

Waits River Valley School

After-school Programming



Family Handbook
2025-2026

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Welcome to the Waits River Valley School After-school Program



Our program is a center-based, State-licensed After-school Program located at the Waits River Valley School serving children In grades K-5 (potentially add PreK?) who reside in the towns of Corinth and Topsham. The program consists of a public Kindergarten-fifth grade support from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The program is led by certified teachers and support staff personnel.

The program is licensed through the State of Vermont, Department of Children and Families, Child Development Division. A copy of licensing regulations are available to anyone interested and can also be accessed online at www.dcf.state.vt.us/cdd/. Reports and notices regarding our licensing will be posted in the school office.

welcome

Waits River Valley School After-school Staff

Classroom Staff:

WRVS current teachers and support staff

Other WRVS Staff:

Carlotta Perantoni, Principal

Carla Horniak, Nurse

Lisa Thompson, Office



Philosophy

We believe that high-quality after-school programs provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive development of children, while responding to the needs of families.

We believe that child-initiated, child-directed, teacher-supported play is essential to quality education young children. Our program is designed to foster a trusting relationship that allows and encourages children to make choices, develop preferences, take initiative, risk failure, set an independent course for problem-solving, and accept help without sacrificing independence.

We believe that working with the families is an integral part in the child's healthy development. Through working with parents and collaborating with other community agencies, the needs of the child can best be met. Fostering a good relationship with parents is of utmost importance to us. It is through this nurturing of the whole child and the family that we seek to provide an after-school program that will encourage the optimal growth and development of each child.

All K-5 WRVS (moving/adding PreK) children are welcome in the program and we will make all efforts to offer accommodations and modifications that assist your child as needed to fully participate in after-school programming. We are able to differentiate our instruction in order to include all students throughout the program schedule. If you have any concerns about your child's development please do not hesitate to talk to the Director.

Our curriculum balances child-initiated exploration with purposeful teacher-directed activities, addressing the developmental needs of the whole child. In our after-school program, children engage in experiences that integrate the Arts, Literature, Movement, and Discovery within a social context that supports the development of self-regulation, cooperation, and self-confidence.

Goals

The primary goals of the Waits River Valley School After-school Program are to:

- Provide an environment that respects children.
- Foster the development of positive self-esteem and social emotional growth.
- Support and promote positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Plan and implement a wide variety of multi-age and multi-level materials and activities.
- Offer opportunities for scholar's active exploration of their environment through play.
- Maintain confidentiality surrounding children and their families.
- Strengthen the relationship between families and school.
- Support scholars for their generalization of skills through extended learning activities, motor control, and socialization.

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to a family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest, and responsibility of the child in our care.

Enrollment

Children whose parents or legal guardians are residents of Topsham or Corinth, VT are eligible to enter the after-school program.

The enrollment process is completed with our school registrar/secretary. After all registration paperwork has been submitted, the director/school will be in contact with you to confirm your child's participation date(s). Weekly/daily changes may/will occur, but each week's attendance will be secured by the Friday prior to the coming week.

Children who are consistently enrolled in the program will maintain his or her enrollment status until notification of a family need change. We have a 1:13 scholar/staff ratio of support. Priority is given to students who fall into the "at-risk" category.

Definition of "At-Risk" Children

- Children who are developmentally delayed by at least 25% of their chronological age in one or more of the five developmental domains (language, social-emotional, cognitive, physical or adaptive).
- Children who are on an IEP or have transitioned from CIS.
- Children who are from a non-English speaking family or are ELL.
- Children who are economically disadvantaged (at 185% of Federal poverty guidelines).
- Children who have a history of abuse, neglect or family violence.

Enrollment Files

According to Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations (3.4.4 Children's Files), the following information must be in an onsite file at the Waits River Valley School After-school program/Center.

3.4.4.1 - The program director shall maintain a complete and up-to-date enrollment file on-site for each child enrolled in the Vermont Center Based Child Care and Preschool Programs (CBCCPP). A complete file shall contain at minimum the following information:

- A completed child's admission form signed and dated by the parent
- The child's name, current home address, and current home telephone number; (WRVS registration form.) If any change to this information occurs, please notify a staff member as it is imperative that we have up-to-date contact information on file.

