BOYS & GIRLS CLUB
of Plymouth

Out of School Time After-School Parents Handbook

2025-2026

In conjunction with the Department of Early Education and Care
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NOTE: Please sign and return the acknowledgement form on page 12

Our Mission

"To inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to realize their full potential as productive, responsible, and caring citizens. The Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth will provide area youth with activities designed to build self-esteem, develop leadership skills, and promote positive life choices."

Vision of the Club

The Boys & Girls Club is the place of choice for Plymouth area youth and a trusted partner for families.

Purpose of the Compass Zone Program (and camp)

The purpose of the Boys & Girls Club Compass Zone Program and Summer Camp is to provide a safe, caring environment for children outside the home and beyond school hours.

Our program provides a wholesome environment which promotes social, physical, and character development, as well as supplementing parents' and schools' efforts to meet children's intellectual and educational needs.

The School Age Child Care Program is operated by The Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth. It is a fee-based program that provides children ages 6 to 13 with enrichment opportunities from the close of school until 7:30 pm. The head administrator is the Executive Director of the club, who will staff the program with qualified individuals, maintaining ratios and standards that meet or exceed all licensing requirements for the Massachusetts Office of Early Education and Care.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth's Compass Zone is open to all families regardless of race, religious affiliation, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, disability, marital status, financial status, or sexual orientation. Our club embraces the differences of our community and strives to foster an understanding and appreciation of all.

Who is eligible?

The Boys & Girls Club's Compass Zone Program is designed to provide children ages 6 to 13, from Plymouth and surrounding communities, with a safe, high quality, developmental enrichment program. Families are asked to make application and enroll for each school year in late spring or summer prior to a fall enrollment. Families with children that we are unable to place will be put on a waiting list and notified as soon as we have an opening. Applications for enrollment can be found on our website, www.bgcplymouth.org or visiting the Club.

Compass Zone, Club Hours, and Summer Camp

Compass Zone operates each weekday from 2:30 PM to 7:00 PM.
The Club offers general programming for members from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM during the school year.

"Smarter Fun in Summer Camp" opens at 7:30 AM. Opening ceremonies are held at 8:30 AM. Closing ceremonies are at 4:30PM, when pickup begins. The Club closes for the day at 5:00 PM.

What is the role of the family?

It is our belief that children are best served when there is frequent, open communication between families and staff. Parents/Guardians are expected to read this handbook and understand our policies and procedures. If a family questions any part of this handbook, they are welcome to bring their

concerns to our Executive Director in writing. A written response will be provided within five working days.

Parents are welcome to join the Parent Advisory Board which is frequently called upon to review policies and procedures. We welcome visits from family members at any time. All visitors to the program must sign in. By becoming involved with the club, working on a fundraiser or volunteering to chaperone, family members indicate to a child that:

- they care about the child's time away from home
- they support our mission
- they want a positive experience at the club for their child.

Parents may request to meet with the staff directly involved with their child for an individual conference. An appointment will be established that will insure adequate staff coverage and privacy. We ask that parents provide staff with information that may help us to understand a child. If there is a change in family status, if a friend moves away or a pet dies, the stress of the situation will most likely manifest itself in the child's behavior. Our caring professional staff will hold in confidence any information that you provide.

What Does This Cost?

Each spring the schedule of fees and tuitions will be published and made available with applications for the coming year. The published rates reflect the cost of operating the program and will be in effect for that school year. We are a not-for-profit organization. See page 12 in this handbook for program rates. Financial assistance will be available to qualified families as our resources permit.

Payments must be made the Thursday before the week that services are provided. A $10 late fee applies after Thursday, if payment is not received.

Once your child/children are accepted into our program, it is our policy that fees are paid weekly. To maintain your slot in our program, fees are to be paid whether your child attends the program or not. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from the program.

Inability to pay

No child is ever turned away from regular membership in a Boys & Girls Club due to inability to pay. However, Compass Zone is a fee-based special and licensed after-school program. Inability to make a scheduled payment should be reported at once to the Executive Director. Often, alternate arrangements can be made. Payments are due by Thursday of the week preceding Compass Zone attendance. Missing a single payment should be discussed at once with the Director. A second missed payment without special arrangements with the Executive Director will result in the child being dropped from the Compass Zone program. The same applies to vacation days and summer camp.

