



# ASTAR EXPLORER

## Parent Handbook 2019-2020 School Year

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## Welcome

Dear Parents:

Welcome to Astar Explorer and thank you for choosing our organization with the care of your child after school. I know there are many options for after school care in Northern Virginia and I am committed to making this the best after school care experience for your child and entire family.

Astar Explorer's mission is to foster and support the individual academic success of each student participating in our programs. Our staff is passionate about learning and we strive to develop partnerships with our local schools and each family to ensure the success of our program and your child's academic achievement.

During each day of our program your child will have open-ended play time, have dedicated time to complete homework with staff available for homework assistance and/or tutoring, receive a healthy snack, plus participate in daily activities from our hands-on STEM curriculum. Those areas include:

- Coding and Robotics
- Mathematics
- Language Emerson
- Science
- Makerspace

At Astar Explorer, it is my goal to provide a cutting-edge program. One that is not only full of unique hands-on activities but also compliments your child's education and the Virginia Standards of Learning.

Thank you again for choosing Astar Explorer for your child's after school care. Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to reach out to us at (703) 459-1031.

Sincerely,

Chris Allen, Director

# About Astar Explorer

## Our Mission

Astar Explorer’s mission is to provide a safe, educational and STEM based learning environment that meets the needs of families here in Fairfax and the surrounding counties. Our STEM enrichment after school care program is engaging and interactive to promote hands-on learning among students.

Our team is made up of local educators and highly skilled professionals to ensure your child is not only receive top-notch after school care but is also participating in academically enriched programming.

## Contact Info

<b>Our Address:</b> 11750 Fair Oaks Mall Fairfax, VA 22033	<b>Our Email:</b> info@astarexplorer.com	<b>Points of Contact:</b> <b>Director</b> – Chris Allen <b>Education</b> – Erin Lewis <b>Admin and Family Accounts</b> – Anna Polanco
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## Program Calendar and Hours of Operation

Our after-school program is based upon the Fairfax County School calendar and care is offered Monday through Friday starting on the first day of school and ending on the last day of school.

### Hours of Operation:

The center will be open starting at 2:00pm with last pick up available at 6:15pm. Our office hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:30pm.

### Early Release Days:

After school care is available on early release days, however, there is an additional \$10.00 charge per child.

### Professional Development Days and School Breaks:

Astar Explorer will be open during school designated professional development days and school breaks. These days are available for a full day of care and require separate registration. Please log into your family account to register for these dates.

<b>Professional Development and School Break Days</b>	<b>Astar Explorer Holiday Closures</b>
Monday, October 14 <sup>th</sup>	Labor Day – Monday, September 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Tuesday, November 4 <sup>th</sup>	Thanksgiving Day – Thursday, November 28 <sup>th</sup>
Wednesday, November 5 <sup>th</sup>	Christmas Day – Wednesday, December 25 <sup>th</sup>
Winter Break: Monday, December 23 <sup>rd</sup> – Friday, January 3 <sup>rd</sup>	New Years Day – Wednesday, January 1 <sup>st</sup>
Monday, January 27 <sup>th</sup>	Memorial Day – Monday, May 25 <sup>th</sup>
Tuesday, January 28 <sup>th</sup>	
Monday, February 17 <sup>th</sup>	
Tuesday, March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	
Spring Break: Monday, April 6 <sup>th</sup> -Friday, April 10 <sup>th</sup>	
Monday, April 13 <sup>th</sup>	

## Program Fees Schedule

Weekly tuition is due by Monday for the current week of care. Family accounts balance must be paid for them to attend the program. Payment for full days, school breaks and camps must be paid at the time of registration for those programs.

To review account balance and register for full days and school break care please visit our website at [www.astarexplorer.com](http://www.astarexplorer.com).

### Program Rates:

Weekly Elementary After School Care - \$115.00  
 Single Day After School Care - \$25.00

Weekly Middle School After School Care - \$145.00  
 Single Day After School Care - \$35.00

There is registration fee of \$50.00 paid once annually at the time of enrollment.

### Program Discounts:

**Siblings:** 15% for the first sibling, then 10% for any additional siblings

**Military Discount:** 15%

**Government Employees:** 10%

**Fairfax County Public Schools Employees:** 20%

Only one discount will be given per family. Proof of discount eligibility will be required such as school employee ID, military ID or government official employee ID.

