

**LINC Caring Communities  
Before & After School Program**

**Parent Handbook**



**LINC**  
Local Investment Commission

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# **LINC Caring Communities**

## **Before & After School Program**

### **Parent Handbook**

#### **I. Vision, Mission Goals**

##### **VISION STATEMENT**

LINC Caring Communities Before and After School programs will make high-quality school-age care available to all families, providing a safe and fun place that supports the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of the children of our community.

##### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of LINC Caring Communities Before and After School programming is to provide before- and after-school activities that foster social and academic development in caring and safe environments.

Our purpose is to support the child, the family and the community.

##### **GOALS**

The program will provide quality childcare that parents can rely upon throughout the school year.

The program will offer a variety of activities – recreation and games, arts and crafts, academics including reading and homework, music, and “free time” for the children to pursue their own interests – in a safe, friendly environment.

Results expected from the program:

1. An out-of-school-time experience for children that is fun and educational, provides a sense of belonging and safety, involves parents and promotes community spirit.
2. Children and youth succeeding in school.
3. Children safe in their families and families safe in their communities.
4. Adults working.

All participating children, youth, and families can expect the following:

1. To be safe – basic health and safety is a top priority. Parents/guardians must sign their children in and out daily.
2. Eyes-on supervision of children at all times.
3. Kind, respectful communication throughout the program.
4. Staff interacting with children at all times.
5. Staff on-time and prepared with daily program schedules, lesson plans, and adequate materials and supplies.
6. Warm, friendly and informative greeting of parents/guardians.

## **II. Fees and Payment Policy**

1. Payment for the first week of services is due prior to or on the first day of participation in the program.
2. A \$10.00 enrollment fee for each child, including free/reduced lunch students and full-pay students, is due at the time of enrollment. The fee covers enrollment processing. A separate enrollment fee is charged for the summer program.
3. Fees are non-refundable.

4. It is the parent's responsibility to apply/re-apply for free/reduced lunch status at the beginning of each school year. Your family lunch status determines your weekly fees for the Before and After School Program. Upon enrollment, fee-paying students (those not qualifying for free lunch) will be mailed a statement confirming their monthly fees. The statement will include mailing envelopes for return payment.
5. Failure to submit payment within 90 days of billing will be cause for probation, dismissal from program until payment is made, and/or inability to enroll in the next program session.
6. Parents are encouraged to talk with the Site Coordinator to identify alternatives if payments are past due and parents are unable to remain current.
7. Child will not be allowed to enroll at any time until balance is paid.
8. On-line payments can be made by electronic check or credit/debit card at <https://payments.umb.com/perlpay/kclinc>. Payments submitted by mail must be made by check or money order only.

### **III. IRS Statements**

Working families can receive a tax credit for 20 to 30 percent of the parent fees paid toward the Before and After School program, depending on family income. A maximum credit of \$5,000 is allowed for families with two children. Year-end receipts for tax purposes are mailed by January 31.

Other receipts for all payments will be issued upon request.

### **IV. Licensing**

LINC seeks to provide a healthy and safe environment for all children. We are required by the State of Missouri Bureau of Child Care to license all LINC-operated Before and After

School sites. While not all schools are licensed at this time, the intent is to have all schools licensed within the next several years.

## **V. Enrollment**

The Caring Communities Before and After School program encourages children of all backgrounds to attend. The program does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic background, or ability to pay.

To attend the program, a child must be enrolled. This includes the completion of the full enrollment packet by the parents/guardians, all appropriate authorizations and an interview with a Before and After School staff member. Without a complete enrollment, the program cannot authorize services for the child, nor, under any circumstances, allow the child to attend the program.

At program sites where space is currently unavailable, enrollment forms will be kept on file and a 'first come, first serve' waiting list developed based on the date enrollment forms are received. Parents will be contacted as space becomes available.

The Before and After School program is not a 'drop-in' program. However, the program may be used for scheduled occasional use (for example, Tuesdays and Thursdays after school) if space is available. Parents will still be charged the full weekly amount for occasional use.

## **VI. Enrollment Forms**

Parents/guardians will be required to complete the following prior to their child attending the program:

- Before and After School enrollment application
- Parent meeting/interview
- Medical report (if enrolled in the early childhood program)
- Billing activation sheet

- Easy reference card
- Immunization records

For the safety and security of all children, enrollment information is to be kept current. The parent/guardian is asked to notify the Site Coordinator immediately regarding any change of information on forms, such as emergency persons, names, employers, phone numbers, arrival/departure changes.

## **VII. Breakfast and Snack**

All enrolled children will have access to the school's breakfast program. All enrolled children will receive a daily after-school snack. All food served will meet USDA nutritional guidelines for school food programs. Children are not allowed to bring food to the program unless the food is available to all children.

## **VIII. Hours of Operation**

***Parents or authorized persons are required by state law to sign children into the before-school program and out of the after-school program. Dropping your child off without signing them into the program can result in loss of the program.***

Before-school program: 7:00 a.m. to start of school.

After-school program: end of the school day to 6:00 p.m.

