

St Margaret's
Summer Camp
Counselor Handbook
2024



Summer Camp Counselor Policies 2024

Professional Expectations

- All necessary paperwork must be completed and signed before the start of camp. You will not be able to begin working without your background clearance and fingerprinting being complete.
- All counselors 16 and older must be CPR certified to work with the children. Safety is our number one priority.
- Cell phone use is not allowed when working with children. Phones must be silent and left in the classroom cabinet. Only leads may have their phone on them at all times in case of an emergency and to take photos. **You may use your cellphone during lunch breaks only.**
- Respect your leads and each other. Communicate if there is a problem. Be proactive and create a positive work environment by having a positive attitude. If you are uncomfortable addressing a problem with the lead, please talk to Taylor or Aleshia.
- No gossip will be tolerated. Talking negatively about other counselors and/or children is not allowed.
- Watch your language and the verbiage that you use with each other and around the children at all times. Little ears are always listening.

Dress code

- SMDS t-shirts must be worn every Monday and Friday. You can wear any SMDS gear that you own. The blue tie dye t-shirts must be worn on field trips.
- Dress appropriately at all times: shorts must be fingertip length, no visible bra straps and no mid sections showing. Shoes must be closed toed. Wide strap tanks are allowed.

Arrival and Departure

- Arrive at the time that is indicated to you. Start work immediately upon arriving. This is not a time to socialize. Ask a lead what needs to be done to be prepared for the day.
- **If you are going to be late/absent please call or text Taylor by 7 am. (410)-858-0015**
- Your work day ends at the time indicated to you. Check with your lead before leaving to ensure that everything is taken care of for the start of the next day.

Discipline

There will never be any yelling or demeaning of any child at any time. Use redirection and gentle reminders to encourage children to make the right choices. If you have a continuous problem with a child, please ask senior staff or the Director for assistance. Physical and/or psychological abuse of any kind will not be tolerated.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

All school personnel are required to report known or suspected abuse of children to the appropriate state authorities. Reports may be made confidentially or anonymously. Any staff member who reports suspicions of child abuse/neglect are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action, unless it is proven the report was intended to do harm. In addition to

reporting to the state authorities, school personnel are required to report any suspected or known abuse of children or youth that may have been perpetrated by school personnel directly to the Director so that immediate and proper steps may be taken. A personnel member who is reported or suspected of child abuse of any type will be placed on administrative leave or reassigned to a task that does not involve direct interaction with children. This process and procedure must be held in strict confidence to protect the child as well as the accused.

Health and Safety

Stay with children at all times. They are never to be left alone. This means being attentive with your eyes and ears.

Handwashing must occur:

- Before snack and lunch
- When coming in from outside
- After using the restrooms for both counselors and children
- After diaper changing

Tables and counters must be wiped down every morning and afternoon, and in between each activity. Vacuum the carpets at the end of the day. Pay attention to allergies: All epi-pens must follow the child in the emergency bag throughout the day.

In Camp Emergency Procedures

Accident/Illness

Parents will be notified the day of the accident/illness using the incident form provided by the Childcare Administration of the state of Maryland, and the parent will be called if immediate medical attention is necessary. If a child must be transported to Anne Arundel Medical Center by ambulance, or is seen by a family doctor for an injury which occurred during camp, it must be reported to the Childcare Administration and MDH by the Director within 24 hours of the incident.

Fire Drills and Fire Safety Procedures

Fire drills will be held at regular intervals during the summer in compliance with the fire department of Anne Arundel County standards. Campers are taught appropriate procedures and proper behavior during fire drills. Under no circumstances should an attempt be made to put out a fire. Exit the building as quickly as you can. Extinguishers should only be used to aid exit.

Code Red Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency situation when we are told by first responders not to exit the building, we have created safe rooms throughout the interior. Counselors have been drilled on the procedure to ensure the safety of the students.