## Billing:

- Tuition payments are due on Monday each week through our online payment system, or via credit/debit card, check and cash at the Astar Explorer center.
- Accounts must be paid prior to child attending program.
- If Astar Explorer Center is closed due to inclement weather, a credit will be issued to your account.
- Credits will not be issued for absences, early pick-ups or schedule changes.

Should you have a question regarding your account status or making payments please call us at (703) 459-1031.

## Payments:

- All payments must be made in advance of your child's attendance and can be made weekly, biweekly or monthly through our online payment system or in person at Astar Explorer.
- Payments are not accepted over the phone.
- Late fees will be applied to your account the following Thursday.
- If a payment is more than two weeks past due, your child will lose the space in our After School Care program.

## Program Registration:

### How to Register:

All registrations must be completed online by creating a family account at [www.astarexplorer.com](http://www.astarexplorer.com) or in person at Astar Explorer in the Fair Oaks Mall. A child is considered enrolled and may attend Astar Explorer's after school care program once the following has been approved:

- Online registration is completed, and a family account has been established through our website.
- The registration fee of \$50.00 has been paid through the registration process.
- The following forms have been submitted online through the families account or in person at Astar Explorer:
  - Signed Family Handbook Acknowledgement
  - Completed Emergency Contact Form
  - Completed Medication Form (if applicable)
  - Current Immunization Records
  - Current Physical from Primary Care Physician
  - Parent/Guardian ID Copy
  - Child's Photograph
  - Completed Media Release



- Families with outstanding balance from the previous year will not be able to enroll until balance is paid in full.
- If your child's enrollment was terminated due to unpaid balance or behavioral issues, enrollment for the following school year will be evaluated on case-by-case basis.

Your child may begin to attend Astar Explorer's after school care program once the above requirements have been met.

### Eligibility:

Astar Explorer does not discriminate against children on the basis of gender, race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, physical, mental or learning abilities or any other protected characteristics. Astar Explorer will serve all eligible students based upon available space. This includes students at all learning abilities and students with special needs.

### Students with Special Needs:

Astar Explorer will not exclude children with special needs from our programs unless their presence would pose a direct threat to the health and/or safety of themselves, others or would require a fundamental alteration to the program in order to accommodate them.

- Astar Explorer will make any reasonable accommodations to policies, practices and programs to include children with special needs in our programs.
- Our Director and Academic Director will make an individualized assessment regarding our programs and location can meet the particular needs of a child with disabilities to attend our programs.
- Children that pose a direct threat – a substantial risk of serious harm to the health or safety of themselves or to other – will not be permitted to remain in our programs. The Director and Academic Director will make this decision and consult the parents.

When determining if Astar Explorer can serve a student with special needs, we will consider relevant factors when deciding. These factors include, but are not limited to:

- The child's ability to function in a high sensory environment with 30-40 other children.
- The child's ability to function in a large space, without individualized supervision.
- The child's ability to function with a student to staff ratio of 6:1.
- The child's health care needs.

When it is deemed appropriate, Astar Explorer may ask to consult with teachers, school administrators and previous childcare providers when deciding. Any outside of Astar Explorer consultations will be shared with the student's parents or guardian.

If Astar Explorer is able accommodate the child's needs and they are accepted into our After School care program, our Academic Director will work with the parent to develop a written plan of accommodation, required to meet the child's needs.

### Changes in Attendance:

Our online family account system allows families to make any necessary changes to your child's enrollment and/or attendance. In order to allow our staff to make adjustments due to enrollment, we required at least 10 days notice of any planned enrollment changes.

If you must make changes with less than 10 business days notice, you may do so by calling us directly at (703) 459-1031. Please note a \$25.00 administration fee will be applied.

### Program Withdrawal Instructions:

All program withdrawals must be submitted through the online family portal or via email to [afterschool@astarexplorer.com](mailto:afterschool@astarexplorer.com) at least 10 business days prior to the last date of your child's attendance.

If 10 business days notice is not given, you may be required to pay for the time your child was not in attendance.

If you wish to reregister your child at any later date, you may do so. Your child will be accepted back, should the following requirements be fulfilled:

- Your account is in good standing and there are no past due balances.
- Space is available in our program.
- A \$49.00 registration fee will be assessed to reenroll.

If you choose to withdrawal from the program due to quality, curriculum or behavioral concerns please contact the Director or Academic Director to discuss your concerns.

