



MECC

Manistee Early Childhood Center

Morning, After, &

Summer Care

Handbook

MECC Morning, After, and Summer Care Handbook

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MECC Morning, After, and Summer Care Handbook

Welcome!

Thank you for choosing the Manistee Early Childhood Center's Morning & After and Summer Care Program. We are excited to partner with your family as we support your child during their school-age years. Our program provides a warm, engaging, safe, and nurturing environment where children can relax, connect with peers, explore their interests, and continue growing as confident, capable individuals outside of the school day.

Philosophy of Care

At Manistee Early Childhood Center (MECC), we believe every child is a unique and capable learner who thrives in an environment where they feel safe, valued, respected, and included. We foster a nurturing and trusting atmosphere that supports children's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development while honoring each child as both an individual and a member of our community.

We recognize that school-age children learn best through meaningful experiences, relationships, and opportunities to explore the world around them. Our program provides a balance of structured activities and free choice, allowing children to relax after the school day, build friendships, develop independence, and engage in creative and active play. Teachers serve as supportive guides—encouraging curiosity, modeling positive interactions, and helping children develop problem-solving skills, self-control, and responsibility. In this environment, children receive the message, "You belong here, and you are capable."

We value families as children's first and most important teachers. By building respectful partnerships with families, we work together to support each child's growth, well-being, and success. Through open communication and collaboration, we strive to create consistency between home, school, and our program.

Program Purpose & Goals

Our Morning, After, and Summer Care Programs are designed to provide children with a safe, enriching, and supportive place to grow beyond the school day. Our goals are to:

- Create a warm and welcoming environment that supports positive self-esteem through encouragement, genuine praise, and meaningful connections with peers and staff.
- Ensure children's safety and well-being by providing a secure physical environment, clear expectations, and consistent adult supervision.

- Offer engaging, developmentally appropriate experiences that balance fun, creativity, movement, and opportunities for rest and relaxation.
- Support each child as an individual by honoring their interests, strengths, and needs.
- Encourage independence and self-direction by giving children choices, accessible materials, and opportunities to take initiative in activities and play.
- Foster responsibility and problem-solving skills by helping children take ownership of their actions, care for their space, and work through challenges respectfully.
- Build strong partnerships with families through ongoing communication, collaboration, and shared support of each child's growth.

Our program prioritizes purposeful play, social interaction, creative expression, physical activity, and opportunities for exploration and skill-building. With the support of caring staff, children develop confidence, friendships, resilience, and a strong sense of belonging—while having fun in a place they look forward to coming each day.

Program Options and Schedule

Morning Care

- Late Start Monday Care 7:00am - 9:00am Monday Mornings
- Morning Care 7:00am - 8:00am Tuesday - Friday Mornings

(Late Start Monday and Morning Care include bussing of children to their school from MECC. Schedule required)

After Care

- After Care 3:00pm - 5:30pm Monday - Friday
- ½ Day After Care 11:00am - 5:30pm Refer to MAPS School Calendar

(After Care and ½ Day After Care include bussing from child's school to MECC. After Care includes an afternoon snack, ½ Day includes lunch and a snack. Schedule required)

- PD days, No School Days and School Break Care 7:30am - 5:30pm
Refer to MAPS School Calendar

(Families must schedule these days in advance. Includes breakfast, lunch and a snack)

- Snow Day Care 7:30am - 5:30pm Any Snow Day Monday - Friday

(No schedule required However, children must be dropped off no later than 11:00am. Families must be registered for Morning or After Care to attend. Includes breakfast, lunch and a snack)

Summer Care

- Summer Care (Daily) 7:30am - 5:30pm Monday - Friday
- Summer Care (Weekly) 7:30am - 5:30pm Monday - Friday

(Starts on the first day of summer break and ends on the last day of summer break. Includes breakfast, lunch and a snack. Schedule required)

GSRP Students can also utilize these programs at an additional cost on days Mini Mariners Care is not available. This includes snow days, professional development (PD) days, ½ days, or breaks.

