



Buffalo Adventures

Parent Handbook

2024-2025

The *Buffalo Adventures* program provides a safe, supervised environment full of enriching and age-appropriate educational activities for VCS students in grades K-8. Because the program is based on choices, children gain independence and have the freedom to learn more about what interests them. We feature opportunities for: socialization, sports and physical activities, exploration in the arts, and time for homework and research. The *Buffalo Adventures* program encompasses five areas: 1) After School Care 2) Extra-Curricular Activities 3) Service Clubs 4) Holiday Camps and 5) Child care for Buffalo HERD meetings.

I. After School Care

An annual registration fee of **\$25/child** and the completion of your registration form with payment is all that is required to register your child for aftercare services. This can be done at any of our *Buffalo Adventures* offices.

We also have optional, fee-based extra-curricular activities, camps, and/or service clubs in which your child may choose to participate. Activity registration is done online by clicking the <https://vcs.jumbula.com> link on our *Buffalo Adventures* website. Early registration is available prior to Student Orientation.

K-8 Daily Care

For your convenience, VCS offers complimentary childcare **before school**, beginning at 6:30 AM. Breakfast is available at each school campus for a minimal fee, and menus are posted on the VCS website.

After-school care is available for your children on a day-to-day basis at the campus your child attends. When carline ends, all remaining students will be assigned to an aftercare class. A one-time registration fee and a daily fee will apply based on the times listed below.

Buffalo Ridge Campus	School Dismissal Time	Aftercare Charges Begin
Primary Center	2:35 PM	3:00 PM
Intermediate Center	2:30 PM	3:00 PM
4 th /5 th Grade Center	2:40 PM	3:00 PM
Middle School	2:55 PM	3:15 PM

Middleton Campus	School Dismissal Time	Aftercare Charges Begin
Elementary K – 5 th	2:35 PM	3:00 PM
Middle School 6 th - 8 th	2:55 PM	3:15 PM
High School	2:35 PM	4:00 PM

If your child has an appointment directly after school, you (or another person listed on your Emergency Contact Sheet) may pick up your child in carline and return them for the extra-curricular activity they are enrolled in after school. In these instances, you (or your designee)

will need to walk your child into the building and sign them in at the Buffalo Adventures office. Unless you pick up your child at the end of the activity, the \$8 daily rate will still apply. Children absent during the school day due to illness or suspension may not participate in *Buffalo Adventures* aftercare services or extra-curricular activities until they return to school.

A quiet opportunity for homework is scheduled each day, with the exception of some Fridays. The *Buffalo Adventures* Guide in your child’s classroom is available to answer general questions during this time; however, one-on-one tutoring, specific help to learn new skills, or checking each assignment for accuracy is not available through our program. **It is the responsibility of the parent to check homework for completion and accuracy.** Middle school students may request a pass to visit a homework lab to complete assignments on their Chromebook. Students who prefer completing homework at home can spend this time reading a book of their choice.

PikMyKid

PikMyKid is a program used for dismissing students from aftercare that allows parents to announce their arrival on campus through a free app downloaded onto their smartphone (found in the app store) that links directly to the Buffalo Adventures Office. Once announced, Buffalo Adventures is notified in live time that you are on campus and your child is called for dismissal.

Parents or designees may pick students up from any of the Buffalo Adventure programs by announcing them through the PikMyKid app and then following the directions listed in the tables below. Siblings 16 years or older who are driving and present a valid driver’s license are permitted to pick up students.

Buffalo Ridge After-Care Pick Up

Site/Grade	Location for Pick Up
Primary Center K-1st Grades	Use the PikMyKid to announce your child(ren), park, and come to the front door to pick up your child(ren).
Intermediate Center 2 nd - 3 rd Grades	Use the PikMyKid app. to announce your child(ren), park, and come to the front door to pick up your child(ren).
4 th /5 th Grade Center	Use the PikMyKid app. to announce your child(ren), pull into the front carline, and move forward along with traffic until your child is picked up.
Middle School 6 th – 8 th Grades	Use the PikMyKid app. to announce your child(ren), pull into the front carline, and move forward along with traffic until your child is picked up.