Generally, the Before and After School programs will follow the school district's holiday, inclement weather, and Teacher In-service schedule.

## **IX. Afternoon Closing Time**

We understand that problems occasionally arise that could prevent you from picking up your child on time. In that event, please call the Site Coordinator as soon as you know you may be late and identify who will be picking up your child.

If the program staff has not heard from you by 6 p.m., the persons on your authorized pick-up list will be contacted to come and pick up your child immediately. In the event that we are unable to contact you or the late pick-up contact by 7 p.m., the police or Missouri Children's Division may be contacted.

Please discuss any questions about your site's late pick-up policy with the Site Coordinator.

The Before and After School program closes at 6:00 p.m. Parents whose children remain past 6:00 p.m. must pay overtime fees to cover staff costs as follows:

6:00 – 6:15	\$5.00 per child
6:16 – 6:30	\$10.00 per child
6:31 – 6:45	\$15.00 per child
6:46 – 7:00	\$20.00 per child
7:00 –	Mo. Children's Division or police may be called to pick up child.

Parents will sign a statement acknowledging their late fees.

A child's enrollment may be withdrawn if three or more overtime charges occur.

## **X. Absences**

Absentees without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child, resulting in unnecessary concern and time spent in searching for the child. Parents should notify the Site Coordinator if their child will be absent from the program.

If your child will not be attending the program because of a scheduled appointment, vacation or other planned absence, please notify the Site Coordinator in advance.

If a child does not arrive at the program as intended, the Site Coordinator will contact the parents. If the parents cannot

be reached, the Site Coordinator will contact the child's emergency contacts.

## **XI. Release of Children**

Children are to arrive and leave the program according to the schedule indicated by parents on the enrollment form.

All children must be signed in and out of the program daily by their parent/guardian or an authorized pickup person indicated on the enrollment application. Children will be escorted by the parent/guardian or authorized pickup person to and from the program areas as designated by the program policies.

Persons other than the child's parents may be required to present photo identification before being allowed to leave with the child.

If your child attends extracurricular activities or must for any other reason change his or her arrival or departure time, either on a given day or for the duration of the program, please notify the Site Coordinator prior to the date the change is effective.

Children who walk to and from school must meet the following conditions to be considered for "Walker Status":

1. Any child walking home alone from the program must be at least eight (8) years of age.
2. A child under eight (8) years of age cannot be dismissed from the program to walk alone.
3. A child who is eight (8) years of age or older can be the escort for children under the age of eight (8) years, with permission of the parent(s) or legal guardian.
4. After dusk, no children can be dismissed to walk home either alone or in a group.
5. Any child who is allowed to walk must have written permission (Walker Authorization) signed by the parent(s) or legal guardian of the child.

## **XII. Child Custody/Communication**

One of the primary goals of the Before and After School Program is the safety and well-being of each child. During the school year, a family situation can arise changing who the child lives with and who is authorized to pick up the child. If one parent requests that the other parent be removed from the authorized pick-up list, a legal document must be provided to the site coordinator explaining why this is to occur. A copy of the letter will be placed in the child's folder in the program office. If the document is not on file, the child will be released to the parent.

Only those persons identified on the application form will be allowed to remove children from the program.

## **XIII. Discharge of Children from the Program**

It is our desire to serve all children who are in need of the program's services; however, certain situations may require that a child be removed from the program either on a temporary or permanent basis. Generally these reasons include but are not limited to the following:

- Incomplete enrollment forms and required authorizations
- Specific incidences, or repeated behavior problems that endanger the child, others or property
- Conditions that cause health and safety concerns for the child or threaten the program's state license, such as children who are not signed in and out daily by their parents/guardians or an authorized pickup person
- Repeatedly not attending the program as scheduled at sites where a waiting list exists — this allows other children to attend, rather than holding space for a child who does not
- Non-payment of program fees without making satisfactory payment arrangements

## **XIV. Behavior Management**

Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at the program. The Before and After School program cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior.

Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity that may include, but is not limited to, behavior that:

- inflicts physical or emotional harm on self, other children, or staff
- threatens the safety of others through actions prohibited under the Missouri “Safe Schools Act”
- damages property
- ignores or repeatedly disobeys the rules which guide behavior during the school day and program time, thereby endangering self and others

If a child cannot adjust to the program setting and behave appropriately, then the child may be discharged.

## **XV. Health and Safety Policy**

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.) please be sure the Site Coordinator knows what to do if a problem should occur during program hours. Please make sure that any medication is available and that the appropriate forms for its use have been completed. An individualized care plan must be filled out by the doctor and will be placed in the child’s record.

If a child has any one of the following conditions, the parent will be notified to pick up the child immediately:

- contagious disease
- fever over 100 degrees F
- vomiting or diarrhea

- accident requiring medical attention
- head lice

In case of accident or illness, the child's parents will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to the nearest hospital by emergency vehicle for treatment.

Staff are instructed to make every effort to prevent a child from getting into a car with a parent who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In this circumstance, parents may be required to contact an alternative person to transport the child. In some cases, the local police may be contacted to determine if alternative arrangements are needed.