DAYS CLOSED

- ❖ New Years Day
- ❖ Memorial Day
- ❖ 4th of July
- ❖ Labor Day
- ❖ Thanksgiving
- ❖ Friday after Thanksgiving
- ❖ Christmas Eve
- ❖ Christmas Day

The Center may be closed due to natural or man-made disasters. These include but are not limited to : power outages, water main breaks, gas leaks, or severe weather.

Payment Policies

Payments

All payments must be made to Procure unless otherwise approved in writing by program administration. Payments are due weekly on Wednesdays and must be paid in full by the designated due date.

Fees and Charges

- A late pickup fee of \$5.00 per minute will be charged for any child picked up after 5:30 p.m.
- Consistent late pickups may result in termination from the program, as determined by administration.
- All children must submit a schedule. Children who attend without being scheduled will be added as full-time in Procure and billed accordingly.
- If a child is scheduled but does not attend, families are still responsible for that day's rate and will be billed in Procure accordingly.
- Any failed or returned payment in Procure will result in a \$5.00 fee per failed transaction.

- Families receiving assistance through DHHS Child Care Assistance or MI Tri-Share are responsible for any copays, fees, or balances reflected in their Procure account.

Charges and Attendance

Charges are incurred regardless of a child's attendance or center closures. This includes, but is not limited to, absences due to illness, vacations, holidays, weather-related closures, or school closures. No credits, make-up days, or refunds are issued for days or periods of non-attendance.

Late or Non-Payment

Failure to submit timely payment, including repeated late payments or non-payment, may result in suspension or termination of enrollment at the discretion of program administration. All outstanding balances must be paid in full prior to reinstatement or continued attendance. Outstanding balances past due by 30 days will be subject to a \$100.00 fee and an additional \$25.00 fee for each week the balance remains unpaid. Balances overdue more than 60 days will be sent to collections with possible garnishment of wages.

Pricing Guide

Morning Care

- Late Start Monday Care 7:00am - 9:00am \$6.00 per morning
- Morning Care 7:00am - 8:00am \$3.00 per morning

After Care

- After Care 3:00pm - 5:30pm \$8.00 per afternoon
- ½ Day After Care 11:00am - 5:30pm \$20.00 per afternoon
- PD days, No School Days and School Breaks Care 7:30am - 5:30pm \$30.00 per day
- Snow Day Care 7:30am - 5:30pm \$30.00 per day

Summer Care

- Summer Care Daily 7:30am - 5:30pm \$30.00 per day
- Summer Care Weekly 7:30am - 5:30pm \$140.00 per week

GSRP Students can also utilize these programs for an additional cost on days Mini Mariners Care is not available. This includes snow days, professional development (PD) days, ½ days, or breaks.

***We accept DHHS Child Care Credit and Mi Tri-Share**

DHHS and Mi Tri-Share do not cover fees, late pick-up fees, or 2 week withdrawal charges. Those fees and charges are the responsibility of the families.

Enrollment and Attendance

Our Care Programs serve children ages 5–13, or those enrolled in Kindergarten through 6th grade. Staff maintains the State of Michigan's child to adult ratios.

Enrollment is required, and all days of care must be scheduled in advance. Schedules are distributed every 2–3 weeks via a Google Form and must be completed by the posted deadline. Spots are subject to availability and staffing ratios.

Required Enrollment Forms

The following forms must be completed prior to a child's start date:

- Signed Parent Handbook
- Child Information Record
- Written Information Packet Documentation
- Parent Notification of the Licensing Notebook
- OST 32n Grant Form (when applicable)

Procare is used for daily student sign-in and sign-out and is essential for accurate attendance tracking. Parents or guardians can use the posted QR code to complete the sign-in and sign-out process each day. All billing will be done through Procare as well as a communication tool between the program and families.

Written authorization must be on file for all individuals approved to pick up a child. Proper photo identification is required at the time of pickup.

Families wishing to withdraw from the program must submit written notice at least two (2) weeks in advance. If the required notice is not provided, a fee equal to two weeks of full-time care will be charged to the family's Procare account.