### Upcoming School Year Registration:

Registration for the upcoming school year will begin in the spring, typically following the return from Spring Break. All active families will receive an email notification with registration dates for the upcoming school year.

Space in our upcoming school year programs is available on a first come, first service basis. Current/active families will receive priority when registering for the upcoming school year.

### Program Benefits:

At Astar Explorer we strive to provide working parents a unique, hands-on after school care program that is safe, engaging and fun your students. Our curriculum has been developed with the consultation of Northern Virginia educators to ensure or program is meeting

parent expectation, compliments Virginia Standards of Learning and proved a fun and interactive STEM environment for students.

All Astar Explorer team members are highly trained to provide expert after school care.

### Homework Assistance:

Astar Explorer provides daily time, space and support necessary to allow students to complete homework assignments in the timeframe given. Our team is available to assist students with homework when needed.

### Daily Structured Program:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Open time – 4:15pm	Attendance, Open-ended Play, Snack Time				
4:15pm-5:00pm	Homework Time				
5:00pm-6:00pm	Coding & Robotics	Language Emerson	Makerspace	Mathematics	Open Exploration
6:00pm-6:15pm	Open-ended Play, Parent Pickup				

### STEM Programming:

Astar Explorer’s STEM based curriculum programs all students the opportunity to participate in hands-on activities in the following categories:

### Parent Communication and Responsibilities:

#### Methods of Communication:

Astar Explorer will communicate to parents through many forms.

- Email notifications will be sent out for reminders of special events, scheduled closures and other related information.
- This information will also be told verbally during pickup times.
- In the event of an emergency a phone call will be made.

- In the event of a closure due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstance, parents will receive a text message via our family account system as well as an email.
- Account information and billing information can be viewed and/or updated in our online family account system.
- Parents will be emailed a monthly newsletter to highlight upcoming events, new program offerings and other important information for the future.
- The Director or Academic Director are available to speak with parents during office hours. Should you need to speak with them outside of these hours, they can be reached via phone call or email.

### Parental Responsibilities:

In order to offer the best experience possible for our students and families, Astar Explorer has set the following policies for parents.

- Notify Astar Explorer as soon as possible of any unplanned absences.
- Updated documents with Astar Explorer throughout the year as necessary to ensure our records are up to date for student physicals, immunizations, emergency contacts, etc.
- Be sure to properly sign out your child through our checkout system each day they are in attendance.
- In order to keep your child's spot in our program be sure to make payments on time. To access family account information just log into the online portal at [www.astarexplorer.com](http://www.astarexplorer.com)

### Plan for Student Behavioral Guidance:

When setting student behavioral expectations, Astar Explorer uses a positive behavior support method. Astar Explorer will not impose punishments and/or restrictions on your child. Our teaching staff will offer your child choice to help guide behavior.

- A quiet area is provided to students who act aggressively out of frustration. This area will be within view of our teaching staff and academic director.
- Students will plan an active part in the discussion and setting behavioral expectations.
- Leadership plays an important role in our curriculum and students may be given designated jobs or responsibilities to keep them focused and on task.
- Astar Explorer will provide behavioral guidance to children by:
  - Encouraging self-control and the use of self-control.
  - Help our students learn social, communication and emotional regulation skills.

- Teach students to use activity modification and adult support to encourage appropriate behavior.
- Intervene quickly at the first sign of physical aggression between students.
- Explain Astar Explorer's expectations, rules and procedures and the reasons behind them to students.
- Train our staff in behavior management techniques and promote consistency in training.

Astar Explorer prohibits staff from using the following methods:

- Corporal punishment in the form of spanking or other method.
- Severe punishment such as humiliation, shaming, neglecting, verbal and/or physical abuse.
- Depriving students of snack time and/or meals, forcing students to eat or drink against their will or any other form of using food as a consequence.
- Confining students to a small space in lieu of supervision.
- Giving excessive time-out time.

## Avoiding Suspension from Program

Astar Explorer's Academic Director will review all student applications that indicate the risk of behavioral or social-emotional challenges. An accommodation plan will be presented to the parents and mutually agreed upon between the parents and our Academic Director prior to the student's enrollment in our after school care programs.

