

2008-09

**After-School Program
Program Policies for Parents**

Graystone Academy

139 Modena Road
South Coatesville, PA 19320

After School Program (ASP)
Graystone Academy

WELCOME!

Welcome to Graystone Academy Charter School's After School Program. We are committed to providing your child with enriching and rewarding experiences that will enhance their childhood memories about school and learning. This overview has been prepared to answer questions you may have concerning our philosophy, policies and procedures. We extend to you an ongoing invitation to visit our program at any time to see how well your child is benefiting from the program. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share in the magic of your child's life.

PURPOSE

Our program has been developed to assist parents in providing their elementary school age children the opportunity to relax, study and involve themselves in personal interests in a safe environment when they are not in school. Our program does not duplicate the charter school program but rather supplements the program in a more recreational manner.

PHILOSOPHY

We recognize that working parents and parents seeking work need to feel secure in the knowledge that their children are well taken care of during times when they are not in school. Children, during early and middle childhood, based on their environment and experiences will learn self-expression and self worth. We, therefore, as an extension of the family, provide a safe haven that is nurturing, warm, clean, and caring. In this environment, we offer "hands on" opportunities for school age children to make choices that will enable them to pursue their personal interests, develop friendships, and grow in confidence, independence and respect for themselves and others. We encourage independent thinking and discovery through developmentally appropriate activities, materials and methods while providing adequate adult supervision and guidance. We want the children that participate in our program to realize their potential while understanding their uniqueness and worth.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Graystone's ASP has an open door policy and welcomes you to visit the program at any time your child is present. Please feel free to join our program either as an observer or a volunteer. We seek your active involvement in the program and invite your participation by sharing your own special interests and abilities with our students. Please consult with your child's teacher first should any problem arise concerning your child either at the program or at home. The ASP Program Director and the School Principal are also available to offer assistance if needed.

THE CURRICULUM

Primary Care

Primary Care is a method of student management by which a particular ASP staff member is responsible for the routine care, activity implementation, and daily reporting for your child. The Primary Care Provider serves as your principle point of contact regarding information concerning your child. All ASP staff members will be familiar with your child's needs and will be involved with your child either peripherally or directly at some time during the program. Primary Care allows for better continuity and bonding between the child, staff member, parents and peers. It also allows the ASP staff member to be more closely involved during planned activities by working with a smaller group of children.

Developmentally Appropriate Practices

A child's interests and abilities change as the child ages and matures. The ASP Program is committed to the rights of children to experience a respectful and supportive learning environment that reflects the child's current interests, needs, and competencies. The school age staff understands developmental stages and plan activities that are appropriate and inclusive of all children enrolled in the program.

Activities

Variety is the key component of the ASP program. Activities include arts and crafts, construction, board games and puzzles, quiet reading and conversation, homework and active physical play.

Homework

Parents should make the decision whether their child should work on their homework during the after school program or at home. Some parents may want their child to make the decision. Program staff will provide an appropriate area for working on homework and will establish guidelines for its use. Although the ASP staff cannot be responsible for consistently assisting students with their assignments or for monitoring homework completion they will offer help if requested. The time allotted for homework will not exceed 45 minutes.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily schedule for after school is appropriate to the developmental needs of the children in the program. The daily schedule includes: a balance between child selected and teacher directed activities, large group, small group and individual activities, quiet and active play, and indoor and outdoor play.

Typical Schedules

After School

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| 3:30 - 3:45 | Children arrive and are greeted; sign in; snack is available; staff set up activities |
| 3:45 - 4:15 | Outdoor play, group activity, free play in multipurpose room |
| 4:15 - 4:45 | Homework; quiet, academic skill-building activity |
| 4:45 - 5:15 | Arts and Crafts project developed by GACS Art Teacher |
| 5:15 - 6:00 | Activity clean up; individualized activities; free time in the library reading books or using computers; prepare to go home. |
| 6:00 | The program closes |

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

THE PROGRAM

The program operates Monday through Friday from 3:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. The program is not open on early dismissal days or days when school is not in session.

PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents must cooperate with the ASP program in carrying out all governmental laws, rules, and regulations affecting the operation of the after school program. It is the parent's responsibility to supply and maintain required accurate record information including all required forms and acknowledgments. Parents are also responsible for notifying the Program Director or the charter school administrative staff if their child will be absent for the day. Only children enrolled in the ASP are allowed to participate in the program. Children that are not enrolled in the ASP program and that have not been picked up after the charter school day will not be permitted into the ASP program.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Upon enrollment you will be given a packet of material to review. The enrollment packet includes requests for personal, biographical, health, and emergency information concerning your child. **All requested information is kept confidential.** Please complete and return these forms to the ASP Program Director before your child begins the program. As changes in information occur during the year, you will need to complete an Update of Information form.

