# PARENT HANDBOOK 2025-26

## PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY AND GOAL

Dare County Schools After-School Enrichment Program is designed to provide after-school care for children in grades K-5 in a warm and nurturing environment. Our staff provides a variety of activities, positive interactions, and supervision while promoting education, values, and creativity. We believe that during after-school hours, children should have free time and the choice to pursue their own interests, explore new activities, and build social skills. Our goal is to complement the values and skills taught in school by providing creative, hands-on enrichment opportunities, physical activities, and a quiet homework place and time for each child to pursue his/her interests during the Dare County Schools After-School Enrichment Program.

## I. ASEP CONTACTS

**OFFICE HOURS:** 11:00 – 2:00 pm for Site Coordinators.

### SITE COORDINATORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION:

***Cape Hatteras Elementary School***
Site Coordinator-Betsy Smock
smockel@daretolearn.org
Office: 252-995-6196 ext. 3662;
Cell:252-489-8218 47500 Middle Ridge Tr., Buxton, NC 27920

***First Flight Elementary School***
Site Coordinator- Justin Orgsbon
orgsbonju@daretolearn.org
Office: 252-449-7058; Cell: 252-489-8415
107 Veterans Dr., Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

***Kitty Hawk Elementary School***
Site Coordinator-Stephanie Hughes
hughesst@daretolearn.org
Office: 252-261-2313 ext. 1628;Cell:
252-489-9255 16 S. Dogwood Trail, Kitty Hawk, NC 27949

***Manteo Elementary School***,
Site Coordinator-Marc Kaiser
kaiserma@daretolearn.org
Office: 252-473-2742 ext. 1430; Cell: (252) 489-8354 701 N. Hwy. 64/264. Manteo, NC 27954

***Nags Head Elementary School***
Site Coordinator - Caroline Walker
walkerca@daretolearn.org
Office- (252) 480-8880 ext 1863; Cell-(252) 216-8613 3100 Wrightsville Ave. Nags Head, NC 27959

***ASEP Director***– L'Tanya Murray
Office: 252-449-7000 ext. 2439
Cell: 252-423-1104
Email: murraylt@daretolearn.org

**NOTE: Phone Messages and Emails are checked daily and responded to promptly. Texting is not available on any ofthe phone numbers listed above.**

# II. OPERATIONAL POLICIES/PROCEDURES

## ENROLLMENT

Children in grades K-5 that attend Dare County Schools are eligible for admission to ASEP. A limited number of children are permitted per site. The capacity of ASEP is determined by our licensing agency. The Division of Child Development requires that the information contained in the child application be completed each year in order to enroll your child in ASEP. Parents will be asked to update information quarterly or as information changes.

## HOURS & DAYS OF OPERATION

ASEP starts at the end of the normal school day and continues until 6pm. On scheduled early dismissal days, ASEP will not be open. If school is canceled due to weather conditions, ASEP will also be canceled. There is no ASEP on school holidays, or Saturday make-up days. Please review the quick reference at the end of this document for closure dates.

## STAFF: CHILD RATIOS & GROUP SIZE

The ratio for school age children is 1:15 for 5 year old Kindergarteners and 1:20 for all other grades. This ratio is determined by the Division of Child Development. Children/staff may be moved to maintain this ratio.

## Arrivals and Departures at ASEP

Students will arrive at ASEP directly from their school classrooms. If a child is participating in an after-school activity outside of ASEP, such as GoFAR, children are required to check in at ASEP first then proceed to the other activity.

Parents/guardians **will not** enter the building to sign out their child.
The site coordinator or any other staff member will document who is picking up the child and when the child left the facility. Detailed records **MUST** be maintained. No child will leave ASEP without a staff member acknowledging them. Children are to be released ONLY to adults listed as "authorized to pick up" on the registration form which is available to each staff member for their group. No one under the age of 16 is allowed to sign a child out.

## Absences

If your child does not attend school due to illness, your child may not attend ASEP. Fees will be charged for the missed day due to illness. If there are long term illnesses or family emergencies, please contact the site coordinator so that accommodations may be made.

## Late Pick-Up

We understand that some circumstances are out of our control and may contribute to a late pick up of your child from ASEP. However, when a pattern of late pick-ups emerges, parents may be required to pay a late fee if they arrive after 6pm to pick up their child. After 3 late pick-ups, the Site Coordinator will make contact with parents and explain possible ramifications of continued late pick-ups. After this contact,there will be a late pick-up fee of $10 for every 15 minutes after 6pm until the child is picked up. Continued late pick-ups after being notified and/or charged the late fee may result in the removal of the child from the program. In addition, when a parent has not contacted ASEP and/or has not arrived by 6:30pm, the site coordinator will contact the director who may contact Dare Central Communications or Social Services.

# III. PROGRAM PLAN

## ASEP Curriculum

Lesson plans are designed weekly. These are posted on the parent board. We remain flexible, to allow the children choices in ASEP.