Grounds for Immediate Dismissal

Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Late or missed payments
- Failure to maintain a current account balance
- Repeated late pick-ups or drop-offs
- Rude, disrespectful, or inappropriate behavior toward staff by a parent, guardian, or authorized individual
- Ongoing or severe behavioral issues that are deemed harmful to other children or staff

- Intentional destruction of school, student, or staff property
- If your child is sent home, dismissed, or suspended from school due to illness or behavior they are not permitted to attend that day's program. Families will still be billed accordingly.
- If your child is disruptive on the bus to or from MECC you may be notified to pick your child up or that they are no longer allowed on the bus.

Administration reserves the right to determine appropriate consequences or termination of care.

Health and Illness Policy

To protect the health and safety of all children and staff, please do not bring your child to care when they are ill. Children must remain home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms or conditions:

- A fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or a lower temperature when accompanied by other signs of illness. Children must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before returning to care.
- Vomiting, diarrhea, or persistent abdominal pain
- Unknown rashes, skin conditions, or mouth sores
- Discharge from the eyes or ears
- New or worsening cough, loss of taste or smell, severe headache, or difficulty breathing
- Communicable diseases, including but not limited to: chickenpox, mumps, measles, and rubella
- Head lice or scabies

Staff observe children daily for signs of illness. Parents or guardians will be notified promptly if any symptoms or health concerns arise during the day. Children who become ill while in attendance must be picked up as soon as possible.

Any diagnosis of a communicable disease must be reported to the center immediately so families and staff can be notified as required by licensing regulations and public health guidelines.

Proper handwashing is required to help prevent the spread of illness, including after restroom use, before and after meals, and at regular intervals throughout the day.

Medication will only be administered when provided by a parent or guardian in the original labeled container, with a valid doctor's prescription when required, and accompanied by a completed and signed Medication Permission and Instruction Form.

Discipline Policy

The program uses positive guidance strategies to promote appropriate behavior. These strategies include praise, gentle reminders, and offering choices to help children learn self-regulation and problem-solving skills. When necessary, children may be redirected or briefly separated from group activities to allow time to calm down and reflect.

In cases of ongoing or serious behavioral concerns, a conference with parents or guardians may be required. Continued concerns may result in dismissal from the program.

For the safety of all children, biting incidents may result in immediate removal for the remainder of the day and parents or guardians will be notified promptly

Safety Procedures

The center conducts regular fire, tornado, and lockdown drills in accordance with Michigan state regulations. In the event of an emergency, the center's established emergency response plan will be implemented. Children may be evacuated or sheltered in place as appropriate, and parents or guardians will be notified promptly of the situation and location of their child.

Children with special needs and/or chronic medical conditions will have an individualized **emergency** plan. (Including who will help with the child and any accommodations that may be needed for that child) posted with the above information.

Any closures related to pest management will be handled in compliance with safety regulations, and families will be notified in advance whenever possible.

Food Service and Allergies

Nutritious meals and snacks are provided in accordance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) guidelines.

Any food allergies or special dietary needs must be documented on the Child Information Record and communicated to classroom staff and Nutrition Services. A completed Special Diet Statement, signed by a physician, is required in order for alternative meals or snacks to be provided.

Children are encouraged to participate in age-appropriate meal service and lunch cleanup activities as part of developing independence and responsibility.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is centered on play as the primary vehicle for learning and growth, promoting:

- Motor skills (fine and gross)
- Language development and storytelling
- Literacy and math skills
- Social-emotional learning through cooperative play and problem-solving
- Prevention of summer learning loss

Parent Communication and Involvement

Families receive regular communication through daily drop-off and pick-up interactions, Procure messages, emails and phone calls. Additional updates may be shared as needed in emails or on Facebook to keep families informed of classroom activities.

Families are encouraged to share their cultures, traditions, and talents with the classroom community. Parent and family volunteers are welcome to support classroom projects, special events, and enrichment activities, in accordance with center policies.

Rest Time

Rest time is a required part of our full-day schedule in accordance with Michigan Child Care Licensing guidelines. During rest time, children will participate in quiet, calming activities such as resting on the carpet, reading, drawing, or engaging in other low-stimulation activities.

