

QGPCA Kids' Club

PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

2022-2023

QGP Community
Association



QGPCA Kids' Club Parent/Guardian Handbook and Policies

Welcome Parents and Guardians!

This Parent Handbook is your guide to important details about the Kids' Club after school program along with helpful tips to make your child's experience the best possible. Please take the time to review the handbook and keep it handy throughout the year as a resource. You can also find a pdf copy on our website. along with other program updates at: <https://qualicum.org/programs/after-school-program/>

We believe that the Qualicum Graham Park Community Association (QGPCA) Kids' Club will provide your child with the opportunity for healthy growth and development and is a great way to make friends. We have designed our program to be age appropriate, safe and fun. We see parents as partners and welcome your comments and suggestions.

If you ever have questions, comments or concerns regarding registration, overall program structure, facilities, specific activities, safety, behaviour management strategies, staff issues, or other policies and procedures that are not covered in sufficient detail in this handbook, please contact me. I will be more than happy to answer all questions!

Sincerely,

Sarah Sumner, Program Director
Kids' Club After School Program
asp@qualicum.org
613-721-1409 (home)

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Communication

Cell Phone:

QGPCA Kids' Club Cell Phone: 613-501-6976

Please text us at the Kids' Club cell phone if:

1. Your child will not be attending the program that day.
2. If someone other than the usual individual will be picking up your child.
3. Someone who is not on the authorized pick up list will be picking up your child.

This phone stays at the community center and is checked for messages at 2:30 pm. Once the children arrive, our primary responsibilities are the safety and supervision of the children, but we will periodically check for messages until 5:30 pm.

Email:

Email will be the primary means of communication to families, including urgent messages such as last minute program closures. Please ensure we have an address that is checked frequently.

Absences:

If your child will be absent, it is important that you text us at the QGPCA Kids' Club cell phone as soon as you know they will be away. We cannot accept messages from siblings or friends as official notification.

Last Minute Program Closures:

In the unlikely event that the program can't run on a given day, parents will be notified as soon as possible of the closure. Every effort will be made to ensure that a responsible individual will meet the bus. Parents are encouraged to have a plan in place in case their child must be picked up immediately.

Newsletters:

We post our newsletters on the QGPCA website <https://qualicum.org/programs/after-school-program/> and email them to all families. These newsletters will contain essential information on the activities, special events and changes to the program.

Parent Contact:

All staff strive to maintain ongoing communication between the program and parents. Suggestions are welcomed and the Program Director would be happy to make time to discuss any concerns.

We will not tolerate aggressive or abusive comments or behavior directed at staff, volunteers or children. Such behaviours could result in the cancellation of your contract with us.

Program and Staff

The QPGCA Kids' Club after school program operates under the umbrella of the Qualicum Graham Park Community Association and the City of Ottawa. Our Program Director is responsible for creating innovative programming ideas for the participants in and supervising the program as a whole. The Program Director reports to the President of the Qualicum Graham Park Community Association, who can be reached at president@qualicum.org.

We select our supervisors, and youth staff with care, paying careful attention to their ability to serve as positive role models for your child. All adult supervisors have valid Vulnerable Sector Screening checks and there is always a certified First Aider on-site. All youth staff receive training in leading activities, emergency response, and QPGCA Kids' Club Policies and Procedures. Should you have any concerns, please contact the Program Director at asp@qualicum.org.

Fees

The QPGCA Kids' Club program fee is based on a ten month period, September to June, and is \$2500. The fee is split evenly over the ten months and is therefore \$250 per month per child regardless of how many days the child attends. Cheques should be made payable to "**QGP After Four Program**". We are unable to offer discounts for multiple children in one family.

Late Pickup Penalties and Procedures

After 5:30 pm, there is a late fee of \$20 for the first five minutes, and \$1 for each subsequent minute.
These penalties are strictly enforced.

At registration, all families are required to list on the registration form at least one alternative pickup plan for unforeseen circumstances, such as unusual traffic or imperative last minute job requirements. Once the parent/usual caregiver realizes they will be late, it is their responsibility to contact the individual(s) with permission to pick up listed on the registration form, and to text the QGPCA Kids' Club cell phone to inform us of the change in plans, and so we can reassure your child that someone is on their way.

After 5:30 pm, if a staff member is unable to reach a parent or guardian to ensure someone is on their way to pick up the child, they will then call the emergency contacts listed for the child and make all reasonable attempts to reach an alternate contact. If by 6:30 pm the staff is unable to contact a parent, caregiver or alternate pick up person, the Program Director will notify the authorities (Ottawa Police and/or the Children's Aid Society) that a child is left in a program with no contact by a parent or caregiver. The staff member will remain with the child until either a parent, guardian or local authority arrives.

Arrival and Departure

School Bus Registration:

Parents are responsible for organizing bus transportation to the QPGCA Kids' Club with the school their child attends. The buses stop at 48 Nanaimo Drive. We recommend you organize this well in advance since there is an application process.