PROGRAM HOURS

The ASP program is open only on school days Monday through Friday from 3:30 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. If there is an unusual circumstance that prevents a parent from picking their child up by closing, the parent is required to inform the Program Director or charter school administrative personnel as soon as possible so that staffing arrangements can be made. There is a late fee of **\$10.00 per quarter hour** or fraction thereof for children picked up after the 6:00 P.M. closing time payable at time of pickup. **If a parent fails to notify the program staff that they will be late and they have not arrived to pick up their child within 30 minutes of closing, Child**

Protective Services will be contacted. Chronic late pick up WILL lead to dismissal from the program.

HOLIDAYS

OASIS will be closed during every school-honored holiday along with emergency school closings and early dismissals. Please refer to your charter school calendar for the days of operation.

SIGN IN AND SIGN OUT PROCEDURES

- Students will be signed in upon arrival to the program by a staff member and signed out upon departure from the program by a parent or the adult person (18 years and older) designated by the parent to pick up the child.
- Parents are responsible for their own children once the child has been signed out
- The only people, other than a child's custodial parents, who are authorized to take the child from the program are those adults (18 years and older) designated in writing on the Emergency Contact or Authorized Release sections of the child's application.
- Parents, as well as other authorized adults, not known to the staff will be required to furnish appropriate identification including a picture ID upon request.
- A court order that indicates that a non-custodial parent is required to have special permission to pick up children or that a non-custodial parent is not allowed to pick up children, must be on file. On occasions when the non-custodial parent will be picking up children from the program, the custodial parent is asked to provide a written statement to the program granting permission.

SECURITY

The primary mechanism for ensuring the security of the program is the strict adherence to established procedures for your child's arrival and departure. All parents must be prepared to display identification and guests are required to register in the office.

FEEES AND TERMS

The ASP program is a self-supporting program and the cost of service is based on the cost of labor and materials and includes the activity programs and afternoon snack. Payments are due in advance of service on FRIDAY for the upcoming week by check, money order or cash. A late fee of \$5.00/day

will be charged for payments received after Friday. If payment is late, child care services will be immediately suspended until payment is made. There is a \$25.00 service fee for checks returned for non-sufficient funds (NSF). The only way the charter school is able to continue to provide before and/or after school services is through strict adherence to the payment policy.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Your child will be involved in various hands-on and sometimes messy activities and should be dressed accordingly. Your child's clothing should be appropriate for the weather conditions, washable and comfortable. We recommend that children wear tennis shoes or soft-soled shoes.

Children are requested to leave non-nutritious food, gum and money at home. Please discourage your child from bringing personal possessions from home unless specifically requested by the ASP staff. Although we cannot be responsible for the loss or damage to clothing, labeling will help us to identify lost items.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Discipline is designed and carried out to help each child to learn self-control, choose alternatives, identify feelings and develop an understanding and respect for the feelings of oneself and others. Discipline shall not damage the child's self image, or embarrass the child who is being disciplined. When ever possible, the child disciplined shall contribute to resolving the conflict in which the child was involved. The goal in discipline is to advance the child's sense of responsibility and self-discipline.

Teachers will...

- Acknowledge and compliment positive contributions such as cooperation, sharing, caring for materials and joining into activities
- Set appropriate limits for children
- Listen carefully and openly to children
- Treat all children consistently and fairly
- Develop a warm, trusting program environment
- Encourage children to resolve their own conflicts and step in only if needed to discuss the issues and work out a solution

Prohibited punishments include...

- Physically striking by spanking, hitting, swatting or shaking a child
- Verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks regarding the child or that child's family
- Isolating a child in a closet or any restricted area

Collaboration

It may be discovered that the peer-group experience offered at the ASP does not meet an individual child's needs. Often children express their discomfort in a situation by inappropriate behavior that may affect the child's sense of well-being or the well-being of others. If a problem should occur with a child's behavior, the parents, ASP Program Director and the CAO will work together with the child to develop a plan to help the child succeed in the program. A child who continues to exhibit behavior that compromises their safety and welfare or that of other children will most likely be more successful in another type of program or setting. Two weeks notice will then be given and the Parental Agreement will be terminated. In extreme cases, it may be necessary to immediately discontinue services for a child whose behavior is detrimental to the other children.

