

2025-2026 ‘Bananas’ Parent Handbook

**M-F 2:45pm - 5:30pm**

**Phone: (802) 377-1849**

The Bridge School Afterschool Program is a place for students to join together in a safe space to play with friends, complete their homework, and participate in a variety of enrichment activities.

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(802) 377-1849

The goal of this handbook is a comprehensive overview of the Bridge after school program (commonly referred to as *Bananas*), for parents, prospective parents, and staff. This handbook contains: policies, curriculum goals, procedures, and schedules.

**Typical Weekly/Daily Schedule**

|  | | **MONDAY** | **TUESDAY** | **WEDNESDAY** | **THURSDAY** | **FRIDAY** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2** | **:45** | **Arrive &** | **Arrive &** | **Arrive &** | **Arrive &** | **Arrive &** |
|  |  | **Attendance & rules** | **Attendance & rules** | **Attendance & rules** | **Attendance & rules** | **Attendance & rules** |
| **3** | **pm** | **Inside** | **Inside** | **Inside** | **Inside** | **Inside** |
|  |  | **Outside** | **Outside** | **Outside** | **Outside** | **Outside** |
|  |  | **Cooking Club** | **Craft Club** | **MUSIC CLUB** | **ROCK CLIMBING** | **BOARD GAME** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **3** | **:45** | **snack** | **snack** | **snack** | **snack** | **snack** |
|  |  | **BIG GROUP GAME** | **BIG GROUP GAME** | **BIG GROUP GAME** | **BIG GROUP GAME** | **BIG GROUP GAME** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **4** | :15 | **Inside** | **Inside** | **Inside** | **Inside** | **Inside** |
|  |  | **Outside** | **Outside** | **Outside** | **Outside** | **Outside** |
|  |  | **GYM** | **Computer** | **GYM** | **Computer** | **GYM** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **5** | **pm** | **Kid's Chores** | **Kid's Chores** | **Kid's Chores** | **Kid's Chores** | **Kid's Chores** |
|  |  | **Quiet Time** | **Quiet Time** | **Quiet Time** | **Quiet Time** | **Quiet Time** |
| **5** | :30 | **Say Goodbye** | **Say Goodbye** | **Say Goodbye** | **Say Goodbye** | **Say Goodbye** |
|  |  | **Adult's Chores** | **Adult's Chores** | **Adult's Chores** | **Adult's Chores** | **Adult's Chores** |

**Check-in and Check-out procedure**

In the Banana’s room there is a big whiteboard. This board has every students name and four possible spots where the students could be: Banana’s room, playground, out back or gym. It is the student’s responsibility to move their attendance marker to where they are at all times. It is their choice if they want to move spaces (as long as that space is open), but they need to check in with the Banana’s staff member and let them know they are switching spaces. If there is only one staff member present, all students will transition together to a new space as chosen by staff and students.

**Drop-off and Pick-up procedure**

**Drop-off procedure**

All students arrive to Banana’s exclusively from their Bridge School Day. There is no parent drop-off. A daily Banana’s attendance list is compiled by the Bridge School administrator every day. The list is given to the Banana’s Director before the end of the school day. Kids arrive to the after school program directly from their home centers and they check in both on the attendance board and on the Banana’s daily attendance board. The attendance is then compiled and put into a google document and saved for the school year.

**Pick-up procedure**

As students leave, it is expected that they or their parents note that they have been picked up on the attendance sheet and note the time of their departure. This sheet is checked at the end of the day by the Banana’s staff and saved for up to a month. Students and parents also are expected to say goodbye to Banana’s staff and make sure they know that the student is leaving for the day.

**Parking Lot:**

Please be very careful and drive slowly in our parking lot. The speed limit is 5 mph.

Do not leave young children unattended in cars while you are dropping your child off. Vermont has a law prohibiting idling, as this can be a health hazard. Please shut your car off unless you are picking your child up in the winter, and you need to leave it on for warmth. Please hold your child’s hand until they are safely in a car or have left the parking lot. Transport children in appropriate car seats or restraints.

**Banana’s and Bridge Philosophy**

The following four core values guide Bridge School’s distinct educational program, and serve as a foundation for the ongoing enrichment of our learning community:

**1) Personal Excellence**

**2) Respect for Children**

**3) Engaged and Passionate Learners**

**4) Caring Community**

Much more can be read about this on our website <https://bridgeschoolvermont.org/> or via the Bridge School handbook.

At Banana’s our goal is that each child is to make sure that they get what we call the

3 c’s: **Contentment, Choice, Community**.

