



# **2023-2024 Extended Day Program Parent Handbook**

## **PROCEDURES MAY CHANGE**

The procedures stated in the manual are guidelines and are subject to change at the sole discretion of The Biome School, as are all procedures, policies, or other programs of The Biome School. From time to time, you may receive updated information concerning changes in procedures and policies.

We are excited that your child is attending the Extended Day Program. Our program activities have been planned to help extend and enrich the learning experiences for you and your child. We hope that you will assist your child in taking advantage of the opportunity that has been afforded him/her by the generous donations and support offered to THE BIOME on behalf of our children.

Our rules and procedures are intended to help all children feel comfortable and safe. They are expected to follow the rules, which will be explained during their first day. Everyone is expected to respect themselves, others, and THE BIOME property.

This parent's handbook is an official part of your contract with THE BIOME Program. If for any reason, you cannot accept, abide, or understand information disclosed here, please advise us immediately. If applicable, we will discuss your enrollment cancellation options. Your child's attendance at our program indicates your full acceptance of our rules and practices.

### **Community Connections**

As part of our ongoing development strategy, we are committed to building strong relationships with key community organizations that can enrich the experiences of young people attending THE BIOME.

### **Enrichment Coaches**

THE BIOME is fortunate to have a large and diverse pool of Enrichment Coaches who are committed to the mission of the organization and to seeing your children succeed. THE BIOME Enrichment Coaches are college students from esteemed academic institutions; they are professionals from reputable organizations and companies; and they are retirees who have a wealth of knowledge and experience to share. Despite their busy schedules, our Enrichment Coaches find time to dedicate to our children. Encourage your children to respect all adults who spend time helping them each day, and remind them to say, "thank you"!

### **Ratios and Group Size**

THE BIOME currently maintains a staff-to-child ratio of 1:10. A larger ratio may be allowed for organized health and fitness activities and special group events. In the 2023-2024 academic year there will be a Before Care capacity of 20 students and an After Care capacity of 60 students.

### **School Year Program Daily Hours**

Before Care: Monday – Friday, 6:30 A.M. to 7:40 A.M.  
After Care: Monday – Friday, 3:45 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

The Extended Day Program operates every day that The Biome School is in session unless you are notified otherwise. When there is an emergency early dismissal from school, After School Care will NOT be provided.

**Contact Information**

Andrea Carpenter - Program Manager  
314-531-9916 (Office)  
314-536-5785 (Cell)  
[acarpenter@thebiomeschool.org](mailto:acarpenter@thebiomeschool.org)

Shari Pittman – Director of Operations  
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314-489-2285 (Cell)  
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**Registration Process**

All families must complete and submit an application, which can be found on The Biome School's website. The program is open to all K-5 students at The Biome.

Program acceptance is based on a first come, first served basis and not on prior program enrollment. If a program is full, your child will be placed on a waiting list until there is an opening in the program. ALL outstanding fees from the previous school year must be satisfied PRIOR to acceptance in the program.

**Daily Schedule**

School Dismissal: 3:30 - 3:45 pm  
Students Arriving and Snack: 3:45 pm - 4:00 pm  
Enrichment Activities: 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm  
Clean Up and Prepare for Departure: 5:30 – 6:00 pm

**Snack**

We provide a small snack for After Care participants. If your child has special dietary restrictions, please speak with the Program Manager.

**Program Fees**

Before Care - \$80  
After Care - \$200  
Before & After Care - \$280

Fees for the months of August are prorated by 50%. Fees for other months may be prorated as well, depending on the school calendar. Fees are due by the 5th of each month. Invoices are generated and delivered via EZ School App. CASH PAYMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR ANY REASON.

### **Late Pick-Up**

A charge of \$25.00 will be assessed for unannounced late pick up (i.e., pick up after 6:00 pm for After Care). An additional \$25 will be assessed every 15 minutes after 6:30 pm. This fee is due before the end of the week in which the fee was assessed or in cases of Friday, the fee is due before end-of-business on the following Monday. Parents are required to sign out their students and the sign out sheet will be used to determine pick-up times. Failure to pay the fee may result in student being dismissed from the program.

