

LATER @ LONGFELLOW



AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM PARENT HANDBOOK



**2024 - 2025
SCHOOL YEAR**

Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Longfellow's philosophy and goals	4
Core Values	4
Enrollment/Admissions	4/5
Age Groupings/Ratio	5
Hours and Cost	6
Holiday Closings	7
Early Release Days	7
School Vacation Programs	7
Storm & Emergency Procedures	8
Daily Activities	8
Community Service	8
L@L Example Activity Plan	9
Transportation Plan	10
Parent/Guardian Responsibilities & Input	11
Staff at Later @ Longfellow	12
Health Policy	13
Discipline and Guidance Policy	14
Policy Suspension and Termination	15
Prevention of Abuse and Neglect	16
Electronic Communication Policy	16

Later @ Longfellow

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM



Welcome to 'Later @ Longfellow' After School Program. This Parent Handbook provides you with not only the essential information pertaining to our program, but also general instructions which will answer your questions and help ease the transition of your child entering our after-school program.

We are licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (E.E.C.) and we comply with its guidelines and regulations. We are in compliance with State and local regulations for building codes, fire laws and health and safety rules.

If at any time you have any questions or concerns, please call to talk to a staff member or myself. We are here to provide you with the best quality, after school care we can for your children.

Program Administrator
Caroline Donahue

OUR PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

'Later @ Longfellow' is an After School Program that offers a safe and healthy environment where your child can go after school.

At 'Later @ Longfellow,' we offer a wide variety of developmentally appropriate activities: arts and crafts, swimming, yoga, team games, board games, blocks, and other small and large group activities. We also offer quiet areas and free play. Children will participate in activities both indoors and outdoors in our amazing children's playground area.

Our goal is to provide a program, which enables children to develop self-esteem, confidence and trust, while at the same time learning that fitness can suit any lifestyle and how important it is to enjoy staying healthy and active.

Longfellow's Core Values

- Happiness
- Health
- Service
- Sustainability
- Community
- Gratitude
- Knowledge
- Sparkle

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT

'Later @ Longfellow' is designed to accept children in Grade K - 6 Grade from Lilja, Ben-Hem, and Brown Elementary schools, and Wilson Middle School. We provide services to children and their families regardless of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or marital status.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

Parents who are interested in enrolling their child in our program must first meet with the Director. The parents will be given a tour of the facility and, if in session, they are invited to observe the program in operation.

Parents will review the parent handbook and discuss important and informative issues. We ask that parents bring their child in to visit prior to enrollment. After the application form has been completed, we will discuss when your child will start or place you on the waiting list until a space becomes available. We typically enroll children year-round, and require a \$50.00, non-refundable, registration fee.

AGE GROUPINGS/RATIO

The program accepts children in Grades K - 6 (ages 5-13 years). The children are grouped according to grade and also by interest. There will be small group activities and some large group activities. 'Later @ Longfellow' exceeds the E.E.C regulations regarding staff ratios.

Staff At Later @ Longfellow

Director: In charge of all aspects of the site including staff supervision, curriculum planning, ensuring that procedures are followed to ensure safety and program quality, and maintaining relationships with families and school personnel

Assistant Director: Supports director in all tasks relevant to the function of the site. Manages homework time and supervises staff. Manages the site in the absence of the director.

Group Leader: Leads classroom activities. Supervises assistant leaders, plans the day, and communicates with school staff and families.

Assistant Leaders: Responsible for leading activities, setting up and putting away equipment, following all health and safety procedures, and general supervision of children throughout the day.

Later @ Longfellow staff has been through Orientation, had a CORI SORI check and is certified in CPR and First Aid. All staff are fingerprinted. Staff members range from High School students, to college students and adults. Staff are required to be a role-model to all the children in our care allowing for self-expression, self-confidence and independence and teaching respect, problem-solving and social skills.

HOURS AND COST

'Later @ Longfellow' is open Monday through Friday. The hours are 2:15 pm - 6:00 pm each week that school is in session. We are also open 11:30 - 6:00 pm when Natick schools have early release. (See 'Early Release Days.')

There is a non-refundable registration fee of \$50.00 per child.