Everything that we do in curriculum and program development and on a day to day basis is based on these core principles. Banana’s is a place where students and parents feel good, easy, and at home. They can relax, and be themselves. It is a space that is filled with respect and love, and it is because of the intentionality of planning and commitment to create the best space we can for the students to thrive.

**Schedule of Fees**

**Schedule and fees**

After-school runs from 2:45 to 5:30 each school day. Students should be pre-registered to secure a spot. On-call participation in the after-school program is possible if the program has openings. Please send the school a text to ask about dropping in. Bananas tuition: $20/day non-scholarship families, $17/day scholarship families

**Preregistration**

Families may sign up for one to five days of after-school per week. Parents/guardians will receive a monthly invoice for their child’s attendance in after-school care. After-school tuition is due upon receipt from our bookkeeper.

After school pick-up is at 5:25 sharp to allow for gathering of materials and checking out. Each additional 10 minutes the teacher waits with a child after 5:30, is $10.00.

**Afterschool Cancellation**

Because there are limited spaces in aftercare, we require 24 hours notice for Bananas cancellation. If you cancel within 24 hours, you will be charged the full daily rate.

**After School Child Care Website**

For a detailed description of information, laws and regulations, financial aid, contact information, and publications & brochures, please visit the website dcf.vermont.gov/cdd

The laws and regulations governing Vermont and set into action by the CDD are clearly stated in a handbook that can be found online at this website, under the laws and regulations section. We use many of the policies set up by the CDD and what follows in this parent handbook was aided in large part by this handbook.

**Parental Permission**

1. All documentation related to a specific child, required by the state, shall be made available to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of that child within five business days from the time of the request.
2. Parents shall have unlimited access without delay to their children whenever such children are in the care of Bananas

**Confidentially**

Banana’s and Bridge School uphold confidentiality in the highest regard. We protect the personal information, including health information from persons who are not authorized to see or hear it.

Staff shall observe confidentiality in regard to child/family records and family information. All confidential conversations regarding children/families or collaborating agencies shall take place in private.

**Health and well-being program exclusions**

Children and Staff may be excluded if in the opinion of the Banana’s director (Dave) or medical professional the individual is too ill to participate.

Staff shall follow the exclusion policies as set forth in the document “*Signs and Symptoms of Illness Char*t” which is posted behind the desk next to the med bag in the Bananas room.

**Medications**

* All medications shall be inaccessible to children but immediately accessible to designated Staff. A child with parent permission to self‐medicate may do so under direct Staff supervision.
* Written parental permission shall be obtained before administering any medication. The permission statement shall include the name of the child, name of the medication, dosage, the date and time to be given and how the medication is to be given (mouth, ear, etc.).
* No Staff, shall administer medicines, drugs or herbal or folk remedies that affect behavior except as prescribed by a health care provider with specific written instructions and parental permission.
* All prescription medications shall be kept in the original containers and be clearly labeled with children’s name, dosage, medication name, and schedule of administration.
* The program shall maintain on site a record of all prescribed medications given which include the name of the medication(s), date, dosage, and time given.
* Written general permission for over‐the‐counter medications shall be obtained from parents for giving oral medication to a child. Parents shall be verbally notified before oral medications are given.

**Special Needs**

We strive to make Banana’s inclusive, engaging, and nurturing to students and families of any gender, race, and class. This extends to the realm of students with special learning needs and students that are differently abled. The space, the philosophy, and the training of the Banana’s staff is at the core of making sure that the afterschool program is inclusive to children with special needs. Specifically, we use multisensory strategies, we maintain an organized classroom, breakdown instructions into manageable tasks, and create as many opportunities for success as possible.

A strong collaboration between parents and staff along with open communication sets us up for success and we can confidently do our best work to meet the needs of all the students that come to Bananas.

**Legal mandate to prevent and report suspected child abuse**

All Bridge School and Bananas’ staff have completed a training course through the department of human service of Vermont, and understand the responsibilities of being a mandated reported.

All staff working with children are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect pursuant to 33 V.S.A. §4913 and are required to report to the Child Abuse Hotline when they reasonably suspect abuse or neglect of a child. This report must be made within twenty‐four (24) hours of the time information regarding the suspected abuse or neglect was first received or observed.

**Missing Child Policy**

In the extremely unlikely event when it is determined that a child in care is missing or has been abducted from the program, the Afterschool Child Care Program or Staff shall immediately notify the police, the child’s parents and the The Vermont Department for Children and Families (DCF), Child Development Division (CDD) (in that order). All other kids will be brought inside to the Bananas room, until their parents arrive.

**Immunization Policy**

A child shall be admitted in an Afterschool Child Care Program when there is on file on the premises, in the child’s file of each child’s current immunization status.