### **Refunds and Cancellations**

Students may be withdrawn from the program without penalty within the first 5 days of the program. If the student is withdrawn within that period, you will only be charged for that week of the program. If a student is withdrawn after a full week of the program, you will be charged the fee for that month.

### **Inclement Weather**

In the event that THE BIOME closes early due to inclement weather or loss of power in the facility, the Enrichment Coaches will quickly coordinate with you in order to pick up your child.

### **Closing & Opening Information**

To verify whether the center is open due to inclement weather or other issues, please check your text, email and Class Dojo for updates.

### **Expectations**

At THE BIOME, our expectations are high, so we need you, as a parent, to share our expectations with your child and support our efforts. By participating in the program, you and your child agree to the following contract statements:

#### **Student Contract Statements**

1. I will seek excellence in all my endeavors, be a model of high achievement, and positively represent my family and The Biome School.
2. I will respect all staff and learners.
3. I understand that disrespectful acts and failure to follow instructions from those in authority, may result in dismissal from the program.

#### **Parent Contract Statements**

1. I understand and agree that any and all outstanding fees from previous school years must be paid prior to acceptance in the program.
2. I understand and agree that payments for services are due by the 5th of every month. Late payments may result in suspension from the program.
3. I understand and agree that I am responsible for ensuring that my child arrives no earlier than 6:30 am, is picked up no later than 6:00 pm.

4. I understand and agree that if my learner is picked up after 6:00 pm, I will be assessed a \$25 fee, per incident, per learner. An additional \$25 will be assessed every 15 minutes after 6:30 pm.
5. I understand and agree to attend the Parent Extended Day Program Orientation meeting, which will be held prior to the start of the school year.
6. I acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook and understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

### **Personal Property**

Students will be given a place to store book bags. Please do not allow your child to bring any valuables, as we are not responsible for securing or replacing lost, stolen, or destroyed items. Valuables such as electronic games, cell phones, or toys should be kept in the child's book bag for the duration of the program. **Cell phone use is strictly prohibited.** Cell phones, electronic games, or toys will be confiscated by the Program Director and returned to the parent or guardian. Confiscated items will not be returned to the child under any circumstances. Under no circumstances will we collect or secure your child's money. THE BIOME is not responsible for lost or damaged items or clothing ruined while engaging in program activities.

### **Arrival Procedure**

Controlling the flow of members into and out of the center is crucial to the safety of THE BIOME staff, student members, and visitors. The following protocols, unless advised otherwise by the President & CEO, should be followed without exception.

Entrance to THE BIOME facility is granted through the parking lot entry way located on the side of the building. The door always remains locked. Entrance to the facility is controlled by one of the enrichment coaches. If he/she is not present, only staff members can open the door. Student members are not allowed to open the door unless an emergency warrants it.

Students will be checked in to the extended day program by the enrichment coach. All book-bags, gym-bags, carrying cases, etc., must be secured in a designated area. Coats, jackets, and sweaters must also be hung in the designated area.

### **Photo Release**

THE BIOME takes photos and videos throughout the summer and school year of children involved in every aspect of the program. Some of these photos will be put on our website and/or used in a wide array of marketing materials. Please be aware that by registering your child, you grant permission for THE BIOME to use his/her image.

### **Pick up and Departure**

It is the parent's responsibility to provide the names of all persons approved to pick up their child. Any amendments to the list must be provided in writing. We will only accept changes by phone in case of an emergency.

### **Release of a Child**

It is our policy to release a child to a parent or anyone designated as an approved person on the pick-up list. Parents may utilize a password and/or photo ID if they choose.

### **Release of a Child: Special Circumstances**

When There Is a Restraining Order on a Parent, it is our policy to release a child to either parent unless we have a copy of a court order prohibiting one of the parents from having custody of the child.

### **Child Guidance, Discipline, and Behavior Management**

Discipline provides an opportunity to enable a child to develop self-control and contributes to a positive learning environment. THE BIOME has established discipline guidelines for all children under our care.