- Identification of child's home language; (WRVS registration form)
- The child's date of birth; (WRVS registration form)
- Name, address, and all applicable current telephone numbers for parents; (WRVS registration form)
- Name, address, and all applicable current telephone numbers for at least two (2) other people designated by the parents as emergency contacts; (WRVS registration form)
- Names for all persons authorized to pick the child up from the CBCCPP; (WRVS registration form)
- A description of any special medical, developmental, emotional, or educational needs of the child including allergies, existing illnesses or injuries, previous serious illnesses or injuries and any prescribed medication including those for emergency situations; (WRVS health form)
- Written authorization from the parent for the CBCCPP to be able to obtain emergency medical care and transportation; (WRVS registration form)
- Child's immunization record or Vermont Department of Health approved exemption document as required in the rules in section 5.1.3 of VCCL regulations; (on file with WRVS school registration)
- If applicable, a copy of court orders on custody and visitation arrangements as required in the rule 3.6.4 of VCCL regulations;
- If applicable, any obvious injuries discovered and documented on daily health check as required in the rule 5.3.2 of these VCCL regulations.

Fees and Payment

The Waits River Valley School After-school Program is a charge by daily attendance program, with payment necessary at the start of each academic week. Payments will be made to the front office, with a written receipt given to parents each time payment is received.

Daily Fees:

Daily Rates for Regular After-school Program: \$10.00 per day each Child, or subsidy certificate with co-payment if you have one.

Afterschool Hours of Operation and Calendar

The Waits River Valley School After-school Program follows the Waits River Valley School calendar included in the WRVS Parent/Student Handbook and online, with a first week of school delay and ending the last full day of school in the spring. January of each year will be an opportunity for you to complete a parent/family survey, assisting us in the design of our goals and action planning for the current programming as well as the upcoming school year. Please see the after-school newsletters or blog for additional dates the program is closed.

Daily Schedule

Each day, your child will have choice time, teacher-directed time, physical activity and snack/dinner (meal). Please see your child's teacher for more specific information about the classroom schedule. Every effort will be made to have educational play and motor activities outside daily; please be sure your child comes to after-school programming dressed accordingly. We will have daily extended time outside for organized and social activities.

An example schedule:

3:00-4:00- Outside/Inside movement- gross motor/socialization- meal/snack

4:00-4:45- Activity (games, art, music, theme- rotation of K-2, 3-5 groups)

4:45-5:00- Read aloud (by developmental groups- but all having readaloud)

5:00- exit

Attendance

The daily schedule is carefully planned to provide varied experiences. Please notify the school office at 439-5534 when your child will be absent from the after-school program. Arrival and dismissal will be at the main school entrance.

Release

Children will only be released to parents, legal guardians, or others authorized by the child's parents or legal guardian. All families should have a current release form on file; valid identification which includes a photograph will be required. **Adults must sign their children in and out each day in the book located by the doorway to the school.**

Emergency School Closing/Delay

WRVS has adopted an electronic notification system whereby families will be notified of such events as school closings, and other emergencies deemed appropriate by the school administration. The success of this program is completely dependent on accurate and updated contact information provided to the school by families. Additionally, closure or delayed opening will be posted on WCAX. If the school is closed/early release, after-school programming will be cancelled for that day.

Emergencies

The Waits River Valley School After-school Program follows the Emergency Response Plan created by the school's safety team. Please contact the Principal if you have any questions.

Safety of Children

- Children will be actively supervised by a staff member at all times throughout the program.
- The outside play area will be supervised so that all children are visible to a member of the teaching staff at all times. Children will be actively supervised going to and coming from the outside play area and the classroom.
- A monthly fire drill will be held.

- A yearly lockdown, evacuation, and emergency safety drill will be held.
- Emergency Operation Plans/Crisis Plans are located in each classroom in the event of an active intruder or any other emergency
- Parents will be notified of the full evacuation and lockdown by the teacher and/or the Principal.
- A staff member trained in first aid, CPR, and recognition of the communicable disease is available at all times. A first aid kit is always on-site.
- If a child becomes ill, they may be sent to the Nurse's room with a staff member overseeing them. They will remain with a staff member until a parent or caregiver comes to get them.

Sharing Information

Young children are often affected by events and changes in their environment. Children may not be able to express their feelings or relay significant information. In order to help your child deal with changes, please keep us informed of any events such as:

- Illness or hospitalization of family members.
- Pregnancies and births.
- Deaths of family members or close friends.
- Changes in family structure within the home.
- Plans for moving.
- Extra stimulation such as visitors or celebrations.