### Student Accommodation Plan:

When creating a student accommodation plan Astar Explorer's Director and/or Academic Director will:

- Observe the student and note the circumstances in which the behavior happens.
- Consider all aspects of the student's life.
- Parents should be open about observations made at home and other knowledge from home or school life to gain insight into the student's behavior.
- Consequences for not following Astar Explorer's expectations will be made clear to the student.
- Consider whether change in environment would be helpful.
  - Accommodations may include changes in programs.
  - Changes in room arrangement.
  - Individualized attention from teaching staff.
- Once accommodation plans are agreed upon, a progressive behavior plan may be implemented for reoccurring behaviors that may jeopardize the student's ability to remain in the Astar Explorer program.

## Student Behavior Plan:

Astar Explorer's Academic Director and teaching staff play an important role when implementing a student behavior plan. They will:

- Discuss the behavior with the student to ensure they understand why this is an unacceptable behavior. The Astar Explorer team member that witnessed the behavior will document the incident and discuss with the parents during that day's pickup.
- For sever incidents, parents will be called immediately.
- If the behavior reoccurs on a separate day, parents will be contacted to set up a meeting to review the accommodation plan set forth and additional recommendations may be made.

In some instances it may be necessary to terminate a students enrollment in the Astar Explorer after school program. Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- Intentional destruction of Astar Explorer Property.
- Intentional acts of aggression toward another student or Astar Explorer team member.
- Inappropriate touching of another student or team member.
- Aggressive language, threats or discussion of violence.
- Absent from Astar Explorer program for two weeks without notice and/or failure to pay for two weeks without communication with the Director.

## Child Abuse Protection and Mandated Reporting

State and Federal law requires Astar Explorer employees to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect by contacting the State of Virginia, Child Protective Services. This information will be held confidential between the employee making the report, Astar Explorer's Director and the CPS contact. This includes the reporting parents and/or guardians who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Section 63.2-100 of the Code of Virginia defines an abused or neglected child as any child under 18 years of age whose parent or any person responsible for his or her care\* (such as a child care provider, foster parent, or anyone responsible for the welfare of a child receiving residential care at an institution):

- Causes or threatens to cause a nonaccidental physical or mental injury;
- Has a child present during the manufacture or attempted manufacture of a controlled substance or during the unlawful sale of such substance where such activity would constitute a felony violation;

- Neglects or refuses to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, emotional nurturing, or health care;
- Abandons the child;
- Neglects or refuses to provide adequate supervision in relation to a child's age and level of development;
- Knowingly leaves a child alone in the same dwelling with a person, not related by blood or marriage, who has been convicted of an offense against a minor for which registration is required as a violent sexual offender; or
- Commits or allows to be committed any illegal sexual act upon a child, including incest, rape, indecent exposure, prostitution, or allows a child to be used in any sexually explicit visual material.
- An abused or neglected child is also a child who has been identified as a victim of sex trafficking.

#### Astar Explorer's Procedures of Reporting Abuse or Neglect:

- Virginia law requires mandated reports to immediately make an oral report to Child Protective Services when, in their professional capacity, they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of 18 years is suffering from abuse and/or neglect. A written report is to be submitted within 48 hours.
- Astar Explorer team members are to immediately inform the Director, who will confirm the facts as reported and condition of the child.
- The Director will require the team member involved to complete an incident report with the date, time and specifics of their observations. The report will include the type and location of physical marks of the suspected abuse and/or neglect.
- The Director will review the report within 24 hours and will determine to file a written report or not.
- If Astar Explorer determines to file the written report with CPS, the team member reporting the suspected abuse/neglect will be informed on a need to know basis by the Director. This allows for any additional action and/or observation only if necessary.

#### Astar Explorer's Procedure for Report Abuse or Neglect by a Team Member:

- The Director will be immediately informed by the Astar Explorer team member that witnessed the act of abuse and/or neglect by another team member.
- The Astar Explorer team member will be contacted by the Director and placed on administrative leave without pay until the allegations have been cleared or confirmed.
- Astar Explorer will self-report to CPS immediately upon confirmation of the allegations. Astar Explorer will also report upon learning that a report has been filed naming a team member.

- In the event allegations are confirmed, the team member's employment will be terminated immediately.
- Team members are suspected of abuse and/or neglect will not have any contact with children or families involved in the incident.

