



PARENT HANDBOOK

2026

WELCOME TO BRIARWOOD DAY CAMP

We are very excited that you have chosen to have your camper spend the summer at Briarwood. For those of us who went to camp as kids, we know what a transformative experience camp can be. For those who are less familiar with camp, wait until you see what we can do. We appreciate the trust you've put in us.

This Parent Handbook will give you at least an outline for your camper's summer. We are in the human being business and, accordingly, we place the greatest emphasis on your child's growth during the summer – socially, emotionally, athletically, artistically and intellectually. We want to help create strong, independent, kind, well-adjusted leaders. We believe that Briarwood is the perfect place to nurture these qualities.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe that camp is great for kids.

We believe in our fresh air, our 30 acres and our three swimming pools.

We believe in our superlative staff.

We believe that camp is a form of outdoor learning and kids can learn as much about themselves in two months of camp as they do during the school year.

We believe that camp friends are friends for life.

WHAT WE KNOW

Briarwood is the place to be!

CAMP DATES AND TIMES

The first day of camp will be Monday, June 22. Camp will be closed on Friday, July 3. The last day of camp will be Friday, August 14. The camp day begins at 9:30 am. Everyone is dismissed by 3:30 pm.

WHEN YOU WILL HEAR FROM US IN JUNE

You will be receiving a call from your camper's counselor and driver between June 7th and June 15th. In addition to introducing themselves, your camper's counselor and driver will each ask you about your child, whether your child has any allergies and if there is anything else that he or she should know. Please be forthcoming. We also ask our counselors in this phone call to confirm the weeks that your camper will be attending camp for their own records. During these calls, you should feel free to discuss any concerns about your child or about camp.

TRANSPORTATION – HOW IT WORKS

It is quite a logistical undertaking to plan transportation for so many children.

First and foremost, when it comes to transportation, we want to get our campers to Briarwood safely and in a timely manner. Depending on where they live, our campers are assigned to either a van or a staff driver. Drivers orient their passengers to safety procedures in the vehicle.

We always try to accommodate the transportation needs of all of our families. We cannot guarantee which driver will pick up your child. Also, while we will consider all transportation requests, we cannot guarantee specific pickup or drop off times or accommodate transportation placement based on friendships or other social groupings. Please **DO NOT** ask your driver to change his or her route or adjust your child's pick up or drop off time. Those requests need to go through the office. We will help you if we can.

If you find that you have a need for extended care, Briarwood continues to offer excellent before and after care programs at camp.

If you will be driving your camper into camp in the morning, please arrive no later than 9:15 am. If you will be driving your camper home, please arrive no later than 3:15 pm. We count on your timely arrival to ensure that Briarwood's overall arrival and dismissal goes smoothly. Please remain in your car when you arrive.

If you are picking up your camper for an early dismissal, you must be at camp before 3:00 pm.

For insurance and logistical reasons, we cannot coordinate transportation swaps for play dates. If you have a transportation change that needs to be made, please contact the office. Our Briarwood drivers cannot authorize or coordinate transportation changes. Please do not ask your driver to accommodate a driving change – it puts them in a very awkward position because they are not permitted to do so.

WHAT TO BRING TO CAMP

Campers and parents are always concerned about what they will need at camp. In general, the philosophy of "less is more" applies when packing your bag for the day.

The following is a list of items that will help your child have a safe and enjoyable summer: **TWO BATHING SUITS, a TOWEL, a HAT, SUNSCREEN and a SMALL BACKPACK or DUFFLE BAG (Briarwood bags are always great!). If your camper is a Busy Bee, you will also need to send a clean change of clothes for your child to go home in every day. Some counselors may have special requests or suggestions and they will communicate those to you during their initial phone conversation.**

The following items should be left at camp for the summer: **Change of clothes** in case of rain during the day, **rain gear, old sneakers** and a **sweatshirt** for those cool days.

We discourage the wearing of Crocs, flip flops and sandals because they have limited support and may cause injuries. We ask that our campers wear socks and sneakers to camp every day and that they wear them for all activities.

You may wish to send water bottles and you are, of course, free to do so. However, please know that Briarwood has many water stations throughout the camp. Also, Briarwood will supply all the sports equipment needed for camp activities but some prefer to bring their own softball glove or tennis racket. Remember, the more your child brings to camp, the more your child is capable of losing. We cannot be responsible for items lost, stolen or damaged at camp. Accordingly, **please, Please, PLEASE clearly label everything with your child's name. Use a waterproof marker.** You should have your stuff!

The following items are **NOT** permitted to be used in camp, please leave them at home—they dilute the Briarwood experience: Cell Phones • Electronic Games • iPads • MP3 Players. Smart watches are

permitted but not for communication purposes. Briarwood will not be responsible for broken, damaged, lost, stolen or missing electronics.