The basis of discipline at THE BIOME is that the rules that have been established must be followed consistently among all staff members. The discipline philosophy is that children must respect themselves, others, and THE BIOME facility and equipment.

Defiance and disrespect toward staff members or volunteers is never acceptable. We all have responsibility to work diligently to help children learn to handle their problems and feelings in a productive way; however, we will not allow or support an atmosphere that encourages staff to accept abusive behavior at the hands of a child.

### **Some of the discipline techniques used at THE BIOME are:**

1. Guiding children by setting clear, consistent, fair limits
2. Valuing mistakes as learning opportunities
3. Redirecting children to more acceptable behavior or activity
4. Listening when children talk about their feelings and frustrations
5. Guiding children to resolve conflicts and modeling skills that help children to solve their own problems
6. Patiently reminding children of rules and their rationale as needed

### **Steps to resolve unacceptable student behavior**

1. Children are given a warning about their behavior.
2. Children are excusing from activities or classes; parents will be advised.
3. Suspension (1-3 days) and consultation with parents authorized and conducted by the Program Manager.

4. Expulsion from the program, authorized and conducted by the Program Manager and/or Director of Operations.

THE BIOME does not utilize corporal punishment as a form of discipline.

### **Lost and Found**

Parents with younger children should mark or tag any jackets or bags belonging to them. We will try to identify and return all loose items at the end of the day; however, any unclaimed items may be discarded or shipped to the Urban League, Red Cross, or the Salvation Army. Please be sure to check the lost and found at the front desk for missing items.

### **Health/Medical Conditions/Emergency Procedures**

Our staff includes personnel trained in first aid and CPR. In case of emergency, we use St. Louis Children's Hospital. If your child is injured while participating in program activities, we will make every attempt to contact you, or your emergency contacts as listed on the Health/Medical Conditions Form. If we cannot contact you, we have no choice but to contact emergency personnel to ensure that your child's health is protected. Any cost or fees arising from this procedure are the responsibility of the parent or guardian. PLEASE PROVIDE ALL OF THE CONTACT INFORMATION REQUESTED AND ADVISE INDIVIDUALS SERVING AS EMERGENCY CONTACT OF YOUR CHILD'S PARTICIPATION IN OUR PROGRAM.

Our staff is not trained to administer any type of medication. We will not administer prescription or over the counter medications under any circumstances. If your child needs medication at a specific time during the day, please try to schedule the dosages for times outside the program.

### **Illness and Communicable Disease**

Proactively addressing children who are showing signs of illness can prevent the spread of communicable disease. Children showing signs of illness, i.e., fever, unidentifiable rash, persistent cough, or vomiting, will be sent home as soon as possible. If your child exhibits any of these symptoms, please do not send them to the program. If a child is absent due to illness, parents should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Parents must inform if their child is absent due to illness.
- If the parent has informed us that their child has a contagious or communicable disease, we must notify other parents.
- Parents are asked to follow the medication procedure if a child needs medication.
- The Program Manager should be notified if a child's activities need to be restricted.

- A child should not return to the program until she/he is completely recovered, i.e., twenty-four hours on antibiotic, seven days after onset of chicken pox, twenty-four hours after fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.

### **Student Computer Usage**

The Internet is a wonderful tool when used for learning and exploration; however, the Internet is also a place of potential danger for children. For example, a child might type in an innocent word or mistype a word and become subject to thousands of websites – some of which may contain pornographic material.

At time, children may have access to iPads for use during the program; therefore, we must enforce stringent rules regarding the appropriateness of certain websites and web content. We have been entrusted to provide a wholesome and safe environment for young people and this includes protection from exposure to objectionable materials in any form.