## Healthcare Policies and Information:

### Plan for Medical Emergencies:

- Astar Explorer requests that parents notify a team member of any known allergies for each child enrolled, at the time of enrollment or upon confirmation of the allergy by a medical physical.
  - Every step will be taken to ensure the child does not come in contact with known allergens.
- In case of a medical emergency, such as; allergic reaction, serious fall, cut, seizure or serious illness, an Astar Explorer team member trained in first aid will being administration of necessary treatment while another team member attend to the needs of the other children in the program.
- A team member not assisting with the care of the child involved will call for 911 assistance when immediately necessary and will contact the Astar Explorer Director to inform them of the emergency.
- The Director or other team member not directly involved in the care of the child with a medical emergency will contact the parents to inform them of the situation and that 911 has been contacted.
- An Astar Explorer team member will accompany the child to the hospital and bring the child's file containing permission forms, medical forms, etc.
- For non-911 emergencies, the Director will consult with the parents and/or guardian and request an immediate pickup for transportation of the child to receive medical care.
- In the event the parents or guardians cannot be reached, the team member will contact all emergency contacts listed in the child's account, in the order in which they are listed.
- If a parent, guardian or emergency contact cannot be reached, the Astar Director will decide on a plan of care. If transportation to the hospital or other medical facility is deemed necessary for the safety of the child a Astar Explorer Team Member will serve as the child's guardian until the parents, guardian or emergency



contacts can be reached. If medical treatment is necessary, 911 will be called for ambulance transportation to a treatment facility.

- Astar Explorer team members are prohibited from transporting children in a personal vehicle for medical treatment.
- Once the child has received the necessary treatment, all necessary reports will be completed by the Astar Explorer team member and copies will be filed in the students file and a copy will be furnished to the parent or guardian.

### Plan for Care of Students with Mild Illness or Injury:

Prior to student registration in Astar Explorer's After School care program, parents or legal guardian must upload a current physical exam (performed within the last 12 months) and immunization records to the family account.

- It is required that Astar Explorer have updated and current emergency forms on file for each child attending the after school care program.
- It is required that Astar Explorer have accurate phone numbers to contact parents and/or guardians and at least three (3) emergency contacts. If there is a move, change of phone number, etc that would affect our staffs ability to contact the parent, guardian or emergency contacts in the event of a medical situation or illness; it is the responsibility of the parent to update this information through the online parent portal.
- Astar Explorer must be informed by a parent/guardian of any medical condition or chronic condition that could cause difficulties when handling any medical emergencies that may arise.
- Children who become mildly ill or injured during program hours will receive appropriate care from an Astar Explorer team member who is trained in first aid. Our basic forms of treatment for mild injuries is cleaning cuts/wounds, bandaging and applying a cold compress. Our basic forms of treatment for mild illness is to review the symptoms with the child, take their temperature, and allow for them to rest in a quiet location. Children who are mildly ill or injured will be continued to be monitored by an Astar Explorer team member.
- Symptoms of mild illness may include headaches, fevers below 100 degrees, belly/body ache, mild cough or congestion, ear ache, sore throat without fever, etc.
- Mild injures include small cuts or scrapes, bumps, bruises, nose bleeds, loose or loss of baby tooth, and injuries resulting from a short fall.
- If any student complains of an illness or injury for more than 15 minutes, an Astar Explorer's team member will consider this a persistent injury or illness and will contact the parent or guardian to consult with them. Typically students who are not able to participate in normal activities and routines at the Astar Explorer center should be pickup by parent or guardian as soon as they are able.

- If a student becomes seriously ill, vomits, has a high grade fever, etc. the parent or guardian will be notified for immediate pickup. The Astar Explorer team will keep the child comfortable and away from the other students while awaiting pickup.
- Parents or guardians of any student that receives treatment of any form of first aid care will receive an injury/illness report form that has been completed by an Astar Explorer team member at the time of pickup. The parent will be informed of the situation and the treatment given verbally and asked to sign the report form. A copy of the signed report for will be furnished to the parent or guardian and one copy placed in the students file.
- If a student has an injury to any part of their head, neck or back the parents or guardians will be notified and consulted as to any necessary treatment. They will be informed if the injury is believed to be mild or more severe. This is a precautionary measure in addition to the injury/illness report form.
- If a child is ill with a fever of 102 degree or more, is vomiting or has a communicable illness, parents/guardians are required to keep the child out of the program for the recommended amount of time on the communicable illness graph.
- If the child experiences a fever of 102 degrees or higher, is vomiting or develops a communicable illness while in the care of Astar Explorer the parents/guardians will be contacted, and an immediate pickup will be requested.
- If any Astar Explorer team member or student is known to have any type of communicable illness or condition, such as lice, it is the responsibility to the parents/guardian to notify Astar Explorer immediately. When are report of a communicable illness is received all parents/guardians will be notified via email and a written letter at pickup.