To explain a bit more about our electronics policy, in addition to the fact that electronics inhibit our mission for the kids to unplug and enjoy the outdoors, we also are working to foster our campers' growth, social skills and independence. We find that if your child is "retreating" into his/her electronics or reaching out to you during the day (in a non-emergency situation), that inhibits your child's growth. If for some reason your child feels an immediate need to speak with you during the camp day, his or her counselor will notify us at the office.

*Again, we want to unplug our campers and help them grow. Please partner with us. Please let your camper know our "unplugged" policy. If, for some reason, your camper is bringing an electronic device to camp, please encourage him or her to leave it in the bunk during the camp day. **Please please please do not ask your camper to carry around his/her/their phone so you can text during the day or so you can expedite an early dismissal.***

Additionally, while this is hopefully obvious, the following items are prohibited at Briarwood Day Camp: drugs, alcohol, smoking, vaping, tobacco and weapons. And if there's something else you want to ask us about, please do.

OFFICE HOURS / EARLY AND LATE CARE

The office is open from 7:45 am to 4:00 pm. Briarwood provides early and late care for a small cost. Please call us if you are interested in this service. Early care begins at 7:30 am and late care ends at 6:00 pm. We know that our parents have busy schedules; we ask that camp families respect the opening and closing times – in our experience, even longer days due to dropping off before 7:30 am or picking up after 6:00 pm can be very hard for our campers.

ATTENDANCE AT BRIARWOOD

Please call your camper's driver if your child will be out sick or if there are any other changes that need to be made to your camper's transportation (e.g. arriving late or leaving early).

You may decide that you want to extend your child's time at Briarwood or that you need to make other arrangements. Please call the office to do so – we have found that using our campers' drivers as go betweens does not work well.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL DURING THE CAMP DAY

When our campers arrive each morning, they go directly to their lineup area. At the beginning of camp, we have many staff members available to help our campers get to where they need to be (and things will become second nature after a few days). Likewise, we dismiss from lineup to the vehicles at the end of the day. If you provide transportation for your own camper(s), please remain at your vehicle.

Busy Bees are escorted in the morning by Briarwood staff to the picnic area where they are greeted by Busy Bee staff. At the end of the day, Busy Bees are met by their drivers in the picnic area for dismissal to the vehicles. For families that provide their own transportation, our staff will meet your Busy Bee at

your vehicle in the morning and our staff will bring your Busy Bee to your vehicle in the afternoon. Please remain in your vehicle (and thank you for your understanding).

If you know in advance that you are unable to pick up your child and you are sending another individual to do so, please send a note to camp in the morning with your child. The note must state the driver's name. Please make the driver aware that we will be asking to see his or her driver's license. If you have a last minute change (and we know that these things happen), please call the camp office. This call must come from the parent or guardian and not the alternate driver.

If you are picking your child up early from camp, we recommend sending a note in the morning so we can try to have them ready at the appropriate time. Gathering campers' belongings and getting them ready to leave can take some time, especially if they are in the pool, at the top of the rock wall or out on a boat. Lastly, please tell your driver in the morning that your child will be leaving camp early.

NURSES AND PUBLIC HEALTH

We have nurses at camp. Our nurses assess campers' health, treat campers as appropriate and dispenses necessary medication. We do not ask staff other than our nurses to dispense medication.

So we can best care for your child, we need completed health forms for each Briarwood camper before camp starts. This form is available on our website and is necessary for your child's care and safety. If you have not already done so, please complete this form at your earliest opportunity.

Camp runs best when there are no surprises. If your child has a health (or any other) issue, please make sure that the office knows about it by noting it on your child's health form. If you have additional comments, please feel free to call us. We may call you if we feel we need further clarification. If you feel that you need to speak with our nurse prior to camp, please call the office and we can schedule an appointment or a phone call.

Some parents decide that they want to give their child a "vacation" from their medications during the summer. **THIS IS A VERY BAD IDEA.** Your child may have a very difficult time thriving without medication. Please help us give your camper the best summer we can by keeping your child on his or her medications over the summer.

During camp, we will have a tent outside of the health center where we will do intake and an initial assessment of all health issues (injuries and medications as well as sickness). Based upon medical needs, campers will be treated outside, will go inside the nurse's office or will go to a designated quarantine area.

Please do not send your camper to camp if he/she is not feeling well. This puts others at risk.

We will ask camp families to immediately pick up any camper who develops a fever during the day.

If your camper needs medication during the camp day, we need you to do two things: (1) fill out and return the Permission to Medicate form on our website and return it to us at your earliest opportunity; and (2) either before camp or on the first day, send in your child's medication in a Ziploc bag with any instructions. If the medications are coming in on the first day, please give that Ziploc bag to your child's driver (if you drive your child, bring it in yourself). All medications must go directly to the nurse and must be clearly marked in their original containers. Children and other staff should not administer any medications.

Since this is camp, children sometimes get hurt during the day. This is normal. We will call you if we believe your child has a relatively significant injury or if your camper is sick.