Middleton After-Care Pick Up

Site/Grade	Location for Pick Up
Middleton Elementary K-2nd Grades	Use the PikMyKid app. to announce your child(ren), pull into the front carline, remain in the car, and move forward along with traffic until your child is picked up.
Middleton Elementary 3 rd - 5 th Grades	Use the PikMyKid app. to announce your child(ren), pull into the side carline, remain in the car, and move forward along with traffic until your child is picked up.
Middleton Middle 6 th – 8 th Grades	Use the PikMyKid app. to announce your child(ren), pull into the carline, remain in the car, and move forward along with traffic until your child is picked up.

We ask that all parents register with the NEWEST version of the PikMykid phone application.

Buffalo Adventures Walkers/Bike Riders- Middleton Campus Only

Middleton Campus students only, can walk/bicycle home during aftercare under the following guidelines.

- Parents must change the Pickup mode in the PikmyKid app to “Walker” mode and select the time you wish for your child to be released.
- K-4th grade walkers/bicyclers will only be released if accompanied by an approved adult or sibling in 5th-12th grade.
- Crossing Guards will be on duty until 4:30 PM.

Please see the *VCS Before and After School Policy 24-25* located on the school’s website for the complete policy.

Busing Transportation

Students transitioning after school from Middleton to Buffalo Ridge through transportation services must be picked up when the bus arrives at Buffalo Ridge. Aftercare services are only available at the campus your child attends.

Payment Schedule

Buffalo Adventures aftercare program is a “pay before you stay program.” However, if you choose not to pay upfront for aftercare charges, there will be a weekly late fee of \$5 assessed to all accounts with a balance on Wednesdays.

Aftercare services run from school dismissal until 6:30 PM at a fee of \$8.00 per day.

Payments for your child can be paid in several ways:

- A one-time payment for the entire year
 - 20% discount will apply to this payment option
 - \$1152/child= a savings of \$288
 - Payment in full must be received on or before: August 23, 2024.
- A half-year payment
 - 15% discount will apply to this payment option!
 - \$612/child= a savings of \$108
 - Payment in full must be received no later than August 23, 2024 for the 1st semester and no later than January 10, 2024 for the 2nd semester.
 - Discounted full-semester payment for the 1st half of the year will qualify your child to attend aftercare through December 22, 2023. Discounted full-semester payment for the 2nd half of the year will qualify your child to attend aftercare from January 7, 2023 through May 24, 2025.
- Weekly payments
- Daily payments (due the day of participation)

Methods of Payment

Buffalo Adventures aftercare fees and payments can be reviewed and paid online through our billing app. *Smartcare* with a credit or debit card. Payments made with checks, cash, or money orders can be made at any of the Buffalo Adventures or Accounting Offices, made payable to “The Villages Charter School.” Receipts will be provided for cash payments. For more information about *Smartcare*, please visit Buffalo Adventures website.

A separate check is required for athletics, extra-curricular activities, lunch money, and *The Villages Early Learning Company*.

Please include your child’s name and the name of the Qualifying Parent in the memo section of your check.

For accounting purposes, the following policy is used for returned checks:

- **A \$25 fee is assessed to the family account for any returned check.**
- If a second check is returned in the same school year, a **\$25 returned check fee will be assessed to the family account and the family will be on a “cash only basis” for the remainder of the school year.** Payments will need to be made in cash, cashier’s check, or money order.
- If a third check is returned, will be a \$25 returned check fee will be assessed to the family account and the family will be on a “cash only basis” for the remainder of their enrollment at The Villages Charter School.

PLEASE NOTE- Buffalo Adventures aftercare program is a “pay before you stay program.” However, if you choose not to pay upfront for aftercare charges, there will be a weekly late fee of \$5 assessed to all accounts with a balance on Wednesdays.