Late Pick-up and Pick-up Authorization

A pick-up authorization form must be completed by the parent/guardian prior to the child's enrollment at the Compass Zone. Children will only be released to the people named on this form. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than an authorized person, the Compass Zone must be notified in writing. Parents or designated persons picking up children are required to come to the Compass Zone front desk and sign the child out. For your child's safety, we will not allow your child to leave the site without an authorized person. The same applies to vacation days and summer camp.

Late pick-up causes concern for the child and the staff. If a parent/guardian is late for pick-up and has not called, every effort will be made to contact parents and the emergency contact

person. After thirty-five minutes and no success reaching family members, Plymouth Police will be contacted to report a potentially abandoned child. The DCF hotline will also be called.

Late pick-up is charged at $5 for the first 15 minutes and $1 per minute thereafter.

All people, including parents, picking up children should have a picture identification available. We may not release a child to anyone we suspect to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Club Membership

All Compass Zone participants are required to be members of the Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth. Memberships are $50 per year. Families with demonstrated need may be eligible for a time payment membership scholarship.

All children must bring their membership cards with them on a daily basis.

Replacement cards cost $1 dollar.

Transportation

Transportation to the Compass Zone program will be provided by the Compass Zone vans on a limited basis for a small number of schools on a first-come first-served basis. Children are transported in our licensed and insured club vehicles by (7D and/or School Bus) licensed drivers or by Plymouth Public School buses. *No transportation is provided home from the program. The schools are responsible for the children until the Compass Zone vehicle arrives at the school. Once the Compass Zone members have checked in with the van driver and monitor, they become the van driver and/or van monitor's responsibility.

The van is under an extremely tight schedule, generally arriving within 5 minutes of dismissal, so please make sure your child knows where to wait for the Compass Zone van. The van cannot wait for after-school activities to finish. Children are expected to be ready when the van arrives.

Children requiring alternate transportation should do so under the attention of their parents/guardian. Parents are responsible for their child if he/she walks unsupervised, rides public transportation, or is transported by the parent. However, this needs to be discussed with staff prior to enrollment.

Emergencies And Illness

It is the responsibility of all staff to minimize the risk of injury at all times, at every activity. However, if an accident does occur, it is also the responsibility of all staff to aid the injured individual and make sure that the rest of the children remain safe, calm, and comforted. First aid will be administered only by first aid certified staff.

In the case of a major emergency such as broken bones, puncture wounds, etc., the child will be taken by ambulance to the nearest emergency medical facility. Health forms on file will include child and parent information, emergency numbers when parents cannot be reached, and a medical release to seek treatment if parents cannot be reached.

1. The first thing to do is to STAY CALM and keep everyone else as calm as possible.
2. Evaluate the child's condition before moving him/her.
3. If the injury is such that the person can walk to a first aid box or office (i.e. cut or scrape or injury to the finger), then a staff person should accompany the child to the office and then administer first aid (if it is minor).
4. If the injury, however, disables the person, or there is risk of broken bone, then a staff person should remain with the child while another staff member or older child goes to alert the Compass

Zone Director or Program Director. The Compass Zone Director or Program Director should then call the rescue squad and notify the parents. IF the parents cannot be reached at that time, they should be contacted again once the child is at the hospital. The Compass Zone Director should accompany the child to the hospital with their medical forms and emergency contact numbers.

5. If the staff member who is comforting the child is certified in First Aid and/or CPR, then s/he should proceed with the steps, s/he was trained to take until a director and/or an ambulance arrives.

Any staff members who are not comforting the victim should focus on the rest of the children in the group. They should be moved away from the injured child and engage in another activity as soon as possible. If they have any questions about the accident, they should be reassured that the injured is getting the best attention possible.

Emergency Procedures if parents cannot be contacted:

Call the emergency contact on the child's medical form in their file, as well as those on their authorized pick-up list. Continue to call these numbers until someone can be reached.

