

**COMET CARE BEFORE AND AFTER
SCHOOL PROGRAM**

2018-2019



Providing Before and After School Care that is Out of This World!

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Comet Care Program

The Comet Care Program is an extended day childcare program providing children with an environment that is safe, friendly and stimulating. The program includes time for rest, snacks, play and homework as well as an opportunity for children to interact with adults and peers through a variety of activities. This program is a separate business enterprise that has no direct connection with Swedesboro-Woolwich Schools.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that children experience the greatest growth when they feel secure and wanted. Therefore, we at Comet Care will provide a warm, caring, comfortable and safe environment for our children. Together, we will establish routines that are predictable and consistent. All children will be treated with gentleness, honesty and respect. We will encourage them to treat others in this manner. Our educated staff maintain an atmosphere where children feel comfortable and confident. Constructive guidance and positive reinforcement is key. We feel it is also necessary to establish and clearly define reasonable limits with logical consequences.

Days and Hours of Operation

The Comet Care Program will follow the Swedesboro Woolwich School District School calendar. Days of operation will be during scheduled full-day sessions and early dismissal. The Comet Care program will **NOT** be available when there is no school.

CLIFFORD	STRATTON	HARKER	HILL
AM (7:00-8:30)	AM (7:00-8:25)	AM (7:00-8:15)	AM (7:00-8:30)
PM (3:00-6:00)	PM (3:00-6:00)	PM (3:00-6:00)	PM (3:00-6:00)
½ Day	½ Day	½ Day	½ Day

Registration

All children must be pre-registered. **A \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee is expected for the first child. The cost for two or more children is \$75.00 (Family Package).** The Registration fee must accompany the registration form. Children may **not** start the program without the completion of a registration form and until the registration fee is received. **Parents are required to keep their children's forms up to date by promptly reporting any changes to information.** To update these forms anytime during the year, call the Comet Care office at (609)922-9353.

Program Options and Fees

The Comet Care Program offers parents a wide variety of sessions to better accommodate the need of each family. Parents can choose to enroll their child in the AM session, the PM session, both AM and PM sessions (FULL program) & Drop-In Service.

AM AND PM (7:00-8:30) & (3:00-6:00)	
<i>Days per week</i>	<i>Fee due Monthly</i>
5	\$255 per month
4	\$230 per month
3	\$190 per month
2	\$155 per month

AM ONLY (7:00-8:30)	
<i>Days per week</i>	<i>Fee due Monthly</i>
5	\$120 per month
4	\$105 per month
3	\$90 per month
2	\$75 per month

PM ONLY (3:00-6:00)	
<i>Days per week</i>	<i>Fee due Monthly</i>
5	\$190 per month
4	\$165 per month
3	\$140 per month
2	\$115 per month

DROP-IN SERVICE

The Comet Care "Drop in Service" program allows parents to utilize child care on an occasional basis. If the service is needed that day, payment and registration forms must be received in full using PayPal online no later than 1:30.

VOUCHER BOOKLETS- \$100.00 PER BOOKLET (5 TICKETS PER BOOKLET)

Each booklet is one per child and contains 5 pre-numbered coupons (in duplicate-white & yellow). Booklets are NON-REFUNDABLE and NON-TRANSFERRABLE. For each visit (AM=1 visit, PM=1 visit), a coupon will be signed, dated, and both copies labeled Return to school/CC sent with your child to present to his/her teacher for notification. If Drop-In Service is used for a HALF DAY, two (2) separate coupons need to be signed, dated and returned following the same procedure outlined above.) All vouchers expire at the end of the school year.

Payment and Procedures

The Comet Care Program will require a payment prior to one month in advance. **All payments are due by the 20th of the month.** Acceptable methods of payment include checks made payable to "Comet Care" or PayPal. Billing will be on a monthly basis, with payments beginning on the 20th of the month.

After 5 days from the due date, a \$25.00 charge will be billed if no payment was received. After 7 days of no payment, your child will be automatically removed from our rosters.

There are no payments for days when school is not in session, such as fall, winter and spring breaks, holidays or snow days. **Comet Care does not offer make-up days. Our tuition is based off of the 180 school days.** The Comet Care program is only open on days when regular school is in session.