CAMP SCHEDULE

The camp day starts with lineup at 9:30 and we dismiss at 3:30. Our camp day is divided into 9 periods (our Busy Bees effectively have 8 periods in a camp day – they wind down during 9th period). Campers are divided into bunks. Each bunk aged 3 through 7th grade swims twice a day. Our 8th and 9th graders (CITs) and 10th graders (Super CITs) swim at least once a day. Our bunks rotate through other pre-scheduled activities during the rest of the camp day. Since we are always on the go, please make sure your child has a good breakfast each morning.

FOOD AND DRINK AT BRIARWOOD

Briarwood serves lunch as well as an afternoon snack each day. We post our menu on our website (<https://www.briarwooddaycamp.com/current-families/lunch-menu/>). Our lunches are standard camp/school fare (but we like to think it's better and healthier!). We also serve fresh fruit for dessert with every lunch. In addition to whatever is being served for lunch, we always have salad, peanut butter and jelly and cheese sandwiches available. Yogurt will be available every day as well.

We are not a peanut free camp. We have a peanut free table at lunch where kids can eat with friends if they are allergic.

PLEASE – NO SUNFLOWER SEEDS! NO GUM! They create trash, they get stuck in pool filters, they're bad for camp. Thank you for your understanding and for communicating this to your camper.

We love to celebrate our campers' birthdays at camp and you are welcome to bring in a birthday treat if you choose. Due to the pervasive number of allergies though, please bring in only **nut-free** birthday treats. Please send the birthday treats to camp with your camper in the morning.

We have water barrels and cups available for our campers and staff. You are free to send your camper to Briarwood with a water bottle if you wish.

KINDNESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Just as in school, we want to make Briarwood a safe, fun place for kids to grow and learn. Please partner with us and discuss with your camper ideas such as being a good friend, practicing social

inclusion and why bullying harms all of us. All campers and all staff have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. If your camper texts or is on social media, please discuss the positives and negatives of texting and posting and reinforce the idea that the same kinds of things that may not be acceptable to post during the school year may not be acceptable at camp, either.

VISITATION POLICY

We love when camp families come to visit! We have a few guidelines. Camp is open for visitation during weeks 4 through 7 (Monday, July 13 through Friday, August 7) from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm. You will be checked in at the security gate and then asked to go to the office where you will be asked to sign in. Please knock on the office door and someone will come out to meet you and sign you in. Please do not go into the office. After you sign in, you will be told where your camper is.

We want you to see your camper and your camper will be very happy to see you. We ask that you be a passive visitor – please do not interject yourself into the bunk’s activity because it can be disruptive and distracting. Also, it may upset other campers whose parents aren’t at camp. Likewise, for similar reasons, we ask that you avoid eating lunch with your child’s bunk. If you are watching your child swim, you must do so from outside the gated area, where you will have a very good view.

Please DO NOT go into any buildings in camp. Also, to speak colloquially – and also literally - as we still deal with the physical and psychological fall out from the early 2020s – please stay out of other campers’ faces. Please limit your stay to 90 minutes.

When you are done your visit, please sign out at the office. If you are taking your child with you, PLEASE TELL THE OFFICE. We need to know where our campers are before we dismiss at the end of the day.

BRIARWOOD T-SHIRT

All campers get a Briarwood shirt during their first week of camp. We also have an online camp store. <https://www.packforcamp.com/collections/briarwood-logowear-store>.

PICTURE DAYS

Our “main” picture day will be Thursday, June 25 in the morning. Your child’s photo will be taken and the bunk photo will be taken that day as well. These photos will be provided to you and are part of the camp tuition. Our makeup picture day will be Thursday, July 23 in the morning. Individual photos of campers who missed the first session will be taken on that date.

BRIARWOOD BUGLES

One of the main ways that we stay in touch with our camp families during camp is through our weekly newsletter, the Briarwood Bugle. The Bugles give a brief (and hopefully entertaining) recap of what happened that week, what’s happening in the future and other things you will want to know. We send them home with our campers every Friday. Because we realize that these Bugles somehow don’t always make it home (because we have kids too), we also post the Bugles to our website (<https://www.briarwooddaycamp.com/news/>).

TRIPS

CITs and Super CITs will go on numerous trips and a list of these trips and their respective dates will be made available shortly before camp begins. All trips are subject to change. For ALL trips, we ask that your camper wear a Briarwood shirt. If you find that you need additional shirts, they are available for purchase for \$15 at the camp office.

Our campers (and staff) are expected to act like normal, appropriate, respectful human beings while on camp trips – and while in camp too. We trust you have these same expectations. Please share them with your child.

Unless we hear from a camp family to the contrary, we will presume that our campers have permission to attend each trip and each intercamp sport event.

ONE OTHER THING

We are always curious whether people read all the way through this Parent Handbook. If you are one of the first five camp parents to call our office (215) 598-7143 and say “I read the Parent Handbook and I want my prize,” we’ll give you a Briarwood Prize Pack! First time winners only, please.

AND FINALLY . . .

We are looking forward to a great summer!