Children are encouraged to rest their bodies and minds. While elementary-age children are not required to sleep, all children are expected to remain quiet and respectful of others during rest time. Disruptive children will be redirected and may need to be separated from the group.

Rest time provides an opportunity for children to relax and reset during a long day of care. This time also supports emotional regulation and helps children return to activities feeling calm and focused.

Staff will supervise rest time and provide alternative quiet activities as needed to ensure this period is calm, safe, and supportive for all children.

No electronic devices are allowed at care. Children with smart watches may be asked to keep them in their locker or bag if they are misused or creating a distraction. We ask that children not bring toys, jewelry, or personal items to care. These tend to get lost or damaged and are not the responsibility of the staff.

Proper Dress and Outdoor Play

Children should be dressed appropriately for the day's activities and weather conditions. Our program includes hands-on learning and occasional messy projects; therefore, families are encouraged to send children in comfortable clothing that can get dirty.

A labeled change of clothes should be provided and kept at the center as needed.

Children participate in outdoor recess daily, weather permitting. Please ensure your child is dressed for all weather conditions. During colder months, this includes a warm coat, hat, mittens or gloves, snow pants, and boots. On days when boots are worn, a change of shoes should be provided for indoor use. During warmer months, children should be dressed in lightweight, comfortable clothing. Layers are encouraged so children can remove items as temperatures change throughout the day. Light jackets or sweatshirts are recommended for cooler mornings and can be removed during warmer afternoons.

For safety reasons, please avoid flip-flops or open-toed shoes when possible. Closed-toe shoes with secure straps are recommended for active play.

Proper attire helps ensure children are able to safely and comfortably participate in all program activities.

Staff does not administer sunscreen or bug spray. Children can bring sunscreen in as long as they can put it on themselves.

Employment Standards

All employees, substitutes, and volunteers who have contact with children are required to complete and be cleared through all state-mandated background checks prior to working with children, in accordance with Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) Child Care Licensing requirements.

Staff receive a yearly orientation and participate in ongoing professional development and complete annual training requirements as outlined by Michigan Child Care Licensing. Training and professional development are tracked through MiRegistry. Staff maintain up to date Infant/Toddler CPR and First Aid certifications as well.

All staff members are mandated reporters and are required by law to immediately report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect in accordance with Michigan Child Protection Law and center policy.

Staff maintain confidentiality expectations for all children, families, and staff in accordance to our Staff Handbook.

Daily Schedule Monday Morning Care

7:00am Starting time/Quite Activity/Gym Game

8:40am Get Ready and Dismiss to Bus

Daily Schedule Morning Care

7:00am Starting time/Quite Activity/Gym Game

7:40am Get Ready and Dismiss to Bus

Daily Schedule After School Care

3:00pm-3:15pm Arrival Time/MES students Off Bus

3:15pm-3:30pm Snack

3:30pm-5:00pm Recess/Gym/Free Choice/Group Activity

5:00pm-5:30pm Clean Up/Group Game/Dismissal

Daily Schedule Summer Care

7:30am	Arrival/Quite Activity
8:00-8:15	Breakfast (<i>Serving time may vary based on Nutrition Services</i>)
8:15-8:30	Morning Meeting
8:30-9:30	Free choice/Activity
9:30-10:15	Recess/Gym
10:15-10:30	Bathroom/Hand Washing
10:30-11:45	Free choice/Activity
11:45-12:00	Bathroom/Hand Washing
12:00-12:30	Lunch (<i>Serving time may vary based on Nutrition Services</i>)
12:30-12:45	Bathroom/Hand Washing
12:45-1:30	Recess/Gym
1:30-2:30	Board Game, Cards, Riddles, Table Time
2:30-2:45	Bathroom/Hand Washing
2:45-3:00	Snack
3:00-4:30	Rest Time/Movie
4:30-5:15	Activity/Game
5:15-5:30	Dismissal

Childcare Program Consent and Agreement

By enrolling your child in Morning, After, and/or Summer Care you agree to:

- Follow the policies in the MECC handbooks
- Comply with payment and attendance policies
- Permit staff to act in the best interest of your child's health and safety

This handbook is subject to change, and families will be notified of updates.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent or Guardian)