Parents/Guardians are responsible to pay for days when school is in session. Comet Care does not give credit for sick days, family vacation or days when a child may go to another person's home. Children are not permitted to attend any session they are not registered to attend. If your child is registered to attend Comet Care, and for any reason can't be there due to illness, an appointment, club, etc., please notify BOTH the main office of the school and contact Comet Care office (609)922-9353.

A written withdrawal notice is requested two-weeks in advance, if a child is to be withdrawn from the program prior to the end of the school year. If your child needs to return during the same school year, Comet Care will determine if a new registration fee may be required.

Returned Check Fees

A \$20.00 fee will be charged for a returned check. A \$30.00 fee will be charged for a second returned check, and thereafter, payment will only be accepted in money order or PAYPAL.

Please Note: **Come Care does not provide itemized tax statements. The Comet Care Program Tax I.D. is 81-2448491.** Parents are expected to keep their own records using the Comet Care Tuition Payment Record.

Comet Care offers the Rutgers Child Care Assistance for families that will be filing for child care subsidy assistance. Please visit our website under forms on www.cometcare.com

Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

For the safety of the children, parents are responsible for escorting their child to the AM program in person. The parent or an authorized adult must accompany the child into the building and sign him/her in and remain until the supervisor/staff member at CC has seen the child.

Parents, or authorized adults (18 years of age or older), are responsible for picking up their children at the designated time for the afternoon session. The adult must sign the child out before leaving. Children will not be released to an unauthorized person.

THIS PROCEDURE IS NECESSARY TO ASSURE ACCOULTY AND SAFETY OF THE CHILD. IF THIS PROCEDURE IS NOT FOLLOWED, YOUR CHINTABILD WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE PROGRAM. THE COMET CARE PROGRAM PERSONNEL RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REQUEST PHOTO ID WHENEVER THE IDENTITY OF THE ADULT PICKING UP THE CHILD IS IN QUESTION. REMEMBER, BY REGISTERING YOUR CHILD WITH THE COMET CARE PROGRAM, YOU HAVE ASKED US TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR HIM/HER.

A late pickup fee will be assessed, if a parent arrives after program hours:

5-10 minutes late=\$15.00 11-29 minutes late=\$25.00 30-60 minutes late= \$40.00

Absentee Policy

Any child who will not be attending the Comet Care program must call their child out. It is very important that the staff is aware of who is absent. If your child will be attending an after school activity and then attending Comet Care afterwards, they must call and submit a form stating the information to the school's main office.

COMET CARE POLICY ON FAILURE TO REPORT STUDENT ABSENCE

The determination that all scheduled children are present is a vital safety feature of the Comet Care after school programs. Parents of enrolled children must cooperate to the fullest extent possible in that process.

If a child will not be attending the after school program on a scheduled day, parents must report the child's anticipated absence prior to the start of the program day. All parents must fill out a communication form and send it into the school. Notification may be made in writing or by telephone. Notification for after school programs must be made prior to 2:45 p.m. On early dismissal days, these times must be adjusted to the bus run or school dismissal time accordingly.

Time spent by teaching or office staff tracking the whereabouts of a missing child is frightening and disruptive. A staff member engaged in finding a child is unavailable to supervise the group, posing a potential threat to the safety and well-being of the children who are present.

Therefore, Comet Care will impose the following penalties for failure to report a child's impending absence:

1st Occurrence: Written warning

2nd Occurrence: \$10.00 fine and written warning of penalty for third occurrence.

3rd Occurrence: Suspension for one week, effective Monday of following week

Continued occurrences may result in permanent removal from the program.

Parents will be held responsible should their child fail to report to the program, and the same penalties will apply.

Emergency Closing/Delayed Opening

When school is cancelled for the entire day due to inclement weather or other emergencies, the Comet Care Program will also be closed. **If a delayed opening is called, Comet Care will also be delayed IF staff is available **Please note that most of the staff members are college students and have class scheduled during school hours**** If there isn't enough staff for a delayed opening, there will be no Comet Care AM. If staff is available and Comet Care does go forward with a delayed opening, Comet Care will open at 9:00 am instead of 7:00 AM. The district's Emergency Phone System along with the REMIND app will notify you if there is a delayed opening. Information regarding closings will also be posted on our Web Site.