* Immunization records shall include the immunization administered and the date of each immunization.
* If an enrolled child is in the process of complying with immunization requirements in accordance with the Vermont recommended immunization schedule, documentation in the child’s file shall include the required Vermont Department of Health form.
* If a child has not had a required immunization due to a Vermont allowed exemption, documentation in the child’s file shall include the required Vermont Department of Health form.

**Parental Involvement and Volunteer Opportunities**

Parents are highly encouraged to be \*involved in Bananas. In the past the way we have involved parents is either by leading a club, or by helping staff with the duties when kids are outside. Clubs are an excellent way to lead students and to introduce or reinforce new fun ideas. Some club ideas that parents have helped lead in the past are: chess, cooking, electronics, and reading. Having an extra eye on the playground is always welcome. Adults can help kids engage in meaningful activities and offer new ideas about how to be outside.  
  
\*Due to the limitations of COVID-19 & variants, volunteers must be vaccinated and are allowed to participate in outdoor settings only. Please make sure to use the restroom and take care of any other needs that would require a restroom before visiting.

Bridge School only functions, because of the community that supports it. We could not be a school without being a community first. We work hard to make sure that any parent that wants to be more involved with the school, the community, or their own child’s education will be able to do that.

**Smoking Policy**

Bridge School and Bananas follows Vermont’s leadership and does not allow smoking of any kind on school grounds, indoors or outdoors, and this includes e-cigarettes.

**Relevant information about our Emergency Response Plan**

Every month, at Bananas, we run a fire drill and every other month we run a safety lock down drill. These drills have a detailed description and plan that we keep in the Banana’s room, in our emergency response plan binder. If you would like to read the detailed information, please just ask the program director. The most important information that you need to know is that in an actual emergency you will be contacted after all the kids and staff are accounted for, we are all out of danger, and local authorities have been contacted. Our staff meeting spot is at woodchuck cider in their lobby. That is where you will be asked to come pick up your children as soon as you are able to.

**Pesticide Policy**

**Pesticide Policy:**

We are dedicated to using the least amount of chemical pest control in our program in order to provide the healthiest environment possible for our children. As part of our curriculum, we teach children about nature and taking care of the environment, and so are dedicated to modeling healthy alternatives to chemicals. We attempt to PREVENT infestation by such methods as:

**\***Taking out trash daily or more as needed, and cleaning cans regularly.

**\***Keeping trash cans or dumpsters covered and away from the building.

**\***Keeping grounds clean of food and rubbish.

**\***Storing food in sealed plastic or metal containers.

**\***Cleaning and sanitizing all dishes, utensils, and surfaces used for eating or

food preparation after meals and at the end of the day.

We do not regularly apply any pesticides. Should there be a need to use a chemical pesticide as a last resort, (for wasp, yellow jacket, mouse or ant control for example), notification signs for applications shall be placed at the location of the application and at each entry point to the area being treated. Pesticides will be applied at the end of the day after children have left and will not be stored above or near food or cooking or eating utensils. Parents will be notified when pesticides are applied. Children will not touch or transport any pesticide or pesticide container. Pesticides with the signal words of “Danger”, “Warning”, or “Caution” will be kept in secured storage out of reach of children in a locked area and in accordance with any warnings that accompany the product. If there are any infestations of pests that we cannot control by natural methods, we will work with local pest control to find the least toxic method possible.

**Complaint procedures**

The telephone number for the Child Development Division and the Child Care Consumer Line is 1 (800) 649-2642. You have a right to call them to and lodge a formal complaint in regards to the welfare of any child in regards to Bananas. The CDD will investigate any pertinent complaint fully to ensure that we are in compliance with Vermont state law, and that we undergo any corrective action needed.

**General Emergency**

Bridge School follows Addison Central School District’s school closure policy, and Bananas follows the Bridge School policy. This means that Bananas and Bridge School will be closed when one or more of these five things are in question:

- The safety and well-being of students and staff

- The severity of the weather (extreme cold, flooding, etc.)

- Timing of the weather events

- The ability of buses and cars to travel safely

- The operable condition of our buildings

On the off chance that one of these things changes over the course of the day and Bananas need to close even though Bridge School was in session, then all parents with students signed up for Bananas will be called immediately and asked to pick up their child at the end of the school day.

**Excluded Persons**

All staff, teachers, long term volunteers, and regular subs at Bridge School and Bananas have been background checked and fingerprinted by the state of Vermont within the first 45 days of employment or work. If a person’s background is determined by the DCF or the state to be prohibited to work with kids then they will be excluded from being regularly present at Bananas.

This means that your kids and the students at Bridge School will only be in the safest hands and everyone involved in our program have passed a background check.