



**The Mill Falls Child Care
Program Handbook
2022 / 2023**

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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 is held in-house and aligns with our mission and integrates the Mill Falls Montessori values of Grace, Courtesy, & Respect in every activity.

The Child Care Program is available to families currently enrolled in the school. This program provides much needed care for our students whose parents are unavailable to care for them directly before and after school hours. The Child Care Program is operated at School and follows the same safety standards, 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 Child Care program requires minimum participation rates to be open for our families, we ask that each family enrolls on an annual school-year basis.

Our Child Care Program is 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 at any time per two staff members or no more than 15 students at any time per one staff member for any of our Child Care Programs.

****This year we will only be offering our Before Care Program****

BEFORE CARE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

- **Before Care:** 7:00am to 8:15am when school is in session
- The Child Care Program will run through the school year.
- See the official Mill Falls Charter School at: <http://millfalls.org/parents/school-calendar/>.

BEFORE CARE PROGRAM OPTIONS

Enrollment in our Before Care Program

Before Care provides safe, quality care for your child before school between 7:00am to 8:15am. This program is open to all *Mill Falls Charter School* students in grades Kindergarten through 6th. A maximum of 15 students and a minimum of 12 students will be allowed to participate in Before Care at any given time.

The Before Care Program does not follow a rigid schedule. Children will have 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.

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 5).

- 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 Mill Falls before your child can participate in any care.*

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

- A phone call **no later than 2:00pm the day before** Before Care is needed 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.*

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 are not provided in our Child Care Program. Please make sure you send a snack with your child. If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions, please note them on the Child Care Enrollment form.

Outdoor Play

Children 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. 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 Program.

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 during the school day (8am – 4pm) to speak to the Executive Director about questions or concerns regarding their child.

ADMISSION, TUITION, RELATED FEES & BILLING PROCEDURES**Admission Procedures**

Once you have submitted your registration and enrollment forms and related fee(s), an email notification will be sent in response confirming the admission status and your child's start date in the Program.

If the interest outweighs the number of available slots in our Child Care Program, 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 of inquiry. 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 Child Care Program 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 our Child Care Program, they are guaranteed the same placement in the following year's Child Care Program (subject to your 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**Before Care (7:00am-8:15am)**

- \$100 monthly to attend 5 days per week
- \$10 daily for Drop-In Care (subject to availability)

Registration Fee

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

- \$50 Fee for Enrollment in Before Care

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 if they wish to continue enrollment.

Billing Procedures

Each child's slot in the Program is reserved for him or her *only*. Tuition is billed monthly and payment for monthly tuition is due in advance of services. Invoices will be emailed and receipt of payment are available upon request.

Payments will be due on the first business day of each month for that month's payment (i.e. payment for October would be due on October 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.

Because the Child Care Program is a yearly enrollment, the tuition has been calculated to include partial weeks due to professional development, school vacation, and/or holidays. 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 their scheduled Child Care Program, it is essential that you communicate with us by calling our Front Office at (603) 232-5176 or sending emailing office@millfalls.org to report the child's absence.

Please be sure to communicate with the Front Office 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:

- **Before Care:** Please make sure to call (603) 232-5176 or email office@millfalls.org by 7:15am if your child will not be attending Before Care for the day. Please let us know if your child will still be coming in for the school day.
- **Please refer to the Fall 2022 Covid Protocol for details as the Child Care Program will also follow this protocol.**

Pick-Up Procedures

In the event that your child needs to leave the Before Care Program before school begins, our Before Care Staff will utilize our checkout system to ensure that each child is dismissed to the proper person. Children will not be released to anyone other than a parent, guardian, or an authorized pick-up person as noted on the registration form. 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.

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.

Snow Days & Delayed Openings

The Child Care Program 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 Child Care Program is extended in June.

****PLEASE NOTE: When the opening of school is *delayed* due to weather or other issues, there will be no Before Care (7:00-8:15am). ****

Emergency Dismissal Procedures

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.

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 are subject to availability.

As noted on page 6, 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.

If students enrolled in the Child Care Program do not observe these behavioral expectations, Staff will first speak with the student and certain situations may require them to sit out of activities. Staff will inform parents/guardians of behavioral issues. No verbal abuse or aggressive behavior will be tolerated.

If such behavior is exhibited, the child will be given three chances, on three separate occasions, to correct their behavior. After three incidents, the child will be asked to leave the Program; no credit will be issued and there will not be a Registration Fee refund.

MFCS FAMILY HANDBOOK REFERENCES

To avoid redundancy, please see the MFCS Family Handbook to review the following school policies that also apply to Child Care:

- 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
- Fall 2022 COVID Protocol