All students that attend the Comet Care PM program will follow the same schedule on early dismissal days.

Activities

- Homework Time- students have the opportunity each day to work quietly while completing daily homework assignments. Teachers and staff will be available for help.
- Quiet time- opportunities to write, read, draw or do crafts.
- Gym activities-organized games both inside and out.
- Free playtime- this includes block and board games.
- In the afternoon, one snack will be provided during the program. Children may also bring a snack from home that is on the list.

Personal Property

The Comet Care Program will not be responsible for personal property that is either lost, stolen or damaged. All of your child's personal items/property should be individually labeled to avoid confusion of ownership. Students may not bring electronics from home, unless it is electronic day!

Suspicion of Child Abuse/Neglect

Please be aware that the staff and administration of Comet Care are considered mandatory reporters, and Comet Care will follow all applicable laws/regulations regarding suspected child abuse and/or neglect.

The Division of Youth and Family Services asks that the following information be disseminated to all parents and staff:

- Any person who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, or harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other kind of child abuse, neglect or exploitation by any adult is required by state law to report such allegations to the DYFS office of child abuse **(1-877 NJ ABUSE/1-877-652-2873)** or any district office *immediately*.
Reports may be made anonymously by telephone.

Court Order

If a child is the subject of any court order, Comet Care must have a copy of the most recent version, signed and with a judge's seal, included in the child's file. This includes orders regarding guardianship, parental custody, restraining orders, or any other orders relevant to the child's enrollment or pick up from the

program. Please note that, without proper documents, Comet Care may not restrict a parent from visiting or taking a child from a program, or provide information to anyone other than the parent(s).

Comet Care will make every effort to follow the order as written; however, if there is any confusion as to the meaning or requirements of the document,

Discipline

A serious disciplinary problem is defined as one in which a child is hampering the smooth flow of the program by requiring constant one-on-one attention, inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children, physically abusing staff or is otherwise unable to conform to the rules and guidelines of the Comet Care Program.

It is the goal of the Comet Care program to guide children to be happy, cooperative participants in the program, to also become responsible for their own actions, and to grow in their respects for the rights and feelings of other people.

When conflicts over the rights of other people and property develop, it is our goal to work with the individual children, listen to what each has to say and help resolve the conflict through effective communication.

This policy describes the progression of disciplinary actions which CC will follow in response to inappropriate behaviors, depending upon severity and duration. It is assumed at all times that CC is acting in good faith, and with the best interests of the individual child as well as the other children and the staff in mind. It is also assumed that the parent/guardian of the child is acting in partnership with CC staff throughout the process. If at any time during this process the parent/guardian refuses to comply with the recommendations/requirements of CC, we reserve the right to terminate the child's enrollment effective immediately.

Phase I Description

Typical, everyday inappropriate behaviors (mild acting out, occasional uncooperative behavior, mild temper outbursts, etc.)

Steps

1. The Site Supervisor will remove the child from the situation and evaluate what needs to be done (i.e removed from the group, sit out for 5 minutes, apologize). The
2. Site Supervisor records incidents in daily log book.
2. The Site Supervisor informally requests assistance from parent/guardian as to how these behaviors are best dealt with at home.
3. The Site Supervisor may seek additional resources on specific behaviors from CC library or other sources.
4. The Site Supervisor may explain situation to Executive Director and seek input as to suggested next step.

Phase II Description

Behaviors have escalated or become more frequent, disruptive and/or aggressive.

Steps

1. The Site Supervisor completes an CC Incident Report on an incident, behavior, or pattern of behavior. The Site Supervisor arranges to meet with parent/guardian privately for a few minutes to present incident report and discuss concerns.
2. The Site Supervisor will share information about the situation with the Executive Director, discuss the behavior and the response from parent/guardian, and plan next step.