2024- 2025 MONTHLY PAYMENTS

<u>2 DAYS</u>	\$299.00
<u>3 DAYS</u>	\$449.00
<u>4 DAYS</u>	\$539.00
<u>5 DAYS</u>	\$629.00

- ❑ SIBLINGS RECEIVE A DISCOUNT OF 10%
- ❑ FULL FAMILY MEMBERS RECEIVE A DISCOUNT OF 10%
- ❑ PAYMENTS ARE BASED ON ONE ANNUAL PAYMENT
DIVIDED INTO 10 EQUAL MONTHLY PAYMENTS

Please note that tuition remains the same regardless of holidays, vacations, sickness, snow closings and closings beyond our control.

Tuition is due the first of the month. We do not accept cash or checks.

A thirty-day notice period must be given in writing if the parent wants to switch days, add or drop days or withdraw from the program. We try to be as flexible as we can for changes to keep life less stressful!

2024 -2025 HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

‘Later @ Longfellow’ is **CLOSED** on the following days:

LABOR DAY - Monday September 2, 2024

COLUMBUS DAY – Monday October 14, 2024

VETERANS DAY – Friday November 11, 2024

THANKSGIVING (& DAY AFTER) – Thurs/Fri November 28/29, 2024

MEMORIAL DAY - Monday May 26, 2025

The following days we will be open for a full day (8 am – 5 pm) and registration is required. There is a \$45.00 fee for these days.

YOM KIPPUR – Monday September

MONDAY December 2

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY – Monday January 20, 2025

GOOD FRIDAY- Friday April 18, 2025

ELD al FITR – TBA

No School for Kindergarten TBA

JUNETENTH DAY – TBA

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EARLY RELEASE DAYS

On the following dates, we will be open 11:30 am - 6:00 PM for Early Release for those that attend on those days.

TBA

SCHOOL VACATION PROGRAMS

School Vacation Programs are available. Rates are discounted at \$45.00 per full day (8 am - 5 pm). Health forms are required and need to be completed and returned to the office at least 7 days prior to the start of program. The main program runs from 9 AM - 4 PM with Extended Day hours available from 8-9 AM and 4-5 PM.

December Camp - TBA

February Camp - TBA

April Camp - TBA

For Summer Camp - L @ L students receive the Family Member Rate

STORM and SNOW DAYS **& EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of SEVERE weather or unusual non-weather-related problems, 'Later @ Longfellow' reserves the right, in consultation with the manager of the facility, to cancel or close early.

If the Governor declares a State of Emergency prior to the start of the school day, the program will be closed.

An email will be sent by 6:30 am (or as soon as the Natick Public Schools have declared a snow day) to inform parents whether we will be open or not. This will depend on a number of factors: - the timing of the storm, the amount of snow and ice, driving conditions, staffing and the forecast for the day.

DAILY ACTIVITIES

All our activities will promote the child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social well-being and growth. We encourage the children to make decisions regarding activities and allow them to make choices on how they would like to spend their time, safe, unhurried and flexible choices, either reading quietly, hanging out with friends or taking part in a group organized game.

We also encourage the children to bring their interests to the program and share them with others. We will offer different areas of activity in recreation and cultural enrichment. All our activities are age-appropriately developed.

Many children sign up for swim lessons while here at 'Later @ Longfellow'. You receive a family member discount on swim lessons, so please let us know if you would like to sign up. Our staff will take your child to and from the swim lesson.

Community Service

Community Service is a huge part of our program. We do community projects each year. Projects make us feel good!!!

Later @ Longfellow Example Activity Plan

2:30 - 3:15: - Arrival of children. Check in. Free play with set activities (varied daily). Snack time - we are a **NUT FREE** program..

3:30 - 4:00: - Time to make a choice from our selected activities for the afternoon: swim, free play or outside play.

4:15 - 5:45: - Organize into groups: projects, homework (3rd-6th grade), gym time (physical activity), arts and crafts etc.

5:45: - *Clean-up/Pack up*

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Connolly Buses, Natick, provides transportation. There are no walkers. Children who are outside of Natick and are attending the program will arrive by other means of transportation, determined and arranged by parents/caregivers. Children with disabilities will have transportation provided for by the Natick Public Schools if not able to use the same vehicle.

All buses carry first aid kits & seat belt cutters. Staff monitors carry cell phones, names and addresses of child's parents/guardians, emergency contacts; home/work telephone numbers; contact for the nearest medical emergency facility and a CPR manual in preparation of a mildly ill/seriously injured child. Drivers on the 2-way radio are to call 911 in an emergency. If the bus becomes disabled the driver will call Connolly bus for another bus to be sent out immediately.

