



The MFCS Child Care Family Handbook

Mill Falls Charter School

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Child Care Program Overview.....	Page 3
Program Schedule	Page 3
Program Options	
BeforeCare (7am-8:15am)	Page 4
KinderCare (noon-3pm)	Page 4
KinderCare Extended Day (noon-5:45pm).....	Page 5
AfterCare (3pm-5:45pm).....	Page 5
Early Release Days (11:15-5:45).....	Page 5
Drop-In Care.....	Page 6
Additional Program Notes.....	Page 6
Admission Procedures.....	Page 7
Tuition Rates.....	Page 8
Registration Fee.....	Page 8
Fee for Late Pick Ups.....	Page 8
Billing Procedures.....	Page 8
Attendance & Pick Up Procedures	
Attendance.....	Page 9
Pick Up Procedures.....	Page 9
Late Pick Up Procedures.....	Page 10
Snow Days & Delayed Openings.....	Page 10
Emergency Dismissal Procedures.....	Page 10
Schedule Changes & Changes in Enrollment.....	Page 11
Behavior Expectations.....	Page 11
MFCS Family Handbook References.....	Page 11

CHILD CARE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Thank you for choosing to enroll your child/children in our Child Care Program. We seek to provide a safe, caring, and educational environment for students during out-of-school hours. The program, held in-house is designed to align with our mission and incorporate the Mill Falls Montessori values of Grace, Courtesy, & Respect in every activity.

The Child Care Programs are available to families currently enrolled in the school, and are open to students in grades Kindergarten through Sixth. They provide much needed care for our students whose parents are unavailable to care for them directly before and after school hours. The Before, Kinder, and Aftercare Programs are operated at School, and follow the same safety standards and compliances and behavior expectations as the regular school day. The Program's management falls under the Executive Director, who supervises the Program Staff in consultation with our Educational Program Director.

Because our Before, Kinder, and AfterCare programs require minimum participation rates to be open for our families, we ask that each family that enrolls with us does so on an annual school-year basis.

Our Child Care Program exempt from all child care licensing rules and requirements (as per RSA 170-E:3). However, to ensure excellent programming we have imposed our own capacity limits. There will be no more than 30 students per two staff members at any given time for any of our Child Care Programs. There will be no more than 15 students at any time per one staff member.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

On regular school days (except for the final day of the school year), the Programs will operate as follows:

- **BeforeCare:** 7:00am to 8:15am
- **KinderCare:** 12:00pm to 3:00pm
- **KinderCare Extended Day:** 3:00 to 5:45pm
- **AfterCare:** 3:00pm to 5:45pm
- **Early Release Day Care:** 11:45am to 5:45pm (on scheduled Early Release Days)
- **Drop In Care:** Available daily for all Programs, based on space.

The Child Care Program will run through the school year. See the official Mill Falls Charter School at: <http://millfalls.org/parents/school-calendar/>.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

BeforeCare (7am - 8:15am)

BeforeCare provides safe, quality care for your child before school and runs between 7:00am to 8:15am. This program is open to all *Mill Falls Charter School* students in grades K through 6th. A maximum of 15 students will be allowed to participate in BeforeCare at any given time.

The BeforeCare Program does not follow a rigid schedule, but will allow children the opportunity to eat breakfast (if they wish), play games, socialize, or read quietly. Breakfast must be sent in daily with your child as needed; food will not be provided by Mill Falls.

KinderCare

Our KinderCare Programming offers two different options for you to choose from:

- **KinderCare**, which runs daily from 12pm to 3pm.
- or
- **KinderCare Extended Day**, which runs daily from 12pm to 5:45pm.

KinderCare begins at 12pm and consists of Kindergarten students only. Students enrolled in the Program remain with their Kindergarten Teaching Team. Our Lead Kindergarten Teacher, Ms. Kristin, coordinates this Program; Ms. Kelsey will be the Assistant. A maximum of 24 students are allowed at any given time in the KinderCare Program.

