

2026



CAMP MCLEAN PARENT HANDBOOK



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Camp McLean is a program of the McLean Community Center, an agency of Fairfax County Government. www.mcleancenter.org

Camp McLean

Camp Philosophy

Camp McLean is designed for your camper to experience the fun and excitement of summer day camp in an enriching and safe environment. Each day offers structured activities in arts and crafts, nature, sports, games, music and drama, and other special activities. Under the guidance of experienced and energetic counselors, campers are encouraged to express their creativity, improve their social and physical skills, develop new interests, gain independence, and develop a positive self-image through hands-on activities. The program recognizes campers as unique individuals who deserve the right to be treated equally with fair and consistent limits.

Required Forms

The following forms are required one month prior to the start of camp. **Note: Without these forms, your camper will not be admitted to camp.** Please drop the completed forms off to the Camp Director at the Old Firehouse Center, 1440 Chain Bridge Rd, McLean, VA 22101. The following documents are required:

Camper Information Form: The parent or guardian must sign a completed Camper Information Form including all attachments (e.g., Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Permission form.) All sections must be completed and returned. Forms are available at the Old Firehouse or online at [here](#).

Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form: This is included in the Camper Information Sheet/Welcome to Camp McLean packet. Submit a completed form that is signed and dated by your physician within 12 months prior to the start of camp. A copy of the same form that was submitted to your child's school is acceptable if it was signed within the required date range. Copies of the form are available at the Old Firehouse or online at www.mcleancenter.org.

Verification of Camper Identity: Old Firehouse staff must verify the camper's identity and age in accordance with the Code of Virginia Laws and Related Statutes on submission of paperwork. One of the following documents may be used:

- Certified copy of campers' birth certificate
- A U.S. passport (or US State Department issued documentation)
- Virginia school report card

Please do not leave originals at the Old Firehouse Center!

Medication Authorization Form (required if medications need to be administered during camp): The parent or guardian and a physician must sign a completed form for medication administration; including medical information and a list of allergies. (See special section on "Medication" below if your child needs medication at camp.)

Parent/Staff Communication

The camp office phone number is 571-363-8290. Please understand that the Camp Office telephone may not always be answered as staff may be involved in a camp activity outside the office. You may leave a message. Please do not call the school, the McLean Community Center, or the Old Firehouse directly. Emails may be directed to Camp Director at Barry.PinderRobinson@Fairfaxcounty.gov.

Camp Hours and Days of Operation

Camp	Days	Camp Hours	Pick-up Time
Iron Patriots (5-6)	Monday - Friday	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.	4 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.
Thunderbolts (7-8)			
Guardians (9-10)			

Arrival on the First Day

Please arrive promptly at 9 a.m. Camp staff will be available to direct campers to their respective locations. Please take great care with your camper in the parking area. **All campers MUST have complete paperwork before they are permitted to remain at camp.**

Drop Off: Parents or guardians must escort their camper to their respective destination and check them in. Please be aware the drop-off may take longer than expected, as we check lunches every morning.

Late Arrival: DO NOT SEND YOUR CAMPER(S) INTO THE BUILDING! Parents must call Camp Director (571-363-8290), so that staff can meet you and your camper at the front door. Camp staff will escort your camper to his or her group activity area. We request that every effort be made to bring the camper to camp on time. When tardiness is expected please notify the camp in advance by providing a written note or email. If your camper is late on a Field Trip Day and their group has left, the camper will not be allowed to stay on the premises.

Pick Up: You must park and come to your campers' respective station for pick-up. Individuals authorized for pick-up must be at least 18 years old and **show a government approved photo ID for positive identification before the camper will be released from camp each day.** Pick-up time is any time during the 15 minutes after camp ends.

Early Pick-up: Authorized individuals, picking up campers early **must call Camp Director**, so that they can walk your camper out. These procedures are essential for our camp staff to properly supervise the remaining campers.

Late Pick-up: Authorized individuals, picking up campers late, must call the Camp Director. **A pick-up is considered late if the parent arrives after the end of the normal pick-up time (any time after 4:15 p.m.).** A late fee of \$15.00 per child will be assessed every 15 minutes (or part thereof) up to one hour. Late fees will be placed on campers account, to be paid prior to the end of camp.

If a camper is not picked up by 5:30 pm, camp staff will attempt to contact parents or guardians and/or emergency contacts. If no contact can be made, we will contact Child Protective Services (CPS) and follow CPS recommendations, which may lead to calling the local police department. We will leave a message for you with the location of your camper.

In the event of an emergency, the same late pick-up guidelines will apply, however late fees will be waived.