### Communicable Illness Graph

Diagnosed Illness and/or Symptoms:	Child can't return to Astar Explorer Until:
Fever above 102 degrees	24 hours after the fever is below 102 degrees without the use of fever reducing medications.
Vomiting more than twice per hour	They have not vomited for a 12 hour period.
Infectious Diarrhea	Child is on medications and has a doctor's note permitting return to care
MRSA	Child is on medications and has a doctor's note permitting return to care
Meningitis	Child is on medications and has a doctor's note permitting return to care
Conjunctivitis	On medication for 48 hours
Strep Throat	On medication for 24 hours

The Flu	24 hours after fever has subsided
Pneumonia	On medication for 24 hours
Ear Infection with Fever	24 hours after fever has subsided
Chicken Pox	On medication for 24 hours
Head Lice	Child may return after complete treatment and must be lice free
Ringworm	Treatment has begun
Herpes Simplex	Sores have been completely scabbed over or can be covered
Mononucleosis	Contagious period has passed and child is feeling well enough to return
Vaccine Preventable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measles</li> <li>• Mumps</li> <li>• Rubella</li> <li>• Tetanus</li> <li>• Hepatitis B</li> </ul>	Contagious period has passed and child is feeling well enough to return

### Administering Medication

Medication (prescription or non-prescription) or topical cream cannot be administered to a student without a completed medication form and/or authorization from a licensed health care provider.

- All medication administered including but not limited to oral or topical cream of any kind, either prescription or non-prescription and must be provided by the parent or guardian.
- Astar Explorer staff members are trained annually in procedures for administering medication.
- All medication must be provided as prescribed and in the container in which they were prescribed, with original and readable label that includes the directions of use and the child’s name clearly visible.
- Both the medication and prescription label must be current and nonexpired.
- Astar Explorer staff will not administer medication of any kind contrary to the directions provided on the label, unless with written authorization by the student’s primary care physician.
- Unless otherwise specified in the child’s individual health plan, Astar Explorer staff will store medications out of reach of students. Medications will be stored in a sanitary, safe and secure location within the Astar Explorer center.
  - Emergency medications like epi-pen injectors will be immediately available, however will not be accessible to students.

- When appropriate any unused medication will be returned to the parent or guardian.
- Any nonprescription medication can be administered by Astar Explorer staff with a completed medication form and a written authorization from a primary care physician.
- If the medication requires a measurement, the measuring device must be provided by the parent or guardian and clearly labeled with the student's name.
- Astar Explorer team members will not administer the first dose of any medication, unless it is an emergency situation, and only with consent from the parent or guardian.
- Each time a medication is administered by Astar Explorer team members, the team member will document the student's name, date/time, dosage amount and the method in which it was administered. This will be available in the student's file and available at any time for review by a parent or guardian.

## Medication Forms

Medication forms can be completed through the only parent portal at [www.astarexplorer.com](http://www.astarexplorer.com), or by completing a written form and providing to the Academic Director.

## Program Arrival, Departure and Transitions

Utilizing effective transitions to, from and inside the program help Astar Explorer team members to minimize behavior problems, minimize disruptions and maximize student engagement.

## Transportation Plan

Astar Explorer does provide transportation from specific Fairfax county schools to the center. In order for your child to be transported, a transportation request form must be completed by a parent or guardian through the online parent portal or in person at the Astar Explorer Center. Please contact our office at 703-459-1031 for a list of available schools.

## Program Drop Off

Parents and/or guardians that are responsible for transporting their own students, must accompany their child into the Astar Explorer Center and sign the student in. Students are not permitted to walk through Fair Oaks mall without being accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. The Astar Explorer chain of custody will not begin until a parent or guardian has properly signed in their student.

## Program Pick Up

Astar Explorer After School care students must be picked up by an adult who is 18 years of age or older and signed out between 6:00pm and 6:15pm. Parents who wish to pick up their child before 6:00pm may do so, however, no credit will be given for early pickups.