The Program will include time in the Kindergarten classroom where they will work on social and emotional growth through games, dramatic play, music and movement. The children will also work on art projects and explore the world around them. In addition there will be time for reading and writing practice.

Typical KinderCare Schedule (with flexibility as needed):

12:00-12:45pm	Attendance / Bathroom / Lunch
12:45-1:15pm	Rest Time / Mindfulness
1:15-2:00pm	Story Time / Reading Time / Project Time
2:00-2:30pm	Movement Activities
2:30-3:00pm	Outdoor Time (weather permitting) / Dismissal

Kinder students who enroll in the KinderCare Program (12-3pm) may be able to ride the bus home from school at the 3pm all-school dismissal time. The Manchester Transportation Authority (MTA) will only allow kindergarteners transportation at the 3pm dismissal time IF the kinder has been added on as an "exception to the route". For details on how to apply for this 'exception' parents must contact our school's front office and complete the appropriate paper work. Please note, as per MTA policy, requests for exceptions shall be only accepted by the MTA for consideration two weeks after the first day of school. This procedure can take over three weeks to complete before Kindergarten students can be added to the bus roster. Transportation prior to that time shall be the sole

responsibility of parents or guardians. If you have any bussing questions, please contact the Office Assistant at our front desk at (603) 232-5176.

KinderCare Extended Day is designed for families who need child care for their Kindergarten student beyond 3pm. The KinderCare Extended Day runs until 5:45pm. Those Kinder students who are enrolled in the Extended Day Program will join the AfterCare Program which begins at 3pm, and also includes students from grades 1st through 6th.

Typical KinderCare Extended Day Schedule (with flexibility as needed):

3:00-3:30pm	Attendance / Bathroom / Snack Time
3:30-4:30pm	Outdoor Time (weather permitting)
4:30-5:15pm	Group Activities / Choice Time
5:15-5:45pm	Clean Up Time / Reading / Dismissal

AfterCare

Our AfterCare Program begins immediately following the official end of the school day, and lasts until 5:45pm. This Program is for our 1st through 6th graders and also includes our Kinder students who need 'wrap around' care from 3pm until 5:45pm and are enrolled in our KinderCare Extended Day Program. It will include some down time for snack and relaxation as well as plenty of time for activities, reading,

Typical AfterCare Schedule (with flexibility as needed):

3:00-3:30pm	Attendance / Bathroom / Snack Time
3:30-4:30pm	Outdoor Time (weather permitting)
4:30-5:15pm	Group Activities / Choice Time
5:15-5:45pm	Clean Up Time / Reading / Games / Dismissal

Early Release Days

Children already enrolled in our KinderCare and AfterCare Program will automatically be signed up for coverage on the Early Release Days unless we are otherwise notified.

Early Release KinderCare and AfterCare will be available for children not enrolled in the program for a Drop-In Rate included in the Tuition section, subject to availability. Those Drop In Kindergarten students needing Extended Day care will then follow the typical Extended Day schedule on Early Release Days.

Children attending Early Release care should bring a bag lunch with a drink that does not require the use of the microwave or the refrigerator.

Typical Early Release AfterCare Schedule (with flexibility as needed):

11:15am-12:15pm	Attendance / Bathroom / Lunch / Reading Time
12:15-2:00pm	Outdoor Time (weather permitting)
2:00-3:15pm	Activities / Group Projects
3:15-3:30pm	Snack

3:30-4:30pm	Outdoor Time (weather permitting)
4:40-5:30	Special Monthly Project / Activity
5:30-5:45pm	Clean Up Time / Reading / Games / Dismissal

Drop In Care

Drop In Care will be offered based on availability according to the rates listed in the Tuition section below (please see page 8). Drop In Care is subject to availability on any given day. Please call as far in advance as possible with the specific date/s and time/s that care is needed. *You must receive confirmation from the School before your child can participate in any care for that day.*