Release of Campers to Authorized Persons

Indicated in the Camp McLean Camper Information Packet, there are specific individuals authorized to pick up your campers. Your camper will be released only to those individuals listed on the camper information sheet. As required by Article 63.2-1813 of the Code of Virginia, requests to limit authorization to either custodial parent/guardian must be substantiated by appropriate court documents.

If an emergency arises and you require someone other than those authorized individuals to pick up your camper, you must provide a written note authorizing the change. We will accept an email to Barry.PinderRobinson@Fairfaxcounty.gov. The person authorized to pick up your camper must also provide photo identification. **Camp McLean will refuse the release of a camper to anyone without proper identification.** Camp may call for verbal verification.

Absence from Camp

We ask that you contact the Camp Director before 9 a.m. if your camper will be absent for the day or to schedule a prearranged absence. You may call the Camp Director at 571-363-8290 or email Barry.PinderRobinson@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Camp Standard of Conduct

We believe all children and youth can succeed and will make every effort to work with campers and their families to create an environment where success can be found. Staff approach each situation in a positive, consistent and constructive manner. When campers are having difficulties, we will try to redirect them by providing positive alternatives. The staff involved communicates to the camper privately to discuss issues as they arise. As a result, the camper may be directed to another activity within the group. Depending on the situation, it may become necessary for a camper to sit with staff to receive personalized instructions, cool down, or reset, from a group activity. This can allow for a camper to rejoin the group activity at a later time. We view parents as partners to their camper's success and will contact parents as issues arise. Parents are encouraged to share any success or action plans that are being implemented in other settings.

If working together cannot yield success, a camper may be dismissed from camp for uncontrollable and disruptive behavior, endangering themselves or other campers, or inability to consistently abide by camp rules. The amount of notice before removal from camp will be determined on a case-by-case basis. ***There are no refunds under these circumstances.***

Policy Regarding Illness

Campers that were sick within the last 24 hours, experiencing symptoms of illness must remain home. Campers that are sick and arrive at camp with conditions such as a temperature of over 100.4 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis), or lice will not be able to stay at camp. Staff will notify the parent/guardian whenever the camper becomes ill. The parent/guardian will arrange to have the camper picked up as soon as possible but preferably not more than one hour from the time of notification. A sick camper will be made as comfortable as possible in the camp office, away from the other campers until arrangements can be made to have the camper taken home. In the event your camper becomes ill while participating in a field trip you may be required to travel to the field trip site to pick up your camper. Campers may return to camp once a negative test result is received or the symptoms dissipate.

Communicable Diseases

In the case that a camper or any member of the immediate household has developed any communicable diseases, as defined by the Virginia Department of Health (vdh.virginia.gov), they are required to inform the center within 24 hours. Life threatening diseases must be reported immediately to oldfirehouse@mcleancenter.org or 703-246-2411 or health@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Commented [JM1]: Broken hyperlink

Commented [BP2R1]: Thank you for pointing this out, an updated hyperlink has been added.

Child Abuse

Commented [BP3]: I seen this area was highlighted and wanted to be clear on the change that needed to be made?

Camp McLean staff are Fairfax County employees, and as such, staff are mandated to report any suspected incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in accordance with Article 63.2-1509 of the Code of Virginia. Any concerns or reason to suspect that a child is being abused and/or neglected will be reported to the local Department of Social Service.

Swimming

Iron Patriots, Thunderbolts, and Guardians campers will be transported by a commercial vehicle to a local pool. Your camper will be scheduled to swim once per week; you will be provided with a welcome letter every session that will include dates for pool days. Staff will provide a reminder the day prior to the swimming trip.

Your camper(s) will need the following items on water park days:

- Swimsuit. Preferably worn under their clothes when arriving at camp.
- Towel
- Large zip-lock bag (for placing wet clothes in after getting out of the water)
- Large backpack
- Personal sunscreen/insect repellent. (*Please review the Sunscreen, Lotion and Insect Repellent policies section on procedures*).
- Water shoes, crocs or flip flops (only allowed on water park days).

In addition to the pool site rules, please review the following camp swimming trip rules carefully with your child.

- Each camper is assigned to a group led by a counselor and must always stay with their group.
- Campers planning not to swim must still stay with their assigned group. Staff will provide alternative activities for those campers who choose not to swim.
- Camp staff will accompany all campers when in the locker room.
- Proper swimwear is required in the pool. Participants must wear a bathing suit; however, alternative swim attire is permitted (i.e. religious or cultural considerations). If alternative attire will be worn, please notify the Camp Director in advance. Please note that Camp McLean does not provide bathing suits.
- Sneakers/closed toe shoes may not be worn in the enclosed pool area. All pool shoes must be water shoes.
- Running, pushing, dunking or horseplay, to include participant and staff interaction, is strictly prohibited.
- Dives, flips, back jumps, or cartwheels from the side of the pool are prohibited.
- Food, candy, gum, drinks, glass containers or breakable objects are prohibited in the facility.
- Masks, snorkels, and fins may be used at the lifeguard's discretion.