All pickup persons must be list in the student's file. This includes parents, grandparents, guardians, siblings, babysitters, or anther students parents. Anyone listed as approved for pickup must be prepared to show proper identification to Astar Explorer team members. This includes any of the following:

- Driver's License
- Military ID
- State ID
- Passport

Astar Explorer team members will not release a student to anyone not listed as an approved pickup persons, or to any approved pickup persons that are not able to show a valid identification. This is for the safety of our students.

Also, Astar Explorer Team Members at their discretion will not release a child to any approved pickup persons if the team member feels they cannot safely care for the student, such as believing the pickup person has arrived intoxicated or displays potentially dangerous and/or harmful behaviors or acts aggressively.

Astar Explorer's chain of custody ends when the child has been properly signed out by a parent, guardian or approved pickup person.

## Sibling Pick Up

Astar Explorer will make an exception to the 18 years or older rule, when being pickup by the student's older sibling. Siblings must be 16 years of age and on the provided approved pickup list. Siblings must adhere to the photo ID requirement. Siblings under the age of 18 will not be permitted to pickup neighbors, friends, or family members who are not siblings.

## Parent/Guardian Visitation

A custodial parent may attend our after school program for visitation purposes. Admission will be permitted while the child is in the program and with approval from the legal parent or guardian.

## Additional Program Fees

### Insufficient Funds (NSF)

A \$30.00 fee will be charged for any payment that is returned unpaid by your bank or credit/debit card company as NSF. This fee will be the maximum allowable fee in accordance with state regulations. This fee will be added to the balance due.

### Late Pickup Fee

It is our goal to make pickup times as convenient as possible for families. We understand traffic, meetings not released on time, etc. If you know you are going to be late for pickup, please call us at (703) 459-1031. In the event of a late pickup (10 minutes or more) without notice, a fee of \$2.00 per minute will be added to your account balance.

If late pickup becomes a chronic issue (three times within a 60-day period) will result in possible suspension or termination of enrollment. If you know you will be late, please have an alternate person available for pickup.

All additions to the approved pickup list can be made through the parent portal or directly with the academic director or director.

## Emergency Response Plan

### Missing Student – Transportation Students

**Please contact our office at 703-459-1031 if your child will be absent from our program.** When a student is missing from the transportation pickup location at your child's school, the following steps will be taken:

1. Review the attendance sheet to ensure the student is scheduled to attend.
2. Review the school's absent school report.
3. Contact the school office to page the student.
4. Try to contact the school's teacher with help from the office.
5. Contact the student's school bus with help from the office.
6. Contact Parent followed by Emergency Contact numbers listed in the students file if parent cannot be reached.

Our transportation team will not leave the student's school until the student has been located and in the custody of our team or it has been confirmed the student was absent from school or the parent confirms the student will not be attending the program. If the above steps are taken and the student has not been located, the transportation along with the school will contact the police department and coordinate with parents and/or emergency contacts.

## Missing Student – During the Program

Astar Explorer Team Members will attendance at the start of the program and regular head counts during the program. Should a child become missing during the program the following steps will be taken:

1. Take an additional head count to ensure the count was correct.
2. Immediately identify which student is missing. All activities will be put on hold until a face-to-face roll call has been completed to identify the student.
3. Communication to all staff members that a student is missing and provide name, age, grade and physical description.
4. Confirm with sign-in and sign-out system to verify the student was not pickup early.
5. Communicate with Fair Oaks Mall main office and security office that a student is missing.
6. Contact Parent followed by Emergency Contact numbers listed in the students file if parent cannot be reached.
7. If the child still has not been located, an Astar Explorer team member will contact the policy and coordinate with all staff, Fair Oaks Mall staff and the parents.

## Emergency Contingency Plan

In an effort to keep our students and team members safe, Astar Explorer has put the following Emergency Preparedness plan into effect.

- Astar Explorer team members will plan an execute at least one emergency drill per month. This includes fire drills and tornado drills. Drills will be conducted at various times throughout the program. Parents/Guardians and students will not receive advance notice of the dill schedule.
- Astar Explorer has also adopted the “shelter in place” procedure from Fair Oaks Mall in the event of an active shooter.
- Astar Explorer team members will ensure than all student medication and first aid kit is immediately accessible at all times during an emergency or when leaving the building.
- All exits from the Astar Explorer center are clearly marked by exit signs.
- All Astar Explorer team members will have a method in which to record attendance in the event of an emergency. This will include parent/guardian and emergency contact information for each student enrolled, in the event parents are to be notified of the situation.
- All Astar Explorer team members will receive emergency preparedness training and instructions for handling emergency situations.
- In the event of a loss of power, heat/ac, water or other unforeseen utility, Astar Explorer team members will work directly with Fair Oaks Mall maintenance staff to

gauge the situation. Every attempt will be made to remain open during these events, however, if the center is not able to stay open for the safety of the students and staff the parent or guardian will be contacted for pickup. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, Astar Explorer team members will contact Emergency contacts listed in the order they are listed.