To enroll your child in Drop In Care, we must receive notification as follows:

- BeforeCare: We must receive a phone call **no later than 2:00pm on the day before** drop in BeforeCare is needed in order to confirm availability. If Drop In Care is needed on a Monday, we must receive a call no later than 2:00pm the Friday before. *You must receive confirmation from the school before care can be provided.*
- KinderCare (12-3pm or Extended) & AfterCare: We must receive a phone call **no later than 10am on the day** that drop in care is needed in order to confirm availability. *You must receive confirmation from the school before care can be provided.*
- Early Release: We must receive a phone call **no later than 2:00pm on the day before** Drop In Care is needed on an Early Release day. *You must receive confirmation from the school before care can be provided.*

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING NOTES

We strive to meet each child's need for physical and intellectual activities in our Child Care Program through a carefully designed schedule of educational, enrichment, and recreational activities. The following are a few additional areas of detail to help you prepare and plan for participation in our Program.

Snacks

Snacks and lunch are not provided in any of our Child Care Programs. Please make sure you send a snack with your child for afternoon programs and breakfast (if not already eaten) in the morning. Please also make sure to send lunch on Early Release Days. If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions, please note them on the Childcare Enrollment form.

Outdoor Play

Children who attend any of our afternoon programs can expect to spend time outside, so please be sure to send appropriate attire. Outdoor play will be cancelled due to precipitation, icy ground conditions, temperatures below 20 degrees, or excessive wind or heat. In order to keep staffing levels at a safe number, we are unable to offer indoor supervision for children who prefer to remain inside when the group has outdoor time.

Possessions From Home

Any personal items, such as water bottles, gloves, sweaters, hats or jackets, should be labeled with your child's name. Since we cannot guarantee the safe return of personal belongings, we ask that any personal possessions be left in backpacks during a child's time in our programs.

Cellphone Use By Children

The staff will be happy to convey messages to children when necessary but it is not possible for children to make or receive telephone calls during our Child Care Program time. Parents are welcome to call at any time to speak to the AfterCare Coordinator or Executive Director about questions or concerns regarding their child.

Participation In Other MFCS After School Programs

During the school year, MFCS holds many different afterschool programs, such as STEM, Arts & Crafts, Drama, etc. If your child is enrolled in KinderCare Extended Day or AfterCare, he or she may still participate in our After School Programs. However, we will be unable to refund or apply any payments for Child Care towards other After School Programs. Following the After School Program activity, your child may return to the Child Care Program until dismissal at 5:45pm. Please also note, we are not able to offer discounts for our After School Programs because of enrollment in BeforeCare, KinderCare, or AfterCare.

ADMISSION, TUITION, RELATED FEES & BILLING PROCEDURES

Admission Procedures

Once you have completed and submitted your application and related registration fee(s), an email notification will be sent in response within 5 business days, confirming the admission status and your child's start date in the selected Program.

If the interest outweighs the number of available slots in any of our Child Care Programs, admission will be given on a 'first come, first serve' basis. Those who do not receive a spot will be put on a wait list in order of the date the enrollment application. Available slots will be offered to the next family on the wait list. We do offer a sibling preference whereby any sibling of a student already enrolled in a Before, Kinder, or AfterCare Programs will be offered a slot before others on the wait list (as long as registration paperwork and deposit is received by date specified).

Once your child is admitted to one of our Child Care Programs, that child is guaranteed the same placement in the following year's Child Care Program (subject to tuition payment). If you request a change in the care plan, every effort will be made to accommodate the change. However, it is not possible to guarantee that the change requested will be available. Once registration has opened to the public, families who have not returned a registration form and related tuition will no longer be guaranteed a spot in the Program for the following year.