INJURY AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

A minor injury to a child will be treated at the discretion of the ASP staff. An adequate supply of first aid materials is stored at the program site.

In the event a child sustains an injury of a more serious nature, the teacher will render emergency first aid while the parent is contacted by phone. The emergency telephone information that is on file at the program site will be used. Generally the parent will be asked to come to the school and to transport the child to a physician's office or a medical facility if the parent or ASP staff member feels that this is necessary. If neither parent can be contacted, the person designated by the parent on the emergency form will be requested to fulfill this parental role.

If immediate and urgent medical treatment is required, the program personnel will call 911. Parental agreement forms authorize the ASP staff to secure and authorize any medical attention, treatment, and services as may

be necessary for a child whose parents cannot be immediately contacted. Any qualified person providing such required medical attention, treatment, or services may accept such written consent as if given by the parent in person. ***Parents or legal guardians will be financially responsible for the cost of providing care for an injured child.*** The Parental Agreement will be in the child's file and will be sent with the person accompanying a child to a medical facility.

HEALTH

The ASP program is designed for well childcare. A certificate of Health and Immunization Record must be on file for each child.

Exclusion Policy

The phone call that informs a busy working parent that they must leave work to pick up a sick child is as difficult for the staff to make as it is for the parent to receive. ASP endorses exclusion standards that will help control the occurrence of illness among children, their families, staff and the community. Exclusion standards followed are put forth by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service and the Centers for Disease Control. This policy ultimately protects other children and staff members and recognizes the limitations of staff capabilities to adequately care for a sick child.

Your child must not attend the OASIS program if exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
- Intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting
- Severe itching and scratching of the body or scalp (head lice, scabies)
- Any disease that is classified as reportable, i.e., diseases that have special implications for public health due to their high communicability or seriousness.

Illness Management

If your child develops any of the above symptoms while attending the ASP program, the staff will help your child rest comfortably in an area away from the other children. You will be promptly contacted to arrange pickup for your child within one hour.

CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

Parents are valued partners in supporting our program. Staff members will seek parental involvement in many ways, such as serving as resource persons within the classroom, volunteering time and talents or assisting children and teachers with various projects associated with the program. If there is a concern involving your child, you are encouraged to speak to your child's primary care-giver or the Program Director. Please speak to the Program Director or CAO if you have a question or concern regarding program operations.

Staff will notify parents or guardians or other adults authorized by the parent when the child:

- Is injured
- Has a sign or symptom of illness requiring exclusion from the program
- Has been involved in any situation that has placed the child at risk
- Has been exposed to an outbreak of a communicable disease
- Displays uncharacteristic behavior

Parent/Student Satisfaction Surveys

Once a year parents and students will be requested to complete a satisfaction survey that will assess how well the program is meeting your needs. The results of these surveys are used to redefine goals and methods so as to continually improve program quality and respond to parent and student suggestions.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/SEVERE CONDITIONS

The program will be open during inclement weather if the charter school is open. Information regarding any program closing or delayed opening will be announced to parents and staff on the local radio and television stations and on the voice mail at the charter school. Ratios (not to exceed state ratios) and activities during inclement weather may be modified based on the age and number of children needing care.

Any emergency situation that requires evacuation from the immediate area of the program site will be organized by the Program Director in cooperation with the CAO of the charter school.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY - NON-DISCRIMINATION

The ASP program strongly believes children, parents and staff are entitled to equal opportunities and freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin or handicap. The program offers activities and curriculum that is both multicultural and anti-bias.

Staff members are entitled to work in an environment that is non-discriminatory in all aspects and free of any harassment that interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work atmosphere.

QUALITY ASSURANCE - HANDLING COMPLAINTS

OASIS and your charter school are totally committed to earning your full satisfaction with the after school program. Experience has demonstrated that open communication between parents and the program staff is the key to maintaining a stable business and contractual relationship. We continually look for parent's input on how we can improve our programs.

What to do if you have a problem.....

1. Discuss the problem with your child's primary care provider. Our program maintains an Open Door Policy in which parents are encouraged to visit the program at any time. Staff will make themselves available to discuss parental concerns regarding their child or program operations.
2. Discuss the problem with the Program Director. Parental concerns or questions that cannot be resolved by the primary care provider should be redirected to the program Director. The program Director is fully qualified and possesses the requisite leadership and decision-making skills to solve most problems.