The Staff check the children onto the bus. The driver and Staff check the bus after the children depart. Staff also check the children into the program inside.

Once the children leave the school, Connolly Buses will be responsible for the children on the bus until they reach Longfellow. 'Later @ Longfellow' will not be responsible for any child enrolled in the program until they step off their transportation vehicle onto the premises of 'Longfellow Health Club'.

If a child is not at school for pick up staff will check with the school office. **There is a \$10 charge if you do not notify us of an absence.**

Please note we have a 'Bus Conduct Policy', which will be given to parents the first week of school that addresses behavior on the bus. All accidents/moving violations will be reported to the Natick Police by the Program Administrator and all parents of children on the bus.

All children must be picked up by their parent/caregiver/persons authorized for pick up. If no-one arrives to pick up a child all contact numbers will be called. There will be no field trips at this time.

Two pick up stickers will be given after one month. All parents must sign a written consent form giving permission for Connolly Buses to transport their child, which is included in the Application Packet.

PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES & INPUT

- The application packet must be completed and returned with the application fee before your child begins attending the program.
- If your child will **not** be attending you need to telephone us, **before Noon of that day, at 508.653.4633. There is a \$10 charge if you do not.**
- Please send your child in suitable clothing/shoes for gym/outside play and please write your child's name on all belongings and clothing.
- It is advised that your child takes home his/her swimsuit and towel at the end of each week to be washed and brought back for the following week. Please note that the classroom is open on weekends.
- Pack a NUT FREE snack for Longfellow in a designated bag.
- On Early Release Days please pack a nut-free lunch with an afternoon snack.
- **Please observe the 6:00 PM pick up time - NOTE 5 pm on school holidays.** We understand that traffic is a daily commuter issue. Consistent tardiness to pick up your children could result in not only hefty late fees, but also an evaluation to make sure that this is the right program for your child.
- If you like, you can call **5 minutes** before you arrive so that we can have your child ready to leave, especially if you have younger siblings in the car. You may **NOT** leave your car unattended at the front entrance.
- Please notify us of any changes in address, telephone and email.
- Recycling is part of our program and materials are welcomed!
- We encourage parent input into our program. We have an open-door policy and you may visit anytime.
- The First Aid is located in the office.
- A Parent Conference may be requested at any time during the school year regarding your child's progress with the Program Administrator. Progress reports will be sent home at the end of January.
- We will notify you of the following: -
 - a) Immediately of any injury which requires medical care beyond minor first aid or administration of non-prescription medication.
 - b) A change in staffing.
 - c) Of important news and special events.
 - d) If there is a communicable disease or condition that is identified.
 - e) Seven days prior to any changes in program policy or procedure.
 - f) Before any pets visit.
 - g) If herbicides or pesticides are used.

We are in compliance with EEC and the contact details are below: -

E.E.C (Early Education and care) is located at: -
324 R Clark Street, Worcester MA 01609
Tel: 508 461 1440

HEALTH POLICY

In order to provide the best care for your child, as well as other children in our care, and staff, we have developed the following health policy.

Prevention

The following measures are followed to help reduce the spread of infection:

1. Daily washing of equipment and cleaning of all the rooms.
2. Frequent hand-washing
3. Careful snack preparation

Illness Policy

Even with preventative measures, illness still affects children in school-age care. Children that are ill require the attention and rest that can only be provided at home, while our staff cares for other children in the program.

Reasons For Dismissal or Exclusion:

1. Covid-19 Symptoms
2. Diarrhea and/or vomiting
3. Conjunctivitis
4. Fever of 101 or over
5. Lice
6. Undiagnosed rash

If a child develops these symptoms at home, the child must be kept home. A child must be 24 hours free of illness/symptoms before they return.

If your child develops these symptoms at the program, you will be called. **Please come within one hour.** If we cannot reach you within 30 minutes, your emergency contacts will be called.

If your child needs medication at the program you must call the Director and sign an Authorization for Medication form. **If an antibiotic is prescribed for your child, your child must be on the medication for a full 24 hours before returning to the program.**

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

This policy is based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. The goals of this policy are to maximize the growth and development of the children and to protect the group and individuals.