Emergency Procedures when off the premises (including off the premises field trips and participation at off-site facilities):

1. Carry backpack with: Cell Phone, applicable emergency numbers, first aid kit, permission slips with parent(s) phone numbers and emergency contact phone numbers.
2. Know local EMS # and Medical Facility #.
3. Administer First Aid to child as needed.
4. Call EMS if serious injury.
5. Know location of hospital or heath care facility.
6. Notify parents of child.
7. Document all incident/accidents.
8. Any medications children are required to take; a copy of the medication administration paperwork and the medication sign off.

Inclement Weather Policy

If school is cancelled in Plymouth, there will be no program. Should weather conditions develop during the day that cause the cancellation of after-school sports by the public schools, there will be no club programs. If the Executive Director or designee determines that, due to weather or another situation, it would be a threat to staff or children to hold the program, families would be notified of the cancellation on the radio (WPLM, 99.9 or WATD, 96.5), via email or other form of communication and an attempt would be made to reach all families by phone. Days missed due to emergency closings will be made up and no fee adjustment made.

Fire Disaster

In the event of a fire, the Staff will conduct an immediate head count of the children. A fire drill report will be printed from Member Tracking, which as all emergency contacts for each child. All children will then be escorted from the building to the top of the drive way on Resnik Road. All children will then be recounted and accounted for on attendance sheet. Plymouth Fire Department will arrive immediately, having been summoned by the fire alarm. Once given the ok, all children and staff will return to the building. If Fire Department does not allow children to return to building, children will go to MAP Academy or neighboring businesses until parents can be notified and the children are picked up.

Natural Disaster

In the event of a natural disaster, children will either be escorted from building or if the circumstance

allows, they shall remain in the building. If the children need to be evacuated from the Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth, the Club vans will transport the children to a designated area predetermined by the Town of Plymouth, MA. In the event of the children being able to stay within the Club, the basement is a safe shelter. Adequate food & water is always in the building for the children. In the event of a natural disaster, the parents will be notified to pick up the children. In the event that the power is lost and there are no working phones, cell phones, carried by all staff, will be used to notify parents.

Disaster Kit

In the event of any type of disaster, the Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth, at all times, is prepared by having food, water, and supplies to entertain children for a given period of time.

In the event of a disaster please contact: Garreth Lynch, Executive Director - cell (413) 237-3953

Mildly ill children

Children should be kept at home if he/she seems listless, unusually irritable, complains of a stomachache, headache, ear ache, has a fever or seems to be unusually pale or flushed. It is better to be overly cautious than to risk exposing the rest of the children and staff to contagion. If your child stays home from school because they are not feeling well, they are not to come to the program as our policy is **NO SCHOOL, NO CLUB**.

Mildly ill children will:

- rest
- Any child with a temperature of 101° will go home.
- Children must be picked up within one hour of notification.
- Child much be picked up if they have any of the following symptoms:

High fever	Vomiting	Unexplained Rash
Diarrhea	Conjunctivitis	Persistent Rash
Open Sores	Persistent Cough	Presence of Head Ache

- The child must have a doctor's note to return to the program.

Medication Administration

Any medication administered to a child must have prior written parent authorization. Prescription medication will only be administered on the written order of the child's physician (prescribing physician), and must be in the original container with the child's name, the name of the drug and the directions for its administration and storage on the label. Inhalers for asthma may be used as needed, without direct supervision of staff, and carried by the child, IF AND ONLY IF written consent is given by the parent and the physician. The Compass Zone will keep a written record of the administration of any medication which includes the time and date of each administration, the dosage, the name of the staff member administering the medication, and the name of the child. The Compass Zone will store all medication under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security and safety. All unused medication will be returned to the parent. The Compass Zone cannot distribute non-prescription medicine to children without parental and physician consent.

All medication will be distributed by the Site Coordinator and logged in the medication log. Compass Zone group leaders do not administer medication unless specifically instructed to do so by the Site Coordinator.