Note: As staff members, we are unable to share information regarding the details of the day with grandparents, aunts, uncles, babysitters, or other people who may pick up your child. All that staff is allowed to share relates to the type of day the child had. You must have a release signed to provide details to the person requested.

Confidentiality

All records concerning children at our program are confidential and will only be released with a parent/guardian's written consent.

Snack/M meal

Afterschool programming participants will be served a snack/light meal while at school. For the 2025-2026 school year, this snack/**meal from our cafeteria will be offered FREE to all children and we encourage every child to participate.** During meal times we work on conversation skills, manners, and talking about nutrition. Children who are 'picky eaters' at home will often try new foods and expand their palate while in a group setting. We will talk about being adventurous eaters and why we don't want to "yuck someone's yum." Research shows that young children need up to 15 tries of a new food before they decide that they like it and eating while at school is a great way to foster healthy food choices. We ask families to **NOT send in food from home, unless your child has a medical need.**

Water Bottle

A water bottle will be provided for each afterschool participant, if needed.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy you must notify us in writing. Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician. Epi-pens and other medications need to go through the school nurse. A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

Birthdays

Sometimes parents send special snacks for birthday celebrations (or other special occasions); these are very welcome. Please let the staff know ahead of time so that we can accommodate children with allergies and special diets.

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: outdoor play, creative expression activities, small and large group game activities, etc. We will play outdoors for 45 minutes to an hour on most days and children need to have outer gear for the season. Please see the teacher if you need support in gathering winter or seasonal gear.

Please send a change of clothing (labeled with your child's name) with your child to be stored at school. We have extra clothing in case of accidents. Please wash and return them to us if your child borrows them.

Toys from Home

Toys from home should not be brought to the program. If a child does bring a toy from home, they will be asked to keep it in their backpack until exit time. However, we understand that certain items (blankets etc.) are developmentally appropriate and function as a security item. If your child has an item like this, please let the staff know, and it may be brought to the program until your child is ready for a gentle parting.

Family Involvement

We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program and we believe parent participation is a vital component of a child's school experience. Parents provide valuable input that helps to ensure a successful transition between home and school. Parents are encouraged to become actively involved.

- Parents and teachers work together to create a goal for the best interest of the student.
- Transition due to a move or major change in the family's life can be written into a plan at a conference or a scheduled meeting.
- Parents are welcome to become involved in informal ways such as sharing a special talent with a class or going on a field trip. Formal registration within the OESU Volunteer Program must be completed PRIOR to any scheduled participation. (Contact Lisa Thompson, 439-5534 for more information)
- Parent meetings will be scheduled as needed.

We emphasize the importance of communication between parents, families, teachers and children. The bi-weekly newsletter is one of the primary modes of communication that is used in our program and will be

publicly sent out to all WRVS families for information, celebration and future planning. Families can also call or email to tell us about what is happening at home or communicate any questions or concerns. Please feel free to call or email the teaching staff/director if you have any immediate concerns. Parents and guardians have access to their child without prior notice and have access to their children's records (rule 3.4.4.6 in VT Child Care Licensing Regulations.)

Communication & Family Partnership

- **Daily Communications** - We will have communication at pick up and drop off times. If you feel that you will need more time to talk with a staff member please let us know so we can set up a meeting.
- **Bulletin Board** - There is a parent bulletin board near the front entrance that has our daily schedule, most recent newsletter, lunch menu, copy of the Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations, and any other important information.
- **Newsletters** will go home bi-weekly with your child . There will also be a copy posted on the bulletin board and it will be emailed to all WRVS families via infinite campus.
- **Email** - We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.
- **Parent Resources** - If you are interested in a particular aspect of child development please let us know and we can provide resources.
- **Family Visits** - We encourage families to visit our program, with 24 hours notice. Each visitor must wear a visitor's badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving.

Bus Transportation

WRVS does not provide transportation for after-school programming.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism and inclusion are vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we live in. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Toilet Learning

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready.. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

Health

Your child should come to after-school programming in good health and be fully able to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Any student who is ill or injured may be dismissed through the Office. The

Director/Teacher will notify families of the child's illness/injury and if required, dismissal should occur as soon as possible.