## Daily Lesson Plans Include:

1. Physical Activities: organized activities and free play both outside and in the gym. 2. Creative/Enrichment Activities: arts, crafts, music, nature projects, and creative writing.

## Daily Schedule - Example

2:30 - 3:00 Check in, wash hands, snack, and cleanup
3:00 - 5:00 Rotation of activities: homework, centers, projects (art, music, science), gym, playground, and other enrichment activities.
5:00 - 6:00 Free play, clean up, and departure
*Each site has a varied schedule due to available space and number of children enrolled. Hands are washed at each transition and there are frequent bathroom breaks.

## Snack Information

A nutritious snack will be provided between 2:30 and 4:30 pm daily, as approved by the "Meal Patterns for Children" guidelines. These snacks will consist of healthy and nutritious foods with milk or 100% juice. Every child will receive both snack components, but they are not required to consume them. Please notify us if your child has allergies to food or other substances. Menus are posted on the parent board and are subject to change. Children get hungry before pick-up time so many bring a snack to be eaten after 5pm. ASEP maintains a nut free environment. If snacks are brought from home, please be sure they are nut free.

## Homework

Good study habits during homework time are greatly encouraged at ASEP. All children are encouraged to complete homework during quiet time in ASEP.

## Electronic Devices Not Permitted

Electronic devices are not permitted at ASEP. ASEP will not be responsible for any lost or stolen items brought from home.

## Enrichment, Field Trips, and Transportation

As an enrichment program, we encourage parents and the community to present programs to our children. We may take field trips to enrichment activities. Transportation for field trips is provided through the use of a school activity bus when the trip is too far for children to walk. Parents will need to complete a permission slip for field trips and cover any additional expenses to participate in the trip. Parental participation on field trips is always encouraged!

## Cleanliness of Site Environment

In order to maintain a healthy environment for the children and staff cleaning duties will be assigned to staff on a rotating basis.
**Daily:** Clean and sanitize tables before and after snack; Sweep floors, mop as needed to clean up after spills. School custodial staff is in charge of mopping floors after lunch. Clean toys.
**Weekly:** Wipe down shelving; Children assist by taking home projects each Friday. Wipe down the refrigerator. (if applicable)
Monthly: Clean toys and storage bins; Clean refrigerator. (if applicable)
*Cleaning schedule may change, as needed, especially during cold, flu season and during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## IV. DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

The following policy is supplied by the NC Division of Child Development:
Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, ASEP will practice the following discipline and behavior management policy:

We:
1. DO praise, reward, and encourage the children.
2. DO reason with and set limits for the children.
3. DO model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. DO modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur.
5. DO listen to the children.
6. DO provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children.
7. DO provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors.
8. DO treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings.
9. DO ignore minor misbehaviors.
10. DO explain things to children on their level.
11. DO use short supervised periods of time-out sparingly.
12. DO stay consistent in our behavior management program.
13. DO use effective guidance and behavior management techniques that focus on a child's development.

We:
1. DO NOT spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish children. 2. DO NOT make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. DO NOT shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. DO NOT deny food or rest as punishment.
5. DO NOT relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
6. DO NOT leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. DO NOT place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
8. DO NOT allow discipline of children by children.
9. DO NOT criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

### Rewards for excellent behavior:

1. Constructive praise
2. Notes sent home, certificates for citizen of the month.
3. Group rewards, such as extra center time or outside play as voted on by the group.

### Consequences for inappropriate behavior:

1. The child will be given a warning.
2. Parents will be notified through phone call, note, and/or parent meeting.
3. Continued disruptive behavior may result in suspension or removal from the program.

### Suspension and Termination from the Program

ASEP will always put the needs of the children first. Fighting, destroying property, or behaving in a way that jeopardizes the overall health and safety of the staff and children may result in suspension or dismissal from

the program. Repeated failure to comply with ASEP rules and/or procedures may result in dismissal. Each incident will be examined on an individual basis. To hold the child's spot, fees must be paid during a suspension. If the child is removed from the program any fees that have been paid in advance will be refunded.

## V. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

### Child Illness and Medical Emergencies

In case of an injury, or emergency health problems, the following steps will be taken after first aid is given:

1. Contact the parent
2. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, 911 will be called.
3. Contact the director and notify school administrators.

If a child has a temperature over 99.9 degrees, a parent/guardian will be contacted. Sick children will be separated from the other students until an adult can pick them up. Children exposed to the flu or other communicable disease will not be allowed to return to the program for 24 hours. If the illness is treatable by an antibiotic, the antibiotic must be in the child's system for 24 hours before the child is allowed to return. If your child or a family member has been exposed to a communicable disease such as chicken pox, measles, impetigo, head lice, or strep infection, please inform your ASEP site coordinator. A current health form must be maintained for each child enrolled in ASEP and is part of the registration form. Parent and emergency contact phone numbers will be updated after each marking period or as needed.