Allergies

Allergies along with the symptoms and directions in case of exposure will be documented by the physician on the medical/ health form in the enrollment application. Any allergies to foods, chemicals, medications or

other materials should be listed in the child's information form. This information will be placed on a master list and posted in food preparation /distribution area in an area not visible to the general public, and the Program Director's Office. All staff will be informed of children's allergies and instructed to avoid these products. In the event that a child is unable to smell/be exposed to any foods/chemicals that child will be removed from the area and placed in a safer area of the building (i.e. program director's office, resource development office).

If your child has any allergies or any serious diagnosis, please inform the staff at the Club and provide an I.H.C.P. (Individual Health Care Plan) filled in completely by your child's physician (see staff for the form if you did not receive one).

School Vacation Weeks

Participants of the Compass Zone may choose to attend the Compass Zone during school vacations and certain holiday as well as half days. The Compass Zone will be open from 7:30 am to 5:00 pm on all school vacations with an additional fee.

Parents/guardians are required to provide a lunch for their children on these days. If a child does not have a lunch a parent will be expected to bring a lunch for their child. Please do not send foods that need preparation. Furthermore, the staff or others will not be permitted to go to any restaurant/fast food chain for your child. Lunch is only served during summer camp and is provided by the Plymouth Public Schools.

Attendance

If your child will not be attending the Compass Zone, it is imperative that you inform the Compass Zone Director by 1:00pm during the school year and 9am during the vacation session. If you do not inform the Compass Zone of your child's absence, we will consider this an unexcused absence. If your child has three or more unexcused absences, your child may be withdrawn from the program.

Credit will not be given for the absences due to illness unless a child's absence exceeds a week period and arrangements have been made with the Compass Zone Director (A doctor's note may be required). In addition, no credit will be awarded for cancellation due to inclement weather, emergencies or other reasons. The waiver of fees due to extended vacations will be up to the discretion of the Compass Zone Director. You will be allotted two vacation weeks throughout the entire school year; prior notifications of these vacations are required.

Holidays Closed

The Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth will be closed the following dates and are subject to change:

Labor Day
Indigenous People's Day (open if we have 15 sign up for full day care)
Veteran's Day (open if we have 15 sign up for full day care)
Thanksgiving Day & the Friday after
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve
New Year's Day
Martin Luther King Day (open if we have 15 sign up for full day care)
Good Friday
Memorial Day

Food and Snacks

Children enrolled in the School Age Child Care Program will be given a nutritious snack upon arrival each day. Our

program will follow the American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics nutritional guidelines for children 6-12 years of age.

Protecting Children from Abuse and Neglect

As a Boys & Girls Child School Age program, we are mandated by Massachusetts state law to report all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family. The Early Education and Care Office will be notified immediately. If a case of child abuse is suspected by a staff member, it will be reported immediately to the Boys & Girls Club Executive Director and the Program Director.

- The person receiving the initial report will be responsible for confirming the facts reported and the condition of the child on the same day in which the first report is made.
- Data concerning the child will be obtained within the Program throughout the discussion with the initial reporter and other staff.
- After the information is secured, the Executive Director will call the Department of Children and Families to report the case. Within 48 hours, a 51A report will be filed with DCF.
- Notification to the Office of Child Care Services is done immediately after filing a 51A or learning that a 51A report has been filed alleging child abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the Compass Zone.
- In the case of a disagreement (or uncertainty) concerning the need to report an incident, the Compass Zone Director may not substitute his/her judgment for any mandated report within the program. While agreement of all professionals involved is desirable, the Director must report to DCF even if he/she believes the mandated reporter is incorrect.
- Our Agency will cooperate fully in any investigation needed.
- In the event that a staff member is suspected of child abuse or neglect and they are named in a 51A report, the Executive Director will immediately EEC and DCF. The staff member will have no contact with any children until the DSS and EEC investigation is completed and until further notice may be suspended without pay for the duration of the investigation.

Definitions of Abuse

- Abuse is the non-accidental commission of any act by caretaker which causes or creates a substantial risk of harm or threat of harm to a child's well being.
- Neglect is a failure by a caretaker, either deliberately, or through negligence, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential care.
- Reasonable Cause is a basis for judgment that rests on specific facts, either directly observed or obtained from reliable sources, and that supports a belief that a particular event probably took place or a particular condition probably exists.
- Reasonable Condition is a serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse or neglect, or the commission of any act by a caretaker with a child which constitutes a sexual offense under the criminal laws of the Commonwealth; or the physical dependence of a child upon addictive drug at birth.

