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SUMMER SAFARI PARENT GUIDE

Preparing your child for fun and success at Summer Safari camp

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CAMP LINE 515.974.2550

If at any time you need to reach a staff member during camp hours, you may do so by calling the Education Office at 515.974.2550 or email us at camps@blankparkzoo.net.

PRE-CAMP COMMUNICATION

After you complete registration, you will receive a confirmation email with receipt. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please check your SPAM folder or call 515.974.2550. The Wednesday before camp, you will receive a Pre-Camp email with instructions for Drop-Off and Pick-Up.

SEESAW

We will be using the app Seesaw for communication with parents during camp weeks. The week before camp, registration links will be sent to families to link to their camper's profile. All campers will be archived at the end of each camp week. To download Seesaw, [click here](#).

CLOTHING

- **What not to wear:** skirts, dresses and delicate or special clothes are not advised. Campers will play and get dirty!
- **Dress for the weather:** Camp runs daily, hot or cold, rain or shine. Please make sure your child comes prepared for each day and dressed for the weather. Most camp activities take place outdoors, regardless of rain, wet, heat or cold. We recommend waterproof boots and a change of socks on rainy days, hats and coats on cold days, and short sleeves and pants on hot days.
- **Labels:** Please label your child's belongings. Any unclaimed items after camp will be turned into the lost and found at Zoo Admissions. Lost and Found items are kept for generally 1 month before they are discarded or donated.
- **Footwear:** Closed-toe shoes are strongly recommended. **No flip flops** are allowed as they make it difficult for playing and walking.
- **Change of clothes:** Though not required, we always appreciate you sending a spare set of clothes in campers' backpacks in case of accidents/spills.
- **Backpack:** Please send your child with a bag or backpack each day with a change of clothes and to help bring home materials from camp.

CAMP T-SHIRTS

2023 Camp t-shirts are available for purchase but are not required. You can purchase a t-shirt through your CampBrain account. T-shirts that are purchased in advance will be sent home the first day of camp. T-shirts are \$10.

Clearance T-shirts

Clearance camp t-shirts are available for purchase but are not required. These shirts are leftovers from previous Safari Camps seasons. T-shirts can be purchased through your CampBrain account. T-shirts are \$5. *Sizes are limited.* If you purchase a clearance t-shirt and we run out of your size prior to your camp week, we will communicate to find an alternative or process a refund.



Tortoise

Cassowary

LUNCHES & SNACKS

Half-day camps will receive one snack and full day camps will receive a morning and an afternoon snack each day (included as a part of camp registration – no extra fee). Snacks might include items such as: bananas, apples, Goldfish crackers, popcorn, pretzels, fruit snacks, Cheez-its, animal crackers, raisins, carrot sticks, or ice cream (these items are tentative, subject to change and vary from day to day).

Campers may bring a snack from home in place of Zoo provided snacks. These snacks, however, may only be consumed during designated snack times unless there is a health concern discussed with camp staff prior to the start of camp or during Monday morning drop-off.

Children enrolled in a full-day camp will need to bring a sack lunch. During the day, all lunches are stored in grade level tubs in a large refrigerator. Re-heating is not available.

****Food items containing nuts are not served during camp. However, we cannot guarantee a nut-free environment. Camp kids often bring their own lunch items containing nuts, and nuts are a regular part of our animal diets. Please disclose all participant food allergies during registration. To discuss concerns or request special accommodations, please contact camps@blankparkzoo.org or call 515-974-2550.*

MEDICATION

If you are bringing any medication to camp with your child (including rescue inhalers and EpiPens), you must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Morning/evening dose of medications should be given before or after your child attends camp. Only medications with a dosage schedule that cannot be adjusted for camp hours should be administered during the day.
- ALL medications must be given to a Camp Supervisor by an adult. Prescription medications must be in the child's name and in its original bottle. Adult should advise whether the medication should be returned at the end of each day or stay at the Zoo for the duration of camp.
- A medication authorization form must be filled out completely for each medication to be administered at camp. We will NOT administer medication without a completed form until we are able to reach a parent by phone.
- All medications must be in their original packaging and labeled with appropriate prescription, dosing and/or pharmaceutical information. Liquid medication must be accompanied with an appropriate measuring cup/syringe.
- We must have the child's first and last name and exact time medication is to be given.
- We are unable to accept damaged/expired medications or loose medicine in unmarked packaging or give medication on an "as needed" basis.

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

Both drop-off and pick-up take place curbside. Drop-off begins at 8:45 am for AM PreK, Half Day Kindergarten and full day camps. Drop-off for PM PreK camps begins at 1:15 PM. Please follow our signs for drop-off or see the drop-off/pick-up map located at the end of this document.

Pick-up for AM PreK and Half Day Kindergarten camps is from at 11:30-11:45 am and for PM PreK and full day camps 4:00-4:15pm. Please honor our pick-up times.

LATE ARRIVALS

If you are arriving late for any camp, please advise Zoo Admissions staff when you arrive that you are dropping off a camper and camp staff will be radioed to come pick up your child at Zoo Admissions. Please note, if you are arriving late, curbside drop-off is not available.

EARLY PICK-UP

Families who would like to pick up their children early from camp for appointments and other schedule commitments may do so. Please notify camp staff of your pick up time in advance to ensure a safe and organized check-out process.

The 15 minutes leading up to camp check-out is very busy as groups return to their learning spaces from zoo grounds and camp staff prepare for the check-out process. Therefore, we ask families to avoid trying to pick up during those 15 minute prior to regular pick up time.