### Medicine Policies/First Aid

If your child needs to receive medication during after-school hours, you must sign a "Permission to Administer Medication" form. An adult must deliver the medication to the site coordinator in its original container with detailed instructions from the physician. First aid for minor injuries will consist of washing with soap and water, using ice and/or applying a bandaid, if necessary. ASEP is not permitted to use any type of ointments or creams on children. Sunscreen, lip balm or hand lotions are not allowed to be used by children at ASEP, unless a form is signed by the parent. This form is required to be on file by the Division of Child Development.

### *CHILD MALTREATMENT*

Child maltreatment is "Any act or series of acts of commission or omission by a caregiver that results in harm, potential harm, or threat of harm to a child. Acts of commission include, but are not limited to, physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. Acts of omission include, but are not limited to, failure to provide for the physical, emotional, or medical well-being of a child, and failure to properly supervise children, which results in exposure to potentially harmful environments."

Every citizen of the State of North Carolina has a duty to report suspected maltreatment. Reports are made to the DCDEE (Division of Child Development and Early Education) by calling 800-859-0829. Please refer to the Summary of NC Child Care Law Brochure posted on the parent board at each site or click here: https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Portals/0/documents/pdf/S/Summary_of_the_Law_Brochure.pdf?ver=2019-07-03-114203-840

## VI. COMMUNICATION

### Parent Involvement

Parents may visit the program at any time. Parents are encouraged to participate in the following ways: 1. Talk to the site coordinator or your child's ASEP group leader about ideas to improve the program and specific ways you would like to help. Suggestions may be left in the ASEP lock box (if applicable), given to your site coordinator, or Director of ASEP.

2. Volunteer to help in the program by making presentations to the children, donating games, books,

puzzles, or art supplies. Cultural Heritage presentations are also welcome.
3. Visit/observe our program.
4 . Request a parent conference to discuss your ideas, child's progress or concerns.

### Monthly Newsletters

Newsletters are made available at the beginning of each month electronically or on paper by request. They are posted on the ASEP parent board and Dare County School's website, www.daretolearn.org These newsletters provide calendar updates, notification of upcoming field trips and events, general announcements and pictures of the activities in ASEP.

## VII. LICENSURE OF THE PROGRAMS

### DCD Licensure

ASEP is licensed by the Division of Child Development. There are many rules and guidelines that we must meet in order to be licensed by the state. A local consultant monitors our programs every year to ensure that all licensing requirements are met. The Environmental Health Department in conjunction with the DCD monitors any areas that involve environmental hazards. These include all spaces utilized by children and staff. The fire department also inspects our programs.

### SACERS/Star-Rated Licensure

SACERS is the School Age Care Environmental Rating Scale that is conducted at our sites to improve the quality of the program through a rigorous evaluation process. This scale allows a center to increase its star rating by receiving a high score on the evaluation. Star-rated licensure is set up so that parents can judge the quality of child care. The more stars a center has (five stars being the highest), means a higher level of excellence in the child care program. Please feel free to contact your site coordinator or the director if you have any questions about our licensure.

## IV. FEES AND PROCEDURES FOR PAYMENT

**Fees are due each Friday in advance of the week your child attends ASEP.**
**Weekly Fees**
**1 child = $80**
**2 children from the same family = $120**
**3 children from the same family = $160**
**4 children from the same family=$200**

### Prorated Weeks

There will be no charge for holidays, teacher workdays, or days that school is closed due to weather. If school is closed due to weather, ASEP will issue a credit to be applied to the fees within the next month. This policy does not apply to days that the child is absent due to illness or other family obligations. If the child is ill or the family chooses not to send the child to ASEP, payment is required for the missed days. Every effort will be made to assist families during emergency situations and extended illnesses.

### Payment Methods and Returned Check Fee

Checks, cash, and credit cards are accepted at ASEP. Checks are made payable to ASEP and must have the name, address and telephone number printed on the check. Please also write the child's name in the memo line. Credit card and ACH payments can be made through Infinite Campus. Returned check fees will be determined by the bank and DCS Finance Department.

**Financial Assistance**

Families may be eligible for subsidized child care services through Dare County Department of Social Services (252) 475-5500.

**Delinquent Accounts**

Accounts are considered delinquent if they are not paid by 6pm on Friday for the upcoming week. Accounts which are not up to date by Monday at 11:00 a.m. will be reported to the ASEP Program Director. The Site Coordinator will communicate with the parents. If the parents are unreachable or there is not an agreement to resolve the absence of payment, the child will not be allowed to return to ASEP until payment is made. The principal of the school will be notified that the child will not be able to attend ASEP and the parent will need to make afternoon transportation arrangements until the situation is resolved. We understand that issues may arise which render parents unable to pay on each Friday. The ASEP Director is available to privately discuss the issue with parents and can be reached by phone or email.

***Any unpaid charges from the previous school year must be paid in full before the student will be permitted to attend the After School Enrichment Program in the current school year.**

**Please contact your site coordinator or the director if you have questions regarding fees or payment options.**

## THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ASEP TO CARE FOR YOUR CHILDREN AFTER-SCHOOL!