Tuition Rates

BeforeCare (7:00am-8:15am)

- \$25 weekly to attend 5 days per week
- \$10 daily for Drop In Care (subject to availability)

KinderCare (12:00pm-3:00pm)

- \$65 weekly to attend 5 days per week
- \$50 weekly to attend part-time (3 days per week)
- \$20 daily for Drop In Care (subject to availability)

KinderCare Extended Day (12:00pm-5:45pm)

- \$120 weekly to attend 5 days per week.
- \$85 weekly to attend part-time (3 days per week)
- \$35 daily for Drop In Care (subject to availability)

AfterCare (3:00pm-5:45pm)

- \$65 weekly to attend 5 days per week
- \$50 weekly to attend 3 days per week.
- \$5 Partial Drop in Care from 3-3:45pm ONLY
- \$20 daily for Drop in care (subject to availability)

Early Release Day Care (11:15am-5:45pm)

- \$25 daily for Drop in care for **KinderCare** (subject to availability)
- \$40 daily for Drop in care for **KinderCare Extended** (subject to availability)
- \$35 daily for Drop in care for **AfterCare** (subject to availability)

Registration Fee

A per-child refundable registration fee is required with your registration paperwork as follows:

- \$75 Fee for Enrollment in KinderCare, KinderCare Extended Day & Aftercare
- \$50 Fee for Enrollment in BeforeCare

At the end of each school year, all families who have remained in the Program for the entire school year will be refunded in full (minus any tuition owed) by deducting the amount paid in Registration Fees from the final month's tuition payment. Alternatively, families may request that the Registration Fee be rolled over to the next year.

Fee for Late Pick Ups

As noted above, there is a \$1.00 fee charged per minute for each minute past the Program end time. We ask that you pay on the day of late pickup with a check or exact cash. Outstanding Late Fees will be sent by invoice that will be emailed and/or sent home in your child's backpack.

Billing Procedures

Each child's slot in the Program is reserved for him or her only. Tuition is billed on a monthly basis and payment for monthly tuition is due in advance of services. Invoices will

be emailed and copies will go home in backpacks.

Payments will be due on the first business day of each month for that month's payment (i.e. payment for September would be due on September 1st). Payments received late would be assessed a \$5 per business day late charge. After five business days late, the child may be dismissed from the program.

Payment for months in which there are partial weeks due to teacher workshop days, school vacation days, and holidays will be prorated. There will be no refunds when the program is closed due to weather-related conditions. Payment is due regardless of attendance. There will be no refunds or discounts due to child illness or family vacation.

Payments for Drop In Care are required on the day that care is provided in check form or exact cash only.

Please make checks payable to Mill Falls Charter School. Please include your child's name on the check. We cannot accept state reimbursement for childcare at this time.

ATTENDANCE & PICK UP PROCEDURES

Attendance

The safety of each child in our care is paramount. Tightly linked to safety, is accurate attendance. Therefore, on those days when your child will not be attending his/her scheduled Child Care Program, it is essential that you communicate that to us by calling our front office at (603) 232-5176 or sending emailing office@millfalls.org to report the child's absence. We ask that you communicate with the front desk about absence from the Child Care Program, even if you have communicated with your child's teacher about your plan. This will help avoid miscommunication and confusion.

When reporting absences from the Child Care Program, please abide by the following:

- **BeforeCare:** Please make sure to call (603) 232-5176 by 7:15am if your child will not be attending BeforeCare for the day. Please let us know if your child will still be coming in for the school day.
- **Kinder & AfterCare:** If your child will be attending school but not KinderCare or AfterCare, please call the Front Office at (603) 232-5176 by 11:00am to inform us.

Pick-Up Procedures

Our Program utilizes a checkout system to ensure that each child is dismissed to the proper person at the end of the day. Children will not be allowed to leave the Program unattended. Parents/guardians must walk into the school building (unless the children are outside) and checkout with a Child Care Staff member. Please speak directly to Child Care Staff when dismissing a child from the Program.

Children will not be released to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or person listed on the child's Childcare Enrollment Form unless the child's parent notifies the Program prior to pickup time. If a staff member is unfamiliar with any person picking up a child, the

staff member will ask to see picture identification before the child is released.

