



Zoo Camp Handbook

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Welcome

Thank you for choosing Brevard Zoo Camp! We offer a variety of camp programs throughout the year, including Summer, Winter and one-day Mini Camps. Camps are designed with the goals of fostering a lifelong connection to nature and an appreciation of the many ways that we are connected to the natural world around us in a safe, fun and inclusive environment. Each day, campers will have the opportunity to explore the Zoo, participate in up-close animal encounters and take part in themed games and activities.

Please review the information provided in this handbook prior to the first day of camp so that you and your camper can prepare for a great camp experience. *Please note that information is subject to change.*

Camp Overview

When school is out, camp is in session! Brevard Zoo offers the following camp opportunities throughout the year:

Summer Camp: Summer Camps are offered each year during summer break. Half-day camps are available for campers entering Kindergarten the following school year, and full-day camps are available for campers entering 1st through 9th grades. All campers must be 5 years old by September 1st to participate. Camps range from 3 to 5 days in length.

Winter Camp: Winter Camps are offered each year during Winter Break. Full-day camp sessions range from 3 to 5 days in length and are available for campers in 1st-5th grades.

Mini Camp: Mini Camps are one-day camps offered during school holidays and Brevard Public School's teacher workdays. These full-day camps are available for campers in 1st-5th grades.

Please visit our camp registration page for additional details about available camp sessions:
<https://brevardzoo.org/education/zoo-camps>

Camp Hours

Summer Camp:

Half-Day (Entering Kindergarten Only)

8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Full-Day

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Winter Camp:

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Mini Camp:

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Drop-off begins 15 minutes before camp, and pick-up ends 15 minutes after camp. Brevard Zoo does not offer before- or aftercare, and a fee may be applied for late pick-ups.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Drop-Off

- Drop-off takes place at the following areas:
 - Half-day camps for campers entering Kindergarten: Conservation Learning Gate in the first parking lot.
 - Full-day camps for campers entering 1st-6th grades: KidZone Gate in the first parking lot.
 - Full-day camps for campers entering 7th-9th grades: Nyami Nyami River Lodge in the second parking lot.
- On the first day of camp, we ask that parents/guardians park and walk to the registration table to sign-in their camper and meet the counselors. On the following days, you may drop your campers off in our car-loop line. Camp staff will be available to escort your camper to their assigned camp group each day.
- We close our gates 15 minutes after the start of camp. If you are running more than 15 minutes late, please call 321-254-9453 ext. 219 for assistance. If you arrive after 9 a.m., please go to the Zoo's administration office to the left of the main entrance for check-in.

Pick-Up

- Pick-up will take place each day at the drop-off location for each camp. During pick-up, please remain in your car and follow the car-loop line. We will walk your children to your car.
- We check campers out daily. This is a process we take very seriously, and we appreciate your patience and understanding.
 - One the first day of any camp longer than 1 day in duration, you will be provided with a car-loop tag. Please display this tag on your car's dashboard in the car-loop line.
 - If you arrive without your car-loop tag or are not given a car-loop tag, a photo ID is required.
 - During camp registration, you will be asked to provide the names of all people authorized to pick-up your child. Only those individuals listed will be allowed to pick-up a camper.
 - If the person presenting the ID is not on the authorized pick-up list, we will call the primary contact for written authorization via email from the email address of the primary contact used during registration.
 - **We do not accept copies or photos of either the car-loop sign or photo IDs. No other forms of identification will be accepted.**
- In the event of lightning in the area, pick-up will take place at the same gates. We will ask you to park and pick up your camper in their camp classroom. The car-loop sign or a photo ID will still be required.
- If you need to pick your child up from camp early, please go to the Zoo's administration office to the left of the main entrance. Early pick-up cannot be accommodated within 30 minutes of regular camp dismissal time.

Preparing for the Camp Day

Get ready for an adventure! Zoo Camp is an active camp, and campers spend their day in a variety of places throughout the day, including exploring Zoo grounds, indoor classrooms, outdoor play areas, and behind-the-scenes.

What to Wear:

We recommend dressing your camper for the weather in comfortable clothes that are okay to get dirty. Sneakers or other closed-toed shoes are required. We do not allow Crocs or sandals except during water play activities. For Winter and Summer Camps, you will be given a detailed letter on the first day which will outline the activities and specific requirements for your camp.

For safety reasons, campers who do not comply with attire requirements may not be able to participate in certain activities, and your camper will have to miss out on fun! You may be called to bring proper attire or pick up your camper.

What to Bring:

- Reusable water bottle(s) that can be refilled throughout the day.
- Morning and afternoon snacks for full-day camps, and morning snacks for half-day camps.
- Lunch for full-day camps. Lunches cannot be refrigerated or heated. We suggest that lunches be packed in reusable containers with ice packs to minimize waste. *Half-day camps do not require a lunch.*
- Self-applied sunscreen and insect repellent (no aerosol). Staff are unable to apply sunscreen or insect repellent.

What Not to Bring:

- Personal items such as money, games, trading cards, toys, stuffed animals, etc.
- Electronic devices such as handheld games, iPods, cell phones, cameras, etc.

Please note that these items may be confiscated until the end of the camp day if brought. **Brevard Zoo is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.**

Additional Information for Campers Entering Kindergarten

Campers attending our half-day camp for entering Kindergarten are scheduled for the PawsOn Play Lagoon Friday mornings. Please send your camper to camp that morning wearing a bathing suit with clothes on over. At the end of our time in the Play Lagoon, campers will not change but will instead dry off outside while eating snack. Please be sure to pack a towel.

Camper Wellness and Safety

Medical Policy:

Please indicate on your registration form any medications, allergies, or other medical conditions that your child may be taking or have while at Zoo Camp and complete the Brevard Zoo Medication Administration Policies and Waivers form before or on the first day of camp. Our camps operate without a Nurse or Physician on site. Zoo Camps are equipped with staff who are certified in first aid, CPR and epi-pen assistance. Please see below on medication administration procedures:

- It is the responsibility of the camper's parent/legal guardian to supply any necessary medical equipment that relates to a specific medical condition, including epi-pens and inhalers.
- Brevard Zoo staff **MAY NOT** administer medications of any kind, with the exception of epi-pen assistance in an emergency. This includes both over-the-counter (OTC) and prescribed medications.
- Brevard Zoo staff **MAY** witness camper self-administration, but this is not guaranteed.
- Campers must keep medication on their person throughout their time at Zoo Camp, including epi-pens and inhalers.
- Campers are permitted to bring a backpack, purse or lunch bag with them into the Zoo if necessary to keep medications on their person at all times.
- A camper's parent/legal guardian authorizes any medications (OTC, prescription, non-

prescription or otherwise) administered during camp are under