Household accounts that have a balance of unpaid fees, will result in suspension of *Buffalo Adventures* activities including: aftercare services, fee-based extracurricular activities, camps and/or service clubs. (Reinstatement to *Buffalo Adventures* programs can occur after regaining a zero balance.)

Tax information

Buffalo Adventures aftercare account information including fees and payments are available online through our *Smartcare* billing app. A link to this app. can be found on the Buffalo Adventures webpage or you may call Buffalo Adventures for additional information.

The Villages Charter School taxpayer I.D. # is: 59-3597803.

Overtime Charges

Our professional, hardworking staff is dedicated to providing excellent care for your children. **The staff workday ends at 6:30 PM**, so your prompt arrival to pick up your child will help show your appreciation and respect for their personal time. If an emergency occurs, please call Buffalo Adventures as soon as possible to let them know that you will be delayed. The direct phone number for Buffalo Adventures is (352)259-6818.

Overtime Policy

We will care for your child until you arrive, but please take note that the following policies will apply **any time** you are delayed. **Any child** picked up at any school **after 6:30 PM** will be assessed overtime charges. Charges are based on the time displayed on the **school clock** at the *Buffalo Adventures* desk.

- **Overtime charges are \$2 per minute per child for the first 30 minutes.**
- **Overtime charges will increase by \$5 per minute per child for the remaining 30 minutes.**

EX: 6:30-7:00= \$2 per minute per child
7:01-7:30= \$5 per minute per child

- Overtime charges are to be paid immediately and a signed statement must be completed upon arrival.
- After **three** late pick-ups from our aftercare program, *Buffalo Adventures* privileges may be denied for the remainder of the school year, which includes participation in fee-based, extra-curricular activities, camps, or service clubs.

PLEASE NOTE- After 6:30 PM, every attempt will be made to reach you or an authorized person on the Emergency Contact Form you provided. However, if we have not been notified you are delayed and are unable to make contact by 7:00 PM we are obligated to notify the proper authorities to assist in locating appropriate care for your child.

Suspension or Dismissal from the program

Your child may be denied privileges in our Buffalo Adventures programs if any of the following apply:

- o Required fees are not paid
- o Non-payment of overtime charges
- o 3 or more late pick-up occurrences
- o **Student behavior which does not exemplify *The Villages Charter School Code of Conduct and Core Values***

Students participating in *Buffalo Adventures* activities, including: aftercare, fee-based, extra-curricular activities, camps and/or service clubs are held to the same high standards to which they are accountable during the regular school day. *Buffalo Adventures* Site Coordinators and Guides do their very best to work with students and their behavioral choices. Many times, these instances are used as “teachable moments.” However, repeated behaviors, especially those that include physical contact, or other behaviors deemed inappropriate by the Site Coordinator, will be grounds for immediate suspension from *Buffalo Adventures*. The number of days for suspension will be determined by the Site Coordinator.

In some cases, a discipline referral will be submitted to the administration at the child’s school. At the middle and high school levels, these discipline referrals will become part of the student’s permanent record. Reinstatement to the *Buffalo Adventures* program will occur after the parent has conferenced with the Site Coordinator and expectations for student behavior are reiterated. Sadly, continued failure to meet expectations will result in expulsion from all *Buffalo Adventures* activities for the remainder school year. We look forward to working with you and your student for a successful experience in *Buffalo Adventures*!

Other Important Policies

Buffalo Adventures is pleased to use the beautiful facilities at *The Villages Charter School* to provide after-school and seasonal programs. Students who knowingly misuse VCS property including desks, chairs, fixtures, and classroom materials will receive disciplinary consequences which may include suspended services from aftercare.

While you are on campus watching an activity or picking up your children, please be sure that you:

- Avoid the use of any tobacco and vaping products indoors or outdoors. It is strictly prohibited.
- Do not bring pets. Service dogs are the only animals permitted on campus.
- Safe guard any personal belongings. VCS will be held responsible for any lost or damaged items. Please be sure to communicate to your child the importance of following the guidelines indicated in their school’s *Code of Conduct* for the use of electronic equipment while on campus.