Late Pickup Policy

The After School Program closes promptly at 5:45 pm. If there is an emergency that will delay your arrival by 5:45pm, it is critical that you call us at (603) 232-5176 and speak with a Child Care Staff member, so that adult can inform your child about the delay.

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for a pickup after 3pm for KinderCare and after 5:45pm for Kinder Extended and AfterCare. An entry in the late pickup log will detail the time of pickup and the amount due. Late fees will be added to the child's tuition bill.

Continual late pickup may result in a child's suspension or removal from the program.

Please note, Child Care Staff members are unable to remain on site after 5:45pm for activity updates or consultations about children. We will be happy to discuss special requests or exchanges of detailed information over the telephone or at a meeting scheduled during Program hours.

Snow Days & Delayed Openings

The Before, Kinder, & AfterCare Programs will be closed whenever school is closed due to inclement weather. Credits will not be issued for days when school is closed due to snow, and no additional charges will be incurred when the duration of the Program is extended in June.

PLEASE NOTE: When the opening of school is delayed due to weather or other issues, there will be no BeforeCare (7:00-8:15am) or KinderCare (12-3pm) Programs held. The AfterCare Program (3-5:45) will operate as scheduled. All Program changes due to weather will be listed on WMUR and WZID.

Emergency Dismissal Procedures

The After School Program will be closed whenever Mill Falls Charter School is dismissed early due to inclement weather or whenever there is an unexpected event that impacts the safe use of our school.

In the event of an early dismissal, we will use our emergency communication system to send you a detailed automated recording or text message (depending on your preference indicated on your registration paperwork) about the early dismissal. Since this is the way we will notify you of any unexpected Program closures, it is very important that every family keeps the school up to date on emergency contact numbers and the method you want to receive emergency notifications (text or voice message). You may do this by contacting the school at (603) 232-5176.

Please note, whenever there is an early dismissal, children who normally attend AfterCare will be unable to be sent home on the bus, as Manchester Transit Authority requires the

child to be on the normal school bus roster for daily bussing in order to ride the bus at any time.

Schedule Changes & Changes In Program Enrollment

We require 30 days notification of request to change your child's enrollment in our Child Care Program during the school year.

Written notice of a schedule change should be submitted to ChildCare@MillFalls.org.

Every effort will be made to accommodate schedule changes, any changes in a child's attendance at any of our Before, Kinder, or AfterCare Programs are subject to availability.

As noted on page 8, Registration Fees will not be refunded due to a child's withdrawal from the Program before the end of the school year. Should your child's enrollment decrease from the required full time or part time enrollment to a drop-in position, registration fees will not be refunded.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Students enrolled in our Child Care Program are expected to behave in ways consistent with the expectations set up during the school day. Children are to be respectful of Staff, of their peers, and of the school environment.

In the event that students enrolled in the ChildCare Programs do not observe these behavioral expectations, Staff will first speak with the student and certain situations may require him/her to sit out of activities. Staff will inform parents/guardians of behavioral issues. No verbal abuse or aggressive behavior will be tolerated. **In the event that such behavior is exhibited, the child will be given three chances, on three separate occasions, to correct him/her self. After three incidents, the child will be asked to leave the Program; no credit will be issued and there will not be a refund of the Registration Fee.**

MFCS FAMILY HANDBOOK REFERENCES

In an effort to avoid redundancy, please see the MFCS Family Handbook to review the following school policies that also apply to BeforeCare, KinderCare, and AfterCare:

- Food
- School Culture
- Health Related Policies
- Operational Policies
- Behavioral Expectations
- School Safety & Emergencies
- Policy and Related Procedures for Transporting Mill Falls Charter School Students in Personal Vehicles
- Common Code of Online Conduct
- Student Safety & Violence Prevention Anti-Bullying Policy
- Grievance & Appeal Policy