Arrival Procedures:

One of our staff will meet the children as they disembark from their school bus to sign them in. If we have no record of a child being absent or late and they do not get off the bus, staff will then contact a parent/guardian. Staff will leave messages at each number until all contacts on file are attempted. If we cannot reach a parent/guardian, staff will contact the school to determine if the child was present during

the day and might have missed the bus. If we cannot reach the parents and the school confirms that the child should have been on the bus, a supervisor will initiate the procedure for a missing child, which may include contacting Ottawa Police Services.

Pickup and Departure Procedures:

Children must be signed out by the adult who is picking them up. Please also briefly connect with a staff member so that we are aware that your child has left the program. The daily sign-out sheet is outside the front door on a clipboard.

We will only release children to parents/legal guardians, Emergency Contacts and Alternative Pick-Up persons listed on the registration form. We will not release children into the care of anyone else without express consent from the parents/legal guardians and verified identification. If your child will be going home with someone who does not regularly pick them up, please text the Kids' Club cell phone to let us know. If the individual is not already on the authorized pickup list, please indicate the name, address and contact number of the authorized adult, and the date and time of pick up. Authorized adults unfamiliar to the staff must produce photo identification bearing the same address that the parents have provided.

Children may sign themselves out of our program only if the *Permission to Walk Home Alone* form is completed. If a parent wishes a child to stay at the program or park after the parent has signed the child out so that the child may walk home alone or with friends later, the *Permission to Walk Home Alone* form must be completed in advance. In the event that a situation falls outside of regular procedures, program staff will act in the best interest of the safety of the child.

Parking:

There is limited parking beside the QGP Community Centre and on Nanaimo Drive. Please keep the road in front of the Community Centre clear at all times for access by emergency vehicles.

Safety, Health and Emergency Procedures

Safety:

All children, parents, volunteers and staff involved in the Kids' Club program are asked to work together to create and maintain a safe, positive and respectful environment for all. Families are asked to review the *Kids' Club Code of Behaviour* with the child before the start of the program.

Health and Wellbeing:

Any child who is ill and unable to participate fully in regular activities should be cared for at home. Please review the *Kids' Club Health and Wellness Policy* for specific details.

Emergency Medical Situations:

There will always be a minimum of one certified First Aider with CPR on site. In addition, we have a fully stocked first aid kit on site dedicated to the QGPCA Kids' Club. In the event of an accident or medical emergency, primary first aid will be administered to the injured child by a supervisor. If the injury or illness is significant enough to warrant prompt medical attention, parents will be notified immediately and be asked to pick up their child promptly. If Emergency Medical Services are required, 9-1-1 will be called and parents will be contacted as soon as possible. A supervisor will complete an incident report.

Emergency Evacuation:

In the event of an emergency where the Community Centre must be evacuated, the designated meeting spot is the basketball court in Nanaimo Park. If necessary and feasible, staff will escort children to a nearby safe location. Once the children have reached safety, a supervisor will contact parents to provide detailed instructions on where to pick up children. To facilitate contacting multiple families quickly, the first contact with parents will be using the email distribution list, if possible. As always, the best way to contact us is via the QPGCA Kids' Club cell phone. During an emergency, if possible, please use text messaging, to keep the line free for urgent calls and to allow multiple families to contact us simultaneously. Furthermore, voice mail messages will not be checked, until the situation has stabilized.

Medication Administration:

Requests for the administration of prescribed medication will be reviewed by the Program Director and the QGPCA board of directors, and may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

A staff member administering oral medication or an EpiPen is acting according to policy and is covered by QPGCA's liability insurance.

Anaphylactic Allergies:

Children with an anaphylactic allergy must carry on their person or keep in their school bag an EpiPen. The QGPCA Kids' Club must also be provided with a second EpiPen to be stored securely on-site as a back-up. The QPGCA Kids' Club will implement strategies that reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic sources in programming spaces and the community centre. Individual information regarding children's allergies will be displayed in common staff areas. In a case where the child is displaying anaphylactic symptoms, a staff member will administer, or help the child administer their EpiPen and 9-1-1 will be called. The parents/guardians will be contacted as soon as possible.

Required Clothing

Indoor Shoes:

Children must have a pair of properly fitting indoor shoes to wear while they are at the QPGCA Kids' Club so they have footwear to protect their feet from indoor hazards and in the case of emergency evacuations. Shoes should give adequate protection outdoors in snow or rain. These shoes must be labelled with the child's name and be stored at the community centre. Flip flops, sandals, Crocs or slippers are not appropriate.

Dressing for the Weather:

Every day, in every season, we aim to spend a minimum of 60 minutes outside unless there are extreme weather conditions. It is imperative that children have clothing appropriate for the weather.

Early fall/late spring: Sun hats are recommended.

Late Fall/Early Spring: As appropriate for the day's conditions: coat or raincoat, waterproof splash pants and waterproof rain boots. Light mittens/gloves and hat/toque. Extra dry socks and mittens.