II. Extra-Curricular Activities

Our goal is to provide working parents the opportunity for their children to participate in extra-curricular activities with the convenience of having those activities offered on their school campus. Activities will be available at both Buffalo Ridge and Middleton campuses with the same or similar content. Students may only register and take part in activities at the campus they attend. Registration will be available on the activities link Jumbula, located on our *Buffalo Adventures* website just prior to the beginning of each nine-week session. Information will be also posted in each *Buffalo Adventures* office. **Wrap-around child care is not included with your activity fee(s). If this service is needed, your child must be registered in our Buffalo Adventures Program, which includes a \$25 registration fee, which can be paid at any Buffalo Adventures office.** Daily aftercare fees (\$8/day/child) will apply to students who are on campus prior to the beginning of the activity and for those who stay longer than 10 minutes after the ending time of the activity. Students attending a 3:00 activity will not be charged a daily aftercare fee if picked up within 10 minutes of the ending time for the activity. Accounts with outstanding balances will not be eligible to enroll in activities.

In compliance with the VCS school dress code policy, students who “dress out” for extra-curricular activities must “dress back in” before attending *Buffalo Adventures* aftercare.

III. Service Clubs

Service Clubs are an integral part of a well-rounded education and provide students at the middle and high school levels a chance to explore leadership, civic responsibility and volunteer opportunities in nationally recognized organizations such as: K-Kids and Inter Act. Students can participate in service clubs for a \$10/year, which covers club dues. Please note: There may be academic and behavioral eligibility requirements to participate. Please see the club sponsor for more details. Daily aftercare fees (\$8/day/child) will apply to students who are on campus after school prior to the beginning of the paid activity and for those who stay longer than 10 minutes after the ending time of the activity.

IV. Seasonal/Holiday Camps

When school is not in session, *Buffalo Adventures* offers themed seasonal/holiday camps to current VCS students in grades K-5 on a first-come, first-serve basis. While in camp, students must follow VCS Code of Conduct. Seasonal arts and crafts projects, as well as indoor and outdoor play are included each day. Seasonal/holiday camps are held when interest in the program is sufficient and when the school calendar year allows. Information will be posted on *Buffalo Adventures* website prior to the start of camps. You won't want to miss the enrollment period, as spaces are limited and fill quickly! **Camp and field trip fees are non-refundable.** Be sure that you select only the weeks that you plan for your children to attend camp. All camp information will be sent via email, so be certain to keep your email address up to date in our activity app. Jumbula. The deposit for each selected week is due at the time of registration. Weekly camp payments are due the Friday prior to the attending week. Unpaid fees will result in cancellation. **Once registration ends, you will be liable for the cost of all weeks you selected. Neither refunds nor credits will be issued due to non-attendance.**

For the coming school year, camps will be held during these times:

Fall Break Camp	-	November 25, 2023 – November 29, 2024
Winter Break Camp	-	
Spring Break Camp	-	March 24, 2025 – March 28, 2025
Summer Camp	-	Begins June 9, 2025 – July 25, 2025

V. Buffalo HERD meetings

The Buffalo HERD (Helping Educate Responsibly Developed children) is an integral part of staying connected to VCS. Virtual and in-person HERD meetings take place on the first Tuesday of every month, excluding January. Parents attending these meetings receive “PI” (Parental Involvement) hours, which is one of the cornerstones of *The Villages Charter School* system. Because some of the topics covered may not be suitable for little ears, the *Buffalo Adventures* program is happy to provide **complimentary** childcare during in-person HERD meetings. Please visit the Buffalo HERD website for times and locations of HERD meetings and fundraising events.

Contact us!

We strive for excellence and are always willing to hear your concerns/suggestions in an effort to improve our quality of care. We look forward to a great year with your child!

Please contact us by email at Buffalo.Adventures@tvcs.org or phone at (352) 259-6818.