Phase III Description

Disruptive / aggressive behavior continues with no improvement after Phase I & II interventions, and/or an additional incident occurs which Program Supervisor determines is a serious concern. **At this stage, the parent/guardian is advised that an intermediate step may be skipped and immediate suspension or expulsion from the program are possible consequences at any time in the future.**

Steps

1. The Site Supervisor completes an CC Incident Report and discusses it with the parent/guardian.
2. The Site Supervisor consults with the Executive Director, utilizing all relevant information (log book, incident reports, etc.).
3. Depending upon the severity of the incident, the Executive Director may meet with or speak to parent/guardian by telephone. The Site Supervisor and the child may be included in a meeting at the discretion of the Executive Director.
4. Recommendation is made based on the Site Supervisor and the Executive Director's conclusions and results of discussion with parent/guardian.
5. At the discretion of the Executive Director the family may be notified that, without improvement in the situation, the child will be expelled from the program with notice of one week. This warning does not preclude immediate suspension or revocation of this notice in the event of a serious incident as outlined below.
6. Director communicates decision to parent/guardian directly, with follow up in writing, and maintains copy of letter in CC files. If the child is recommended for suspension, CC will outline the length of the suspension, and the requirements that must be satisfied before child is allowed to return to the program. The immediacy and length of the suspension will be based on the behavior or incidents that caused the suspension.

Phase IV Description

Behavior continues with no improvement after Phase I & II and III, or a very serious incident has occurred.

Steps

1. The Site Supervisor promptly consults with the Executive Director, utilizing all relevant information (log book, incident reports, etc.).
2. The Executive Director meets with the parent/guardian in person to discuss situation and strategies to deal with behavior. The Site Supervisor and/or the child may be included in this meeting at their request, or the request of the Executive Director.

3. The Executive Director will decide as to which possible action to be taken. Recommendation is made based on input from the Site Supervisor, Executive Director, and the results of parent meeting.

4. The Executive Director communicates the decision to the parent/guardian directly, with follow up in writing, and maintains a copy of the letter in CC files. If the child is recommended for suspension, CC will outline the length of the suspension within 24 hours, and requirements that must be satisfied before child is allowed to return to the program. The length of the suspension will be based on the behavior incidents that caused suspension and whether outlined requirements have been satisfied.

5. If the child has already been subject of a previous suspension, the Executive Director may decide to move on to Phase V and proceed with an immediate expulsion from the program.

Phase V Description

Serious violent behavior occurs; or continued disruptive behavior continues despite Phases I - IV; or other serious rule violation.

Steps

1. The Executive Director notifies the parent/guardian by phone immediately regarding child's behavior and informs the parent/guardian that the child is suspended until further notice, effective immediately. The call is followed up with a letter to the parent outlining this decision, and a copy of the letter is placed in the CC files.

2. The Executive Director will immediately dismiss the child permanently from program.

3. The Executive Director and Site Supervisor consult one another to discuss final outcome the following day.

4. The Executive Director formally advises parent, within 72 hours, of the decision with follow up in writing and a copy of letter placed in CC files.

The following are considered extremely serious incidents, and may be cause for immediate movement to Step III, in which case

suspension and/or dismissal from the program is possible, with or without notice.

- Injury to self, another child, or an adult
- Serious destruction of school or CC property
- Leaving the program site or school grounds
- Repeated uncontrollable behaviors or outbursts
- Repeated disruption of program function
- Inappropriate touching of other children
- Stealing
- Inability to function within normal program structure (i.e. refusal to follow rules; continuous crying or belligerence)
- Threats made toward children or adults
- Parental refusal to cooperate with CC at any step in the process
- Threatening behavior by parent(s)/guardians
- Any other behavior which the Executive Director deems a threat to the safety or physical or emotional well-being of program participants or staff

Each child and each case will be considered individually. Comet Care reserves the right to move directly to Phase III, IV, or V without moving step-by-step through other phases if conditions so

Snacks

CC permits children to bring a snack from home to be eaten during the after school program. Please make sure that these treats from home are non-perishable and as nutritious as possible. CC will provide one snack per child if they decide not to bring in any food from home. Children may not bring candy, soda, and/or glass bottles to the program. Also, children will not be permitted to purchase drinks/food from vending machines located within the school.

Due to the increase in and severity of nut, dairy and other food allergies, CC may decide to eliminate foods containing nuts or other ingredients from any snacks served, and if necessary and feasible, go so far as to prohibit them from the program site. If a child has any serious or life threatening allergies or medical conditions related to food, these must be clarified, and a care plan from a

physician outlining needs/solutions prepared in advance with the Executive Director.