Winter: Warm coat, snow pants (mandatory), hat/toque, mittens (waterproof is best), neck gaiter/scarf. Extra dry socks and mittens.

Snacks and Water bottles

Snacks will **not** be provided by the program. Parents are strongly encouraged to pack additional nut-free snacks in their child's lunch. Litterless snacks are strongly encouraged. All garbage/packaging/uneaten food must be packed back into the lunch bag and taken home. The sharing of snacks, except between siblings, is strictly prohibited. Children are encouraged to have their own refillable water bottle.

We may occasionally offer special treats or snacks to the children in our program. Please ensure that we are aware of any special dietary needs and food allergies.

Please note, we will not serve nuts or other common allergens at the QGPCA Kids' Club, however, we are unable to guarantee an allergen free environment due to our facility being a community facility.

Toys and Electronics

Toys from Home Policy:

A variety of safe toys and equipment are available to the children at all times during the program. Due to both safety and security issues no toys from home are permitted at the program. Any items from home should remain in a child's backpack. This ensures that personal items are not lost, misused or broken, and relieves the staff and children of the additional responsibility of caring for the items. In the event that a personal item/toy is brought to the program, the program will not be held responsible for the loss or damage of items.

No Electronics Policy:

Electronic devices of any kind, including but not limited to phones, tablets and game consoles are not permitted to be used while at the program and must be kept in a child's bag at all times. If a staff member sees a child using a device, it will immediately be confiscated. The device will be returned to the parent at pick up time.

Labelling of Personal Items

Please ensure that all personal belongings are clearly labelled with your child's name. Staff members will make efforts to reunite those items clearly labeled with their owners. Unfortunately, we are unable to retain items beyond 30 days and all unclaimed items will be donated to charity.

First Day, Last Day, School Holidays

The program follows the Ottawa Carleton District School Board calendar when determining operational days. The first and last day of the program will be the first and last day of elementary school instruction at the OCDSB. The program will not operate during the OCDSB March Break and Christmas holiday period.

Special Days

Professional Development (PD) Days:

PD day programs, for OCDSB PD days, may be offered at the QPGCA Kids' Club provided there is staff availability and sufficient participation to make a program viable.

Snow Days:

If school buses are cancelled in Ottawa by OSTA (<http://www.ottawaschoolbus.ca/>) and the CSTO (<http://www.transportscolaire.ca/>), the Kids' Club program will not operate. In the unlikely event that school buses are running for only one of the two bus consortiums, the Kids' Club will run between 2:30 - 5:30 pm.

Behaviour Management

Our staff are dedicated to providing your child with a creative innovative program that will capture their interest and keep them engaged. We will always encourage children to have fun, play fairly, and to show respect for themselves and others.

Our overriding philosophy for behavior management encompasses these guiding principles:

1. The use of positive child behavior management practices.
2. Engaging with children with an open-minded perspective to determine root causes of the negative behaviours, and collaborating to find solutions.
3. Seeking and engaging parent involvement.

Please review the **QGPCA Kids' Club Code of Behaviour** with your child before the start of the program.

Withdrawal Policy

Two months written notice from parents to the Program Director is required to withdraw a child from the program.

While we strive to meet the needs of all children, we recognize that there may be situations where an individual child's behaviour poses a safety risk to themselves or others, or is disruptive for the other children. The Program Director may therefore take any or all of the following actions:

1. Document the incident(s), and inform the parents
2. Meet with the parent(s) to discuss concerns and develop a plan of action, including a timeline
3. Monitor and evaluate strategies
4. Provide two weeks' notice of discharge, or if required, provide immediate notice of discharge

All concerns related to the safety of an individual child or the group will be addressed quickly. Safety concerns may include inappropriate physical contact (i.e., biting, hitting), verbal disrespect towards others (including profanity), leaving the program area without permission, or the throwing of objects.

Waitlist Policy

We maintain a waitlist on a first come first served basis with priority given to families with other children currently registered in the program, then families living in the neighbourhood. We update our waitlist annually by confirming with parents that they wish to remain on the list and confirming contact information.

Matters of Custody

Parents are asked to provide the QGPCA Kids' Club with the details of any agreements for shared or joint custody. In cases where custody is granted to one parent only, and the QGPCA Kids' Club has been

provided with a copy of the court order, the Program Director will take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized access to a participant by their parent, including contacting the police for assistance and intervention. It is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to notify the Program Director with respect to any changes to custody or access rights and to provide the Program Director with a copy of the most recent applicable separation agreement or court order at the earliest opportunity.

Legislative and Regulatory Framework

The QGPCA Kids' Club is an Authorized Recreational and Skill Building Program, as laid out in the Child Care and Early Years Act. It is authorized by the service system manager (in this case, the City of Ottawa) to offer child care in their service area because the program can demonstrate to the service system manager that it offers programming that supports the health, safety, and wellbeing of children.