.00 fee

Late Pick up Policy

The program is unable to offer childcare outside of program hours. For each additional minute past closing time, a \$5.00 charge will be incurred. If a child is left for more than 30 minutes after programming has ended, and all efforts to contact you and/or your emergency contacts have failed, Children’s Services will be contacted to assume care of your child.

Attendance/Absences

Please phone the BGC or talk to staff ahead of time to report your child's absences. If your child is absent and we have not been notified prior, we are required to follow up regarding your child's whereabouts.

Cancellation Policy

If you wish to cancel your child for the day they are schedule to attend, all cancellations must be given to the Club no later than 24 hours prior to their expected arrival. We require 48 hours for the cancellation of PD Days. Any cancellations that come in after 24 hours (or 48 hours for PD Days) will be subject to full charge. Cancellations for Monday must come in by the end of day on Friday. Cancellations through emails, Facebook messages, and the Lillio App will not be accepted during the weekend. When canceling, money will not be refunded, but will be used as a credit on your account. **We are unable to offer any refunds or credits for families who are utilizing any discounts or special pricing.**

Drop-In Policy

Our Club will accept children on a drop-in basis, provided the guardian has contacted the Club prior to needing a spot for their child. If the Club was not contacted, a **\$20.00 fine will be added to each day your child is dropped off without notice**. Dropping off your child with no notice given to our Club is unacceptable. Drop-ins are always welcome, provided that you have contacted us ahead of time to ensure space is available. Having an influx in unexpected children means we are understaffed, which risks losing our child care license through the Government of Alberta. If this license is revoked or suspended, our program will be permanently shut down. **Unfortunately, if your child is not pre-registered or you did not contact our Club to ensure drop-in space is available for your child, we are not responsible for your child.** You must contact our Club ahead of time to ensure there is appropriate space for your child.

Transportation

Staff will take precautions to ensure that participants are transported safely as required. The program will use a combination of school bussing and walking in order to transport participants from their school to the Club and/or off-site activities. External bussing may be contracted for field trips or to support programming; if and when this occurs, communication will be made with parents/guardians and additional forms may be required.

Bussing

1. Northern Gateway Public Schools will pick up registered participants at their designated locations and times at each school to transport them to the Out of School Care program. Drop off location will be Central School.
2. Participants are expected to be prepared for the weather conditions.
3. Bussing will not operate if any of the following conditions occur:
 - a. Temperature of -40 Celsius or colder, with or without wind chill as reported by the weather reports
 - b. Inclement weather conditions
 - c. Road closures by RCMP, municipal, or other local road officials

Walking

1. Our team leaders will transport registered participants on designated program days from our Club location to Central School to either:
 - a. Catch their assigned bus or
 - b. Attend Central School
2. Out of School Care staff will meet participants at the designated location at Central School and will walk them back to the Club once all children have been received from all buses.
 - a. Children may be walked back to the Club directly after each bus drop off if the temperature is -25 Celsius or colder

Program Fees

All participants are subject to a 'Club membership fee' annually. The cost of our annual membership is \$10.00. Annual membership fees are due at the time of registration. Our rates for Out of School Care are as follows:

Morning Care: \$10.50/ day

After School Care: \$21.00/ day

PD Days: \$50/ day

*prices may be changed at any time

Child Care Subsidy

Alberta resident families may qualify for provincial child care subsidies. Families are responsible for ensuring that their subsidy information is kept up to date and the required documents are sent in. The best way to apply is to do so online. You will learn the amount of your subsidy right away and be given a letter/email stating the amount of subsidy the government will give you. Once you have received that letter or email, please bring it to the Club for us to keep on file. Please note that after your immediate approval online, you may be required to submit additional documentation. It is your responsibility to submit that information; otherwise, your subsidy may be revoked by the Government of Alberta. You can access the subsidy application online at <https://applychildcaresubsidy.alberta.ca/>

Jumpstart Funding

We strongly encourage families who have been approved for subsidy to apply for Jumpstart funding, provided that their children will be attending the Club for a minimum of five weeks. To apply for Jumpstart funding, head directly to their website at <https://jumpstart.canadiantire.ca/pages/individual-child-grants>. If you did not qualify for subsidy, but still require funding, please contact the Executive Director to discuss the possibility of Jumpstart funding. Our Executive Director can be contacted at 780-778-6696.

Toys and Electronics from Home

The program strongly discourages participants from bringing toys and electronics from home. BGC Whitecourt & District is not responsible for any lost or broken items. If items brought from home are creating issues while attending the Club, they may be confiscated by staff and returned to the child during pick up.

Harassment/Abuse

BGC Whitecourt & District is committed to an inclusive workplace and ensuring that all employees, volunteers, parents/guardians and children are treated with respect and dignity. BGC Whitecourt & District will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. This policy applies to anyone participating in the program in any capacity.

Conflict Resolution and Grievance

BGC Whitecourt & District will follow a process to receive, investigate, respond to, and document grievances and conflicts. Staff, volunteers, and participants will be informed that they have the right to lodge a grievance or disclose a conflict if they feel they have been treated unfairly and/or inappropriately by anyone. When an individual believes that any condition affecting them is unjust, inequitable, or hindrance to effective job performance, that individual may initiate a grievance. To lodge a formal complaint:

1. Draft a formal complaint in the form of a letter describing the situation and your desired outcome, if applicable
2. Email the letter to executivedirector@bgcwhitecourt.com
3. The Executive Director will forward your letter to our Board of Directors. Once the Board of Directors receives your complaint, please allow 72 hours for a response from our Board of Directors.
4. The Board of Directors will self-report the complaint within 24 hours of receiving the complaint to the Government of Alberta if it falls within their "12 Critical Incidents".
5. The Board will then have a meeting between the Executive Committee to determine what the outcome will be.

Alternatively, if you do not wish to lodge a formal complaint with BGC Whitecourt & District and would prefer to do so with our governing body, the Government of Alberta, you can do so via email or phone number. The Northern Alberta Child Care Licensing branch can be reached at cs.childcarelicensingintake@gov.ab.ca or at 1-888-558-0544.

Checklist of Items to Send With Your Child:

- o Non-marking indoor shoes
- o Water bottle
- o Appropriate clothing based on weather
 - o All children **must** have toques and mitts in the winter time

*****all items should be labeled with your child's name to ensure they are returned to the correct child in the event that the item becomes misplaced*****