- Campers may wear flotation devices in shallow water with direct supervision.
- Acceptable flotation devices are approved PFD's and inflatable armbands ("wings"). The pool may provide inflatable devices when available.
- Ball playing is prohibited on the pool deck. Inflatable beach balls or sponge balls are allowed in the pool during un-crowded conditions at the guard's discretion.
- Campers with skin infections, open wounds, nasal, or ear discharge, vomiting or diarrhea or any other communicable disease are not permitted in the pool.
- Campers may only use the sundeck area under the direct supervision of the camp staff.

Iron Patriots, Thunderbolts & Guardians Field Trips

Parents and guardians will receive an emailed welcome letter before the start of their session that will highlight Camp McLean trips. The welcome letter will give more details on what to bring and details for the day. Campers will be provided with a new shirt on their first day of camp. All campers must wear a Camp McLean T-shirt on all field trips. Your camper must bring a bag lunch consisting of non-perishable foods and a drink, if necessary. Please do not send money with your camper on trips.

Each camper is assigned a buddy within their staff-led group and will be required to stay with their buddy and with their group for the entire trip. Each age group will have a first aid kit available on each field trip in case of minor injuries. Campers will also be given a brightly color wristband to wear during the trip, that lists the camp's name and the phone number for the Camp Director.

We plan to leave for all field trips at 10:30 a.m. and return to camp no later than 3:30 p.m. However, if the return time is delayed for a significant amount of time due to traffic or any other unforeseen circumstances you will be notified.

In the event your camper becomes ill, injured or is unable to meet the camper code of conduct while participating in a field trip, you will be required to travel to the field trip site to pick up your camper. **Failure to do so, may result in a camper being dismissed from camp.**

Commented [JM4]: Again, is this in advanced and then a reminder, or are parents only finding out the itinerary the day before?

Commented [BP5R4]: Parents will receive a welcome letter before their session begins highlighting field trips, pool days, and in-house entertainment. A friendly reminder will be given to the campers and the guardians at pick up.

Vehicle Rules

- Campers will be transported on commercial carriers or Fairfax County designated vehicles.
- Campers will be expected abide by all rules of the Fairfax County Public School regarding safe bus behavior. Please review these rules with your child. Under student responsibility, these rules can be found on the following website www.fcps.edu/resources/safety-and-transportation/transportation-services/school-bus-service responsibilities
- All passengers are to be seated and fasten their seat belt (when available) while the vehicle is in motion.
- No toys or distracting objects are allowed on the bus.
- Eating and drinking is not permitted on the bus.
- Camp McLean staff are prohibited from transporting participants in their personal vehicles.

Camp Survey

Your opinion is important to us! We want to know what you think about our camp program. Surveys will be emailed on the last day of each session.

Parental Visits

For the safety and continued operation of camp, parents are not allowed to stay inside the camp facility for more than 15 minutes, if there's no designated family camp event. Camp events available for parental visits will be made available in advance.

Camp McLean T-Shirts

Two Camp T-shirts will be issued to each camper on the first day of each session. For your camper's safety, a Camp McLean T-shirt **MUST** be worn on each trip day.

Clothing for Camp and Children's Belongings

Weather permitting, campers will participate in outdoor activities. These activities may involve art projects, fitness activities or water fun. Shorts or athletic long pants are appropriate dress for camp day-to-day. Campers must wear sneakers or other sturdy closed-toe shoes. For specific activities that require specialized clothing, advance notice will be given. Sandals, flip-flops, or Heelys are not allowed at camp (unless notified in advance). Any camper allergic to Poison Ivy or sensitive to the sun may wish to adapt their clothing for when outdoor activities are scheduled (long-sleeved shirt and pants, socks, and hat).

It is recommended that all clothing and personal items be clearly marked with the camper's full name. Campers are asked not to bring items of value to camp. The camp does not assume responsibility for missing items, although every effort will be made to recover lost items. Your

Commented [JM6]: This further highlights why we cannot give only a day's notice for trips.

Commented [BP7R6]: Each session parents will receive welcome letters that will highlight dates for field trips, pool days, and any in house entertainment that will be available for their session. Staff members give notice a day before as a friendly reminder to the campers and the parents.

child will have a designated area to store his or her personal belongings.