Parent Visits, Conferences and Progress Reports

In order to ensure a quality Compass Zone, we need your help. The Compass Zone encourages parents to visit at any time. Conferences may also be arranged by appointment. Open and friendly communication is essential. Parent participation and input is welcomed. The children, staff, and Compass Zone Director appreciate your creativity, ideas and leadership in activities.

Parents' concerns or complaints about our school age program should be immediately directed to the Compass Zone Director. Details surrounding the parent's concerns or complaint will be reviewed, solutions will be discussed and an action plan will be implemented. Feel free to discuss any concerns or suggestions that your may have with the staff and/or Compass Zone Director.

Parents and staff will be expected to speak to each other with respect. If a parent is uncomfortable regarding any issue, a private meeting will be set up with the Compass Zone Director and other appropriate staff. Confrontation between parents and staff in front of our members will not be tolerated. Problems of this nature may result in termination of the family from the program.

Progress Reports will be issued yearly in June, prior to the end of school letting out for the summer. If parents and/or staff feel that additional progress reports are needed, then together, they will decide the frequency of the progress reports.

What are our expectations for behavior?

There are two overriding considerations used to establish the Club's behavioral expectations:

safety (self, others, and environment) and respect (self, others, and things)

A good behavior contract is implied in the child's membership to the Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth and stated in this handbook (page 13). While we have reverence for the rights of the individual, the well-being of the group is of primary importance. A child who is experiencing difficulty meeting our expectations will be dealt with privately whenever possible to avoid embarrassment. He/she will be asked to restate the rule and an effort will be made to teach the child the reason for the rule. Staff will reinforce the importance of behaving appropriately, emphasizing safety and respect. The child will be allowed to return to the group. If the behavior continues, it may become necessary to remove a child from the group or to apply an appropriate consequence (such as denying an unruly child the right to go on a field trip). If staff is unable to redirect behavior, the Executive Director will be made aware of the concern and conduct an observation and review of the child's record. During a conference, the scope of the concern will be made known to the parent or guardian, and a mutual plan will be developed to address the behavior. If progress is not made, the Executive Director, together with the staff, will meet to determine if the child would benefit from a referral to an outside resource for additional services. If a referral is warranted, the parent/guardian will be given a written statement including the reasons for requesting the referral, a brief summary of the program's observations related to the referral, and the efforts made by the program to accommodate the child. Parents will be offered assistance in making the referral, including being provided with a list of current resources in the community. No contact with any outside resource will be made without parental permission.

Should it be determined by the Executive Director, after having taken all the measures described above, that a child's continuing in the program is not in the child's best interest, parents will be provided a written notice stating the reason for termination or suspension, prior to our taking that action. Reasons for suspension and/or exclusion from the Boys & Girls Club School Age Child

Care Program would be:

- Staff unable to insure physical or emotional safety of this child.
- Staff feel the physical or emotional safety of others is at risk (staff as well as other children).
- Lack of co-operation from the family in attempting to meet the needs of this child.
- Failure of the family to meet its financial obligations to the Club.

If a suspension is in order, it will last no longer than one week and tuition obligations will not be forgiven.

The child will be permitted to return to the program on probation until such time as the staff, together with the Executive Director no longer feels he/she is a threat. In the case of a termination, all tuition obligations will cease from the date of the termination.

Every effort will be made to prepare the child for termination in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand. Should the family request it, we will provide information on programs that we feel will better meet the needs of the child within our knowledge and ability.

Special Needs and Disability of a Child

The Compass Zone will request and review information given by the parent related to the child's participation in the program. Identification of specific accommodations required to meet the needs of the child, which would include change or modification in the child's participation in regular activities, would be reviewed. In addition, identification of any special equipment, materials or aids will be discussed.