On your child's admission form you are asked to designate at least two people that may be contacted to pick up your child when you are unable to be reached. Please make sure you have notified these emergency transporters that they have been listed. As well, it's a good idea to alert emergency contacts if you know that you will not be available to arrive promptly at the school in case you are called to do so.

Symptoms requiring your child to not participate (but not limited to):

- Fever of 100.4 or above in the past 24 hours.
 - **Note: The child may return when he/she is fever free and after being kept home for at least 24 hours.** This means that your child will be out of the program for one full day after being sent home. We will not admit children who are ill and possibly contagious. Admission is at the discretion of the caregiver, not the parents.
- Has vomited in the past 24 hours
- Has green/yellow discharge coming from nose or coughing up mucus. This could be a sign of infection.
- Unidentified rash (unexplained and/or with fever or behavior change)
- Weeping or oozing eye drainage
- Blood or mucus in diarrhea or stool
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Impetigo (a contagious skin disease, until 24-48 hours after treatment begins)
- Swollen glands and/or sore throat
- Strep throat (until 24 hours after treatment begins and no fever for 24 hours without suppressant)
- Common cold (when accompanied by inability to participate in all regular activities, persistent crying, persistent coughing, difficulty breathing, extreme irritability, continuous drainage, or green or yellow drainage from nose, fever)
- Ear infection (when accompanied by inability to participate in all regular activities, persistent cry, or any fever)
- Any contagious illness (i.e. conjunctivitis, chicken pox, strep throat, Hand, Foot, Mouth, etc.)
- Infestation (lice, Scabies, fleas,)
- CHILD MUST BE ABLE TO NORMALLY PARTICIPATE IN ALL REGULAR ACTIVITIES
- A child with a communicable disease will not be accepted for care until s/he has received appropriate medical treatment and is no longer contagious. A doctor's note that the child may return back to childcare is REQUIRED for all communicable diseases. In the case of strep throat, conjunctivitis or impetigo, for example, 24 hours on a prescribed medication is required before a child may return to childcare. With chicken pox, a

child's poxes must all be completely scabbed over before returning. If your child has head lice or nits, s/he must be treated and all nits removed before reentering the childcare.

Wellness

All students must be in compliance with State immunization requirements and annual well child exams. WRVS must have a copy of these medical services on file (required for school enrollment, copies are already on file). Please provide the school nurse with any updates/changes in your child's health information, such as an updated annual exam, new immunizations, medications, or allergies. If you have questions regarding your child's health and attendance please call Carla Horniak, the school nurse, at 439-5534.

Children are required to wash their hands upon arrival, after using the bathroom, before/after eating and after blowing their noses.

Medication Policy

The Waits River Valley School medication procedures require the use of a written physician's order for school administration of prescription medication. As well, a written permission from a parent/guardian to have the medication administered in school. The permission form and detailed prescription medication procedure are included in the WRVS Parent/Student Handbook. The following information must be provided: name & date of birth of the child, any medication allergies, name of medication and dosage as well as administration schedule and route (mouth, nose, inhalation), reason for medication, start and end dates of medication, and any special instructions.

If non-prescription medication is to be used during school hours, the school nurse must be notified and a written permission with instructions for administration from the parent/guardian must accompany the medications. Medications may not be transported to school by your child.

For further information regarding health concerns, refer to the WRVS Parent-Scholar Handbook.

Injuries/Accidents

In the event of an accident or injury, first aid will be administered by the classroom teacher or director. The Director or teacher will complete an accident report. If the injury is minor, you will be notified at the end of the day through the accident report. If there is a serious accident, you or the emergency contact will be called immediately and/or appropriate emergency care will be sought. If warranted, emergency medical services will be called or your child will be transported to emergency care. For any injury that requires a visit to a medical or dental professional, a copy of the accident report will be sent to Child Care Licensing within two (2) working days. Your child's daily program will include outside play (except when the temperature is below 10 degrees, factoring in the wind chill). If you choose to use sunblock and you want application at school, please send in a labeled bottle with your signature and written directions of when you want the sunscreen applied (for example: "during

the fall and spring months”). This permission must be updated annually. Children are not permitted to apply sunscreen independently.