Websites that are deemed inappropriate for viewing at THE BIOME include but are not limited to the following:

- contains any violence such as harm to others or oneself
- promotes intolerance to any other group because of race or religion or is part of a hate group
- glorifies the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs
- refers to sexual acts, homosexuality, or sexual chat, or has graphics that do so
- contains any curse words or foul language
- contains any nudity, partial or full
- contains any gambling
- games displaying gratuitous violence, gun play, blood, and gore
- games promoting rewards for negative behavior

The tough part is that kids do not always understand or agree with our definition of inappropriate; nevertheless, as a school-aged childcare provider, it is our job to intervene when necessary and even protect children from themselves.

THE BIOME maintains an Internet filter and proxy to filter websites and monitors Internet usage.

### **Child Pornography**

In cases where children may purposely or inadvertently access child pornography websites or receive child pornography via the Internet, we will immediately advise the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children at (800) 843-5678 to report the incident. Additionally, we will contact our local law enforcement agency or the FBI if your child has received child pornography via the Internet. Parents will also be notified.



### **Child Abuse**

The following steps will be taken by staff members in the case of alleged child abuse by staff members, administrators, or family members. Staff members at THE BIOME are mandated reporters for any suspected child abuse or neglect.

- Do not attempt to verify the information or conduct any investigation.
- Do not contact the alleged victim's parent(s).
- If appropriate, inform the Program Manager (note: if the child is in immediate danger, contact the police department).
- Along with the Program Director, you should contact DSS immediately upon receiving knowledge of the accusation. If this does not occur, contact DSS on your own.
- Once DSS has been contacted, the person who first gained knowledge of the abuse must make the report.
- Allow DSS to contact the parent(s) and investigate.
- THE BIOME must provide follow-up counseling when appropriate.
- Log all decisions.

### **INCIDENTS & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

The following is a description of THE BIOME's emergency procedures.

#### **Building Evacuation: Fire / Violence**

If you need to evacuate the building for any reason, the following actions should be taken:

1. Pull the fire alarm.
2. At the sound of the alarm, THE BIOME staff and volunteers should ensure that all children have exited from their assigned areas.
3. Immediately upon hearing the fire alarm, each designated "leader" of an assigned area will have his/her children form a line and exit the designated door.
4. The "leader" and children should proceed to the nearest designated meeting area.
5. The Program Manager should secure the daily attendance list. Roll should be taken as soon as all children and staff have moved to the appropriate area.
6. Call 911 to report the incident.
7. If a student is missing, the Program Manager should attempt to locate the missing student among the waiting groups outside. If the missing child is not located, notify the first responders immediately.
8. Under no circumstances should anyone re-enter the facility after the fire alarm rings.
9. All staff persons not working with children at the time the fire alarm sounds should check the restrooms in their immediate area and then evacuate the building.
10. No one should reenter the building until the "all-clear" signal is given by the Program Manager.

### Natural Disaster Emergency Procedures

When a natural disaster occurs, the following actions shall be taken inside the building.

1. The Program Manager will implement the drop action. Each student will:
  - a. Get under equipment (desk, table, etc.) where available. Otherwise, get next to an inside wall or under an inside doorway.
  - b. Drop to knees with back to the windows and knees together.
  - c. Clasp both hands firmly behind the head, covering the neck.
  - d. Bury face in arms, protecting the head. Close the eyes tightly.
  - e. Stay there until the procedures or emergency is over or until subsequent instructions are given. Such instructions will depend upon circumstances and the extent of damage to the buildings.
2. As soon as possible, teachers will move the children away from windows and out from under heavy suspended light fixtures.
3. Staff members will implement action to leave the building when the earthquake is over. Staff must ensure that children do not run or panic.

### Subsequent Emergency Procedures

1. Staff members will see that children avoid touching electrical wires that may have fallen.
2. Staff will render first aid until emergency medical workers have arrived.
3. The Program Manager and /or enrichment coach will take roll of the children.
4. The director will see that no one reenters for any reason until the buildings are declared safe.
5. The director will request assistance as needed, through appropriate channels, from the county or city civil defense office or fire and police departments.
6. The Program Manager will notify the President & CEO and a decision will be made whether to close the program.
7. Until the buildings are declared safe, the children and staff will remain outside until parents are notified and can arrange to pick up their children.