Referral Plan

Through the Compass Zone's connection with DCF and EEC, we have information concerning possible referrals to social, mental health, educational and medical services. Inquiries about these referral services should be made through the Compass Zone Director.

If staff has a concern about a child, the behaviors will be observed, recorded and reviewed before a referral is recommended. A parent meeting will be set up to discuss the program's concerns and referral. The program will have a current list of possible referrals in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. This list shall include the contact person for Chapter 766. The program will provide parents a written statement including the reason form recommending the referral for additional services, a brief summary of the program's observations related to the referral and any efforts the program may have made to accommodate the child's needs. The program shall offer assistance to the parents in making the referral and shall have written parental consent before any referral is made. The program shall maintain a written record of any referrals including the conferences with parents and the results.

Confidentiality of Records

All information contained in your child's records is privileged and confidential and cannot be released without written consent. Authorized representatives from the Office for Early Education and Care (EEC) and the Department of Social Services have the right and the responsibility to review all records upon request.

Member Behavior and Discipline

Our Definition of Discipline

Discipline is not punishment. Discipline, in relation to Boys & Girls Club work, is a process through which a Club member is held personally accountable for his or her actions and learns to behave in socially responsible ways. The Plymouth Club believes in progressive discipline. In the context of a Club, discipline involves helping youth understand the need to obey reasonable rules and regulations to make the Club they attend, and world in which they live, better places for themselves and others. As such, discipline is an integral part of the youth development process. In establishing and maintaining discipline, a youth development professional is helping the child by exerting a firm but positive influence or by guiding a youth's growth and development in a caring way.

Discipline and guidance must be consistent and based upon an understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. It is the counselors' job to direct discipline to maximize the growth and development of the children and to protect the group and the individuals in it. All members learn that

they are here to make this a better Club. Whenever an untoward incident takes place, the child is asked, "How did your misbehavior help to make this a better Club?"

Youth Development Counselors **NEVER:**

1. Implement corporal punishment, including spanking.
2. Subject a member to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
3. Deny water, food, or shelter as a form of punishment.
4. Punish a member for personal sanitary accidents.

The counselors will administer progressive discipline in order for members to understand that repeated bad behavior results in increasingly strong disciplinary action. Discipline is, and must be, progressive as described below:

- The first violation in the rules will result in a verbal reminder.
- The second violation will result in a 5 minute "time-out" of the current activity.
- The third violation will result in a 10 minute "time-out" and the counselor filling out an incident report before the end of the day, a conference with the program director, and a notification of the parents.
- The fourth violation will result in notification of the parents by the Executive Director, and a suitable solution will be determined, up to and including removal of membership privileges.

Compass Zone Program Rates- as of May 2025-subject to change

Attendance	1st Child	2+ Child
Weekly 5 day program	$165.00	$150.00
3 day program	$120.00	$105.00
Vacation – 5 days	$275.00	$250.00
Vacation – 3 days	$225.00	$210.00

- Compass Zone is a continuous program. Full school year participation is expected. Full program payments are due weekly regardless of attendance. Payments are due the Thursday BEFORE services are provided (including voucher parents' partial payments). Failure to pay in full for weekly services results in loss of slot in Compass Zone. Families with past due program fees of any type, lose membership privileges for ALL family members until past due payment is made. Parents may request a repayment schedule, set up at the discretion of the Executive Director. All repayment agreements must be in writing, signed by both parties. For families receiving a child care voucher through Child Care Network, please refer to policy guidelines referenced in the EEC Subsidy Policy Guide.

****Please not that summer camp and vacation rates differ from Compass Zone rates. Please check with staff for current rates.**

**** PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING****

In the event that you need to remove your child from our program, we require a two (2) week written notice and payment for those two weeks.

Administrative Organization

1. Garreth Lynch, Executive Director, Program Administrator
2. Christine Murray, Director of Operations, Program Administrator

Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Boys & Girls Club of Plymouth's Compass Zone Program and Out of School Time Parent Handbook. I have reviewed the handbook and agree to abide by all policies and responsibilities as outlined in the Parent Handbook.

_____

Child/Children Name(s)

_____

Parent/Guardian Signature

_____

Please Print Parent Name

_____

Date