If warranted, upon exiting, or securing a safe room, and accounting for each student and staff person, a phone chain will be initiated. We will attempt to call home, work and/or a mobile

phone number. In the event a shelter in place is needed, all camp groups will be moved to the interior safe rooms of the school.

ST MARGARET'S DAY CAMP FIRE EVACUATION PLAN

In the event of a fire emergency, the following protocol is to be followed:

1. Counselors are to line up their classes quickly and head to the exits indicated on the plan by each door.
2. Counselors are to take the camper list and first aid bag with them when exiting.
3. Counselors are to walk their classes to the fence at the back of the playground area as quickly, quietly, and safely as possible.
4. Counselors are to take attendance, count the children and keep children calmly lined up until the emergency has been handled.
5. In the event of a campus evacuation, counselors will begin calling campers parents. All campers will be moved to the field adjacent to the school.

Exits are as follows:

1. Classroom back doors
2. Front foyer doors
3. Back stairwell door
4. Director will make sure everyone is out of bathrooms

Director will signal the staff and children back into the building after it is deemed safe to re-enter, or will make sure all parents are called for dismissal of their children. If the building cannot be re-entered, and the parents can't be reached in a timely manner, the remaining children will be taken into the Church, the administration building or remain in the adjacent field.

Supplies

- Do not waste supplies. Be careful not to overpour supplies or snacks. You can always get more if needed. Be sure to replace all lids on glue, markers, and paint bottles.
- In the workroom, there is plenty of scrap paper for free art/drawing. Try to get as much use out of this paper as possible. If you run out of scrap paper for free drawing, please use printer paper from the office. Return all supplies to their appropriate place at the end of the day. It is important to keep them organized for efficiency and inventory.
- Let someone in the office know if a supply is running low. This includes craft and snack supplies.

Snacks and Lunch

The snack calendar for the children must be followed every day. Clean up any mess that you make while preparing snacks: wash bowls, vacuum/sweep the floor, wipe tables, etc. Do not eat the snacks that are provided for the children. Snacks are provided for the counselors in the staff room or bring snacks from home. Do not eat in front of the children if they are not eating.

Lead counselors will decide on a lunch schedule at the beginning of the week for everyone. Clean up after yourself in the staff room and please do not leave a mess behind. Stay within your 30 minute lunch break.

All food must be nut free: Children and counselor lunches/snacks must be nut free and made in a nut free facility. Any items that come in with nuts need to be sent home with a reminder slip to the parents that we are a nut free campus.

Activity Planning

A craft should be made/worked on each day that matches the weekly theme. Plan activities that are engaging and fun for the children. A newsletter must be sent home every week. Take pictures of the children each day to send home with the newsletter, to place on the bulletin board and school website. Please take a variety of individual and group photos. At least two photos should be sent home at the end of the week for each camper.

Areas of Play

Water Tables/Blacktop Play: Must be filled up each day. The items will be brought in at the end of every afternoon.

During Outdoor Play:

- Spread Out
- Minimize socializing: Save it for lunch/end of the day
- Bring water bottles
- Keep the children entertained and safe
- Take items out of the shed everyday: sandbox toys, soccer nets, building supplies, chalk

Bug Spray/Sunscreen permission form must be signed by the parent at the beginning of the week. Bug spray should be applied to the children throughout the day as needed, and sunscreen must be applied to the children at least once during the day. Please make sure you are applying the bug spray and sunscreen on the children outside, not in the building.

Field Trips

For off campus field trips, the counselors and children will be transported by bus. All staff are instructed to headcount their children when they are getting on the bus, before the bus departs, when they arrive at the field trip destination, upon reloading the bus, before the bus departs and once arriving back at the school. Make sure that the children are showing good manners and being respectful while at the destination. Stay in your groups and make sure to count the children and monitor their behavior at all times. Children may never use the bathroom alone. Male counselors go with the boys and female counselors go with the girls in public bathrooms. Campers will wear green SMDS shirts on all field trips, counselors must wear their blue tie dye shirts on field trips.