Health and Safety Practices

MEDICAL ISSUES ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

It is CC policy that staff generally may not administer any medication, either prescription or nonprescription. Exceptions will only be made in extraordinary cases of a chronic or life threatening nature, and only after adequate notice and thorough review of the circumstances with the Executive Director.

Parents/guardians sending a child to the program with medication for self-administration, and/or without following the proper procedure, will be called immediately to make alternate arrangements for administration of the medication.

If a child has an illness that is not chronic or life-threatening but requires a short or long-term course of medication, we ask that the dosage times be scheduled so that they may be administered at home or by the nurse during the regular school day. Please do not give medication to any CC staff member to give to the school nurse, nor give medication to your child to bring to the program or the nurse. We cannot take responsibility for lost or forgotten medication, or for the availability of the school nurse to dispense medication.

In the case of a child with a chronic or life threatening condition requiring immediate or ongoing medication (i.e., asthma or life-threatening allergy), parents/guardians must contact the Executive Director well in advance of the child's first day of attendance to determine whether the program is equipped to handle the medical needs of the child, and/or the necessary medication and its administration. Parents/guardians must clear all medication with the Executive Director. Under no circumstances may medication be administered by an CC staff member, nor may a child self-administer, without prior discussion with and written approval of the Executive Director.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

In the event of a minor injury on site, the staff will administer basic first aid, and depending upon the degree of the injury, the parent/guardian may be called and an accident report may be given to the parent/guardian

(or other pickup person with prior authorization to receive such reports) upon arrival.

In the case of a fall from a height, a possible head injury, or a bite which breaks the skin, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. In the case of a serious injury, the Site Supervisor, in consultation with the Executive Director, may judge that additional medical care is needed. Every attempt will be made to contact the child's parent/guardian, physician, or other authorized person to discuss options for further care. CC maintains accident insurance secondary to the family's own policy to cover injuries which occur at the program. Parents wishing to utilize this secondary insurance coverage should contact the Executive Director to request the appropriate claim forms.

Communicable/Non-communicable disease

The safety and health of children attending CC is of primary concern to the staff and children. The school buildings are maintained by the school district according to state rules and regulations. The parents can assist our health practices by planning for alternate care when your child is sick.

CC's health practices include:

- Exclusion of children and staff with infectious diseases until they no longer present a health problem for themselves or others. Students must be fever free (temp.<100) for a full 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medicine before returning to Comet Care.
- Notification to families of any infectious diseases contracted by children and staff.
- Frequent hand washing by staff and children.
- Sound food-handling practices.

In the event of a child's illness during the program, any of the following actions may occur:

- An attempt will be made to notify the parent(s) regarding the situation. Parents will be given an indication of any action which may be taken and/or if there is a need for the child to be picked up early.
- The child will be isolated under the supervision of a staff member.
- In case of an emergency, the emergency squad (911) will be called.

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she can't attend the program. If such symptoms occur during program hours, the child will be removed from the group and must be picked up within the hour. Children can't return to program until they are symptom free for 24 hours. A child who contracts any of the following diseases may not return to the

program without a physician's note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others:

Respiratory Illnesses

Chicken Pox, German Measles, Hemophilus Influenza, Measles, Meningococcus, Mumps, Strep throat, Tuberculosis, Whooping Cough

Gastrointestinal Illnesses

Giardia Lamblia, Hepatitis A, Salmonella, Shigella

Contact Illnesses

Impetigo, Lice Scabies

If your child is exposed to any excludable disease at the program, you will be notified in writing. In case of accident or illness, parents of the child will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to the hospital by emergency vehicle for treatment and the parents will be called immediately. The staff child ratio shall be maintained according to the minimum Standards for Licensing for school age children to insure the safety of your child. Outdoor play will not be allowed when temperature (including wind chill) falls below 30 degrees Fahrenheit to insure the safety of your children.

Dressing child appropriately for active play

- sneakers and rubber-soled shoes are the safest footwear.
- Monitoring what your child brings for before and after school play that might be hazardous to himself/herself or others.
- Reinforcing appropriate play behavior and limits.

Thank You for Choosing Comet Care, Where Fun and Safety is out of this World!