### Emergency Relocation

If the building becomes unsafe to remain inside, students will be evacuated following the emergency evacuation drills, attendance will be taken, and parents/guardians will be contact as soon it is safe to do so.

### Infectious Diseases

All Astar Explorer team members will be trained annually in infection control procedures, including proper handwashing, disinfecting and sanitizing area surfaces, floors and equipment.

All state guidelines will be followed for the clean-up and disinfection of areas that are contaminated by blood or other bodily fluid.

### Illness

If your child does not attend school due to an illness, they should not attend Astar Explorer's after school care program. If the student becomes sick while at the program the parent/guardian/emergency contacts will be contacted immediately for pickup.

### Reporting

Student safety is our number one priority followed by parent communication. Should any accident, injury, illness or emergency situation occur during the program the Astar Explorer team member(s) involved will create a written report documenting the situation and how it was handled. A copy of the written report will be furnished to all parents/guardians of affected students.

## Additional Procedures/Policies

### Excess Damage

The Astar Explorer team takes great pride in offering a cutting edge learning environment and normal wear and tear is expected. However, should a student cause willful damage, undue carelessness or show disregard for our rules, it is our policy to notify the parents and request their cooperation to overcome the situation. Each situation will be evaluated individually by the Director and Academic Director and will determine what action is to be



taken. The director will determine if and what any reasonable cost of repair is requested from the parent.

## Food

A healthy snack is provided during the Astar Explorer After School program, following USDA guidelines. Students are not permitted to bring in additional snacks/food into the program without consent from the Astar Explorer team.

If special dietary needs or special foods are required, parents will be responsible for discussing with the Academic Director and providing the necessary snack time replacement.

## Personal Belongings

During the Astar Explorer After School program, students will be provided an open cubby for their backpack or other personal belongs brought. This is an open space and students are required to take all belongings home during pickup.

- Students should leave all valuables at home such as toys, money, electronics.
- Astar Explorer is not liable for theft, loss and/or breakage of any personal belongings brought by a student to the program.
- Any personal belongings left at the end of each day will be placed in the lost in found at the reception desk.

## Dess Code

Students dress should be inline with that to their school's dress code. Students should wear close toed shoes to prevent injuries.

## Custody/Care Issues

Should there be changes to the legal custody or care of your child while enrolled at Astar Explorer, please provide a copy of legal documentation to the director.

- Astar Explorer restricts parental access to the site as deemed by legal documentation.
- Astar Explorer team members are not permitted to testify on behalf of a parent or guardian in any type of legal proceeding without a court order.
- Astar Explorer team members will not act as mediators between parent and/or guardians.

## Employee Background Checks

Astar Explorer performs criminal background checks on all employees prior to their working with students. Once the background check has been successfully completed and the new hire has been cleared, they will begin to work with students.



## Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

By signing this acknowledgement form, I agree to the following:

1. All forms must be accurately completed and updated with Astar Explorer
2. I understand that myself or another pre-authorized person must sign out my child daily. I also understand that I must accompany my child in and out of the Astar Explorer center.
3. I understand that my child will not be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person or with an authorized person that cannot supply proper identification.
4. I understand that Astar Explorer will not administer medication to my child without a completed medication form.
5. I understand that tuition payment is due upon pickup on the date of the schedule payment. Weekly, biweekly and monthly payment plans are available.
6. I understand the follow fees:
  - a. Late Payment Fee
  - b. NSF Fee
  - c. Late Pickup Fee
7. I understand I must notify Astar Explorer prior to my child's absence in order to receive a credit for that day.
8. I understand that by state and federal law, Astar Explorer team members are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.
9. I understand that if my child cannot attend school due to an illness, he/she should not attend Astar Explorer's Programs. I also understand the illness symptoms table and agree to remove my child from the program until the illness has subsided per the table.
10. I understand that I can contact Astar Explorer via phone at 703-459-1031 during office hours should I have a question or concern regarding the policies outlined in the Family Handbook.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_