Behavior Management/Discipline Policy

Classroom environments are structured to encourage positive behavior; redirection of children occurs in a positive manner, keeping in mind the child’s interests and motives. We emphasize and teach age-appropriate social skills and behaviors to all children. Each staff member establishes a positive, supportive relationship with each child and provides children with good role models of appropriate behavior. Clear, consistent behavioral expectations are established including being kind to each other and being respectful of others and of the environment. The staff use a variety of ways to help children learn self-control, independence, and cooperation. Some of these strategies include:

- Redirection, encouragement, and reinforcing appropriate behaviors
- Allowing children to make choices within the behavioral guidelines.
- Modifying the environment to minimize potential conflicts and to promote learning.
- Guiding and assisting children in learning ways to solve problems/conflicts themselves i.e. using their words (talking), changing materials or moving to another space.
- “Take a break” allows children to calm themselves in a safe manner. This might look like a child doing a quiet activity at a table, reading a book, or sitting quietly away from the group.

If a child exhibits a challenge with behavior, the following steps are taken:

- The teacher talks with the child about the problem behavior, explaining why it is a problem.
- The teacher then offers alternative behaviors, strategies, materials, and gives the child choices within the behavioral guidelines.
- The teacher observes, assesses the child, the group and the environment and makes changes accordingly.
- The teacher discusses the situation with the child’s family via telephone call or note home (or both).

Positive Guidance

Following our philosophy of positive guidance with children, it is our practice not to expel a child, but rather collaborate with the family to meet the child and family’s needs, as well as the needs of our program. Children are encouraged and guided to treat each other and adults with respect, self-control, and kindness. Each student at the Afterschool program has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly environment
- Be treated with respect and understanding
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive we intervene immediately to protect others in the classroom. Our approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems

using appropriate interactions. When positive guidance is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. If a child is unable to self-regulate and is not responding to our positive guidance strategies the adult will support a child to find a space that is safe for him or her as well as others in the classroom. The adult then assists the child to help calm him or herself using positive guidance strategies and supports. Some children require more guidance and support to grow socially, emotionally, and behaviorally. Together with parents, the team may decide that positive guidance strategies are not adequate to support a child's social emotional development. Individualized supports may need to be put in place for a child to be successful.

Suspected Child Abuse

All school employees are mandated by law – VSA 33 §4911 to 4920 – to report to a local child protective agency, known or suspected child abuse within 24 hours of notification or suspected child abuse. Parents or guardians who wish to file a complaint against a school employee or other person that they suspect has engaged in abuse of a child at a school site may contact the school district office. The parent or guardian may also file a formal report with a local child protective agency.

Waits River Valley School Policies

In addition to the Waits River Valley School After-school Program guidance we also follow the policies for the Waits River Valley School. These policies can be found in the WRVS Parent-Student Handbook and on the school's website <http://www.wrvschool.org>).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) & Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA)

is a Civil Rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. The ADA gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. For more information, visit: <https://www.ada.gov/>

Hazing, Harassment & Bullying

WRVS is committed to providing all of its students with a safe and supportive school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with respect. For more information, please see the Orange East Supervisory Union policy titled "Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Hazing and Bullying of Students" CODE: F20.

Special Issues

SMOKING - State of Vermont law expressly prohibits the use of tobacco products anywhere on school property at any time by any person, adult or child. Your compliance with this law is mandated by the Agency of Education. This includes any and all tobacco products outlined in the WRVS tobacco policy.

ASBESTOS - Waits River Valley School is an ASBESTOS free school.

LEAD - The water system at Waits River Valley School is inspected regularly and is LEAD free. Test results can be found at <https://leadresults.vermont.gov/>.

Concerns

Should you have questions or concerns about the program, about school procedures, or if you need assistance regarding your child, please talk with your child's teacher. Should further assistance be needed please contact the Principal. If the issue is still not resolved, the next person to contact is the Superintendent. If you continue to have concerns you can contact the Vermont Childcare Consumer Concern Line at 800-649-2642. We are interested in knowing your thoughts, questions, concerns, and suggestions.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time; notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Please sign the acknowledgement below, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the Waits River Valley After-school programming/main office prior to enrollment.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

Please cut along the dotted line and return the section below to your child's teacher. Thank you.

I have received the Waits River Valley School After-school Family Handbook. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask for clarification of any policy, procedure or information that I do not understand.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

After-school program Staff Signature

Date