Necessary components of our policy are:

- Having a caring staff that not only respects children, but also accepts each child as an individual and poses as a role model.
- Having a setting where counselors and children can talk and listen to each other with understanding and to encourage independence.
- Developing the child's own awareness of their behavior.
- Having the child gain a positive self-image to feel good.
- We encourage children to verbalize their feelings to help develop their self-control through understanding.
- We encourage children to make their own choices and help establish rules, procedures and policies.

Children will learn the natural consequences of their own actions and learn problem solving skills. They will learn to balance their needs and wants with those of others. We provide expectations that are clear, age-appropriate and applied in a consistent way.

Praise and encouragement are the focus of our program. Positive behavior is always noted and negative behavior is addressed and corrected in a positive manner. The Director directs corrective measures if the child's behavior is extreme or aggressive. **Our goal is to avoid suspension or termination by trying support services in and outside of the program**

Our policy does not include the use of negative, punitive measures by its staff for a child's inappropriate behavior: -

The following practices are strictly prohibited: -

- Corporal punishment shall not be used including physical restraint.
- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children.
- Depriving children of outdoor time, meals or snacks, force feeding children or otherwise making them eat against their will, or in any way using food as a consequence.
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- Confining a child to a piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision.

- Excessive time-out. Time-out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within an educator's view.
- No child shall be subject to any cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, physical or verbal abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment including any type of physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body, shaking, threats or derogatory remarks.
- No child shall be denied any basic needs as punishment.

E.E.C now requires school-age programs to complete Progress Reports, which will be completed mid-year each school calendar year to maintain communication with families and help transitions into other programs.

POLICY SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION

'Later @ Longfellow' will use the following guidelines for warnings, termination or suspending a child from the program if there has been no success in behavior management or discipline: -

- If the safety and well being of other children in our care cannot be assured because of this child's behavior.
- If the health or safety of a child while at our facility cannot be assured.
- If the child's developmental needs are not being met.
- A child may be suspended if the required EEC documentation is not up to date/complete or payment is not received.

Behavior not tolerated here at Later @ Longfellow includes: arrogant, abusive, aggressive or rude behavior towards other students, staff or members.

Parents/Guardians are notified after each incident and the incident is logged. After the first written warning a telephone conversation is required. After two written warnings, a meeting is required to discuss alternate options. After a third written warning a (suspension) or 'termination' will be put into effect.

The Director will request a meeting with the parents to discuss the circumstances and options. Parents will be given documentation with specific reasons why termination or suspension has been put into effect and if there are any conditions for returning into the program. A copy will be placed in the child's file. The Director will inform the parents of information and referral for other services within and outside of the program. If the parents are unable to meet in person, they will be sent written notification.

If parents wish to withdraw their child from the program, a 30-DAY notice must be submitted in writing or email. If no notice is given, parents are expected to pay for their child's monthly tuition.

Prevention of Abuse and Neglect

The staff at 'Later @ Longfellow' shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in the children are in the program's care and custody. All staff members are mandated reporters and shall report suspected child abuse and/or neglect. The report shall be made to the Program Administrator in which case he/she shall report the issue to the DSS immediately.

The Licensee/Program Administrator shall call the ECC after filing a 51A report, or learning that one has been filed, alleging abuse/neglect of a child while in the care of a program.

The Licensee shall cooperate in all investigations including in the identifying of parents of children currently or previously enrolled in the program; providing consent for disclosure to the ECC of information from any person/agency and allowing the ECC to disclose any information to any person/agency the ECC may specify as necessary to the prompt investigation of allegations and protection of children. Failure to cooperate may be grounds for suspension, revocation or refusal to issue or renew a license.

The Program Administrator shall ensure that an allegedly abusive or neglectful staff member does not work directly with children until the DSS investigation is completed and for such further time as the ECC requires.

Later @ Longfellow has a written plan describing procedures for referring parents to appropriate social, mental health, educational and medical services, including dental check-up, vision or hearing screening, should the program staff feel that an assessment for such services would benefit the child.

Electronic Communication Policy

Staff are not able to use cell phones whilst on duty (unless authorized) and are not able to text children or 'friend' them on any social media site. Children are not able to carry cell phones and if they have one it will be turned off and placed in their backpack. The Program Administrator or On-Site Coordinators ARE able to take pictures and videos (no tags) of children for the program brochure, literature, email newsletter, member newsletter and web page. All parents sign a consent form which is in the Parent Application Forms.