Staff may not, under any circumstances, provide transportation to parents or children enrolled in the Before and After School program.

Program policy and state law requires caregivers to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

## **XVI. Distribution of Medications**

Whenever a child is to be given prescription medication, the parent must provide the Site Coordinator with this information on the enrollment application. This form is included in your enrollment packet. Additional forms will be supplied by your Site Coordinator.

Medication must be provided in the original container, or a container accompanied by the doctor's instructions.

If medication for treatment of a chronic condition is to be kept at the program site, no more than a week's supply should remain at the site, at any time.

## **XVII. Insurance**

The program carries minimal liability insurance and a secondary accident policy for injuries that occur as a result of participation in the program, but has no financial resources of its own.

Because accidents do happen, parents may want to determine whether their personal insurance covers accidents at school. Many families are covered by the parent's policy at work, and/or their own private policies. The program's secondary accident policy covers only limited expenses that are not covered by the parent's primary insurance policy.

Uninsured children may be eligible for insurance through MC+ for Kids, the state of Missouri's health insurance plan for children. Please contact your Site Coordinator for more information.

## **XVIII. Child's Personal Property**

Children's personal property, coats, clothing, school bags, etc. must be removed from the child care room every day. Any personal property that remains will be placed in the lost-and-found box. Although the program attempts to help children stay organized, we cannot be responsible for lost personal property. Children's belongings will be placed in designated areas.

Children should not bring money, toys, food or other items not necessary for school activities to the program without checking with the staff. Toy guns or other weapons are strictly prohibited and can result in discharge from the program.

## **XIX. Parent Involvement**

Parents and residents play an important role in the Before and After School Program. Every site has a parent/neighbor advisory group, or site council, which serves as the decision-making body for the program. These groups assist LINC and the site staff by providing input, planning, oversight and support to ensure a safe, productive environment for their children. The site council meets approximately once a month, with structure and overall function determined by the group at each site.

All parents and neighborhood residents are encouraged to participate in their children's success by being a part of their school site council. Opportunities include being a volunteer

or mentor, and assisting with school activities during program time or the regular school day.

## **XX. Program Feedback**

Parents and community members are always welcome and encouraged to visit and observe the program. Our number one concern is the safety of the children. Therefore we ask everyone to arrange visits beforehand with the Site Coordinator and sign in at the main office.

LINC Caring Communities welcomes and encourages feedback from family members and other patrons. The site coordinator and other members of the staff are willing to meet with you to hear your ideas and resolve any concerns.

We do ask that you remember that we operate in a school setting serving children. This requires we maintain a safe environment and model appropriate relationship skills and problem solving.

We will not under any circumstances tolerate abusive language, threats, intimidation, or physical abuse toward children, administrators, staff, parents, family members, or other patrons. If this occurs, we may choose to terminate services for you and your family, and may seek other appropriate legal action.

## **XXI. Before and After School Staff**

It is the intent of the Local Investment to hire high-quality, experienced school-age staff. All staff hired to work in the Before and After School programs have been interviewed by the coordinator and an advisor. We also require a medical examination, TB test, completion of 18 hours of in-service training annually, and background checks on all staff through the Family Care Safety Registry. This screening conducts both criminal and child abuse checks on all staff members.

# What is LINC?

The Local Investment Commission (LINC) is a state-chartered, citizen-led group in Kansas City and Jackson County, Missouri, charged with improving results for children and families through restructuring and reforming the delivery of human services. LINC places a Caring Community facility, a school-based source for diversified social service supports, at schools in low-income, underserved neighborhoods.

Fundamental to LINC's philosophy is citizen decision-making: citizen-volunteers, not state bureaucrats, form site councils at their neighborhood schools, develop neighborhood consensus, and decide what is best for the neighborhood. LINC uses a strong, multi-faceted, results-based accountability model to evaluate the implementation and the overall results.

To learn more about LINC or how to get involved, visit [www.kclinc.org](http://www.kclinc.org), call (816) 889-5055 ext. 1282 or email [info@kclinc.org](mailto:info@kclinc.org).

# What is Caring Communities?

Caring Communities is an effort to create in neighborhoods what the courthouse square was long ago – a place where the community regularly gathers.

Our Caring Communities sites reflect a growing national interest in creating “community schools,” which recently were described as follows:

A community school is both a place and a set of partnerships between the school and other community resources. In these schools, an integrated focus on academics *and* family support, health and social services, and youth and community development leads to improved student learning, stronger families and healthier communities. Community schools are open to everyone—all day, including evenings and weekends. Community-based organizations or public institutions often work as lead agencies in community schools, helping to mobilize community assets and support student success.

# Basic Non-Negotiable Expectations for School-Age Child Care Programs

1. All parents/guardians sign their children in and out daily.
2. Staff maintain eyes-on supervision and account for children at all times.
3. Kind, respectful communication throughout the program.
4. Warm, friendly, informative greeting of parents/guardians.
5. Staff interacting with children at all times.
6. Staff on-time and prepared.

Site Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Before & After School Hotline**

(816) 889-5055 ext. 1444



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