BEFORE/AFTER CARE

We offer supervised Before Care for AM PreK, Half Day Kindergarten and full day camps beginning at 7:30 am until 8:30 am. Children cannot be dropped off between 8:30-8:45 am as staff are preparing for regular check-in. Before Care is not available to PM PreK camps.

We offer supervised After Care until 5:30 pm for PM PreK and all full day camps. All children not picked up by 4:15 pm will join After Care and parents will be charged the daily rate of \$5. After Care is not available for AM PreK or Half Day Kindergarten camps.

To sign up for Before or After Care, please do so on your CampBrain account.

LATE FEES

If you know in advance that you will be late to pick up your child, please let us know by calling the camp parent line at 515.974.2550.

AM PreK and Half Day Kindergarten camps end at 11:30 am and pick-up ends are 11:45 am. Children who are not picked up by 11:45 am will be charged a fee of \$5 for every 15 minutes after 11:45 am.

PM PreK and full day camps end at 4:00 pm and check-out ends at 4:15 pm. Children who are not picked up by 4:15 pm will join After Care and parents will be charged the daily rate of \$5.

After Care ends at 5:30 pm. If you arrive after 5:30 pm, you will be charged a fee of \$5 for every 15 minutes after 5:30 pm.

CAMP AGE GROUPS & GROUP REQUESTS

It is important to us that your child receives the best experience. Age groups are designated so that camp instructors can tailor camp activities and learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate for children of specified ages. As such, we hope that you will help us by honoring our age groups. **Each camp is for children entering that grade level in the fall of 2023.** AM PreK camps are for children who are at least 3 or 4 years old. Children must be 3 years of age by the first day of camp. PM PreK camps are for children who are 4 years old. Children must be 4 years old for PM PreK camps by the first day of camp.

Your child **MUST** be potty-trained to be a part of the camp.

Occasionally an age group will split into smaller groups for activities. During the online registration process or by emailing camps@blankparkzoo.org, you can request that your child be grouped with another camper within his/her same age group. Although we make every effort to accommodate grouping preferences, please understand that group requests are never guaranteed.

CAMP STAFF

Our seasonal camp staff are often college students studying natural sciences and/or education. Camps may also be staffed by full-time educators currently working at the Zoo.

Each camp group is led by a teaching team of 2-5 educators. Groups may also be assisted by youth volunteers (Zoo Crew) or Junior Camp Educators (educators-in-training). Zoo Crew volunteers are teens trained in a variety of Zoo programs. Junior Camp Educators are long-time teen volunteers who have showed an interest in working with children and possess an exemplary record of volunteering at the Zoo. These volunteers serve as an extra pair of eyes and hands and are always under the supervision of Zoo staff.

CAMP EXPECTATIONS

Campers and staff alike are required to follow camp expectations at all times to ensure everyone stays safe and enjoys their time at camp. We will go over camp expectations with campers on the first day of camp, but we also encourage you to review these expectations with your child prior to camp.

Be Safe

Everyone's safety is our highest priority! In order to keep campers safe, we ask everyone to stay with the group at all times, do not climb up fences or into exhibits, wear appropriate clothing and footwear, and refrain from fighting (even play fighting) as it may result in serious injuries.

Be Respectful

Simply put, respect means to be nice. We all need to work to be nice to each other, respecting each other's space, listening with our whole bodies and respecting what everyone has to say. This also includes respecting the plants and animals at the Zoo by not picking any plants or their leaves, tapping on the glass at animal exhibits or yelling at the animals.

Be Responsible

At Safari Camp we share, we clean up after ourselves and we conserve our resources. This means we take turns, push in our chairs, place trash and recycling items in the appropriate bins and do not waste camp supplies.

SAFETY POLICIES: AUTHORIZED PICK-UP

Safety is our highest priority. We thank you in advance for adhering to our authorized pick-up policy and the staff enforcing it.

Adults picking up a camper are required to show a valid, photo ID.

When registering your child for camp, you will be asked for several adult names including: Parent Name(s), Emergency Contact and Authorized Pick-Up. We will not release a child to anyone who is not listed somewhere under those three headings. If an adult's name needs to be added to the list after registration is complete, you may do so by calling or emailing the Camp Office or notifying staff any day during check-in.

If an individual is not listed, we will need to contact a parent or emergency contact for verbal permission before we can release your child to them.

Because Blank Park Zoo is a public facility, we require that all campers, regardless of age, are physically walked into the zoo and signed in and out by an adult with their instructors. If the adult picking up a camper is unable to walk into the zoo due to physical limitations, please contact camp staff so we can make arrangements as necessary.

SAFETY POLICIES: RESTROOM POLICY

Children will always be accompanied to public restrooms and will never be allowed to enter a restroom alone with zoo visitors. The “rule of three” is followed to ensure an educator is never alone inside a restroom with an individual child.

SAFETY POLICIES: COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS

We are following recommendations from the CDC for Safari Camps. Recommendations and requirements may change between now and the start of your child’s camp.



Summer Safari Camp

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP LOCATIONS

Age Group	Drop-Off Period	Pick-Up Period
AM Preschool	8:45-9:00 am	11:30-11:45 am
PM Preschool	1:15-1:30 pm	4:00-4:15
Kindergarten, <i>Half-Day</i>	8:45-9:00 am	11:30-11:45 am
Kindergarten, <i>Full-Day</i>	8:45-9:00 am	4:00-4:15 pm
Grades 1 & 2	8:45-9:00 am	4:00-4:15 pm
Grades 3 & 4	8:45-9:00 am	4:00-4:15 pm
Grades 5 – 7	8:45-9:00 am	4:00-4:15 pm
Before Care	7:30-8:30 am	NA
After Care	NA	4:15-5:30 pm