All campers must have an extra change of clothes packed and brought to camp, at all times.

Electronic Devices

Campers are not permitted to have electronic devices during the camp day. Cell phones, tablets, earphones, smart watches, portable video game systems or any other electronic device will be held in the office. These items will be returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the camp day. If you need to be in contact with your camper in case of an emergency, please contact the Camp Director.

Cameras will be permitted during non-water park field trips and on the last day of each session only. If you must send a camera to camp, we recommend sending an inexpensive disposable camera. Camp McLean does not assume responsibility for lost or damaged cameras.

Meals/Lunches

Camp McLean is a NUT FREE site. Please check labels and do not send anything that includes any sort of nuts in the ingredient list, even if it is labeled as “may contain traces of”. This includes all items that are packaged with/by companies that produce peanut products. It is important that you check packaging labels before sending food items with your camper’s lunch. Camp McLean staff inspect all lunches daily upon check-in and will remove any items that contain nuts. Should camp staff have to remove an item(s), they will attempt to replace it with a comparable item.

All campers are required to bring lunch and a drink every day. Please label your camper’s lunch bag/box with the camper’s full name. We recommend your camper bring a refillable water bottle each day with the camper’s full name clearly marked. We also recommend packing an additional snack.

On site refrigerators are not available, please ensure lunches are packed appropriately. Some field trips may include a lunch option. Parents will be provided with lunch options prior to the field trip. Parents may opt out of the lunch option and send their camper with a lunch from home.

Snacks and drinks may be provided by the camp, depending on the day’s theme. Please inform Camp Director if your camper has any food allergies not previously noted on the camper information form. We will try to make special arrangements the best we can for camper with severe allergies.

Commented [JM8]: Do we provide snacks or occasionally provide snacks?

Commented [BP9R8]: Snacks are provided on occasion.

Medication

If your camper is on any medication, you must complete a Medication Authorization Form. The form can be obtained online on the [Camp McLean page](#) or requested from the Camp Director. Please submit the completed form on or before the first day of camp. **The form must include the physician's signature.** Only the Camp Director, can accept medications. All medication must be in the **original container with the prescription label and direction label attached.** The form must include the camper's name, the medication's name, the dosage and frequency amount. All medications must be current; we will not administer expired medication. All medications are kept in a locked container at camp. Medications needing to be refrigerated will be securely stored in a refrigerator.

Summer Heat (Code Red or Higher Alerts)

Although most camp sites are air-conditioned, when Code Red alerts and high-temperature warnings are issued, program activities will be modified. Scheduled events may be substituted with alternative activities such as fewer active games, water play, and indoor activities. Field trip days may be relocated temporarily to an indoor site at the discretion of the Camp Director.

Sunscreen, Lotion, and Insect Repellent

Camp McLean will only provide sunscreen, lotions and/or insect repellent with the written consent of parents in the Camp McLean Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Permission Section of the Camp McLean Information Packet. Camp staff will not apply these products to campers without permission. You may wish to apply sunscreen, lotion, or insect repellent on your child before their arrival at camp and, with permission, our staff will reapply. At Camp McLean we use Waterbabies SPF 50 and Off Family Brand, Unscented Insect Repellent. If your camper has an allergy to a product or you wish us to use a special brand, please indicate that on the camper's Sunscreen and/or Insect Repellent Permission Form. Please mark the sunscreen and/or insect repellent bottles you send to camp with your child's full name to ensure that only your child uses his/her bottle. Camp staff will encourage that children play in or have shade available whenever possible, avoid long periods of sun exposure and are provided with plenty of water. The Camp Director will determine the amount of time the children spend outside depending on the weather conditions.

Emergency Communication Policy

In the rare case of an emergency, for example, fire, severe weather, or a lockdown situation, Camp McLean will contact parents/guardians by phone and email. Please do not call the school. Camp McLean will follow the Fairfax County Public Schools Emergency Response Plan.

Camp McLean Team

Camp Director:

Barry Pinder-Robinson
(571)363-8290

Barry.PinderRobinson@fairfaxcounty.gov

Other important McLean Community Center names to know:

MCC Executive Director:

Betsy May-Salazar
(703)744-9342

Elizabeth.May-Salazar@fairfaxcounty.gov

MCC Deputy Director:

Jonathan Melendez
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Jonathan.Melendez@fairfaxcounty.gov

MCC Programs Director:

Michael Fisher
(703)448-8336

Michael.Fisher@fairfaxcounty.gov

Old Firehouse General Manager:

Andrew Carter
(703)246-4715

Andrew.Carter@fairfaxcounty.gov

Registrar Team:

Katie McGovern
Katie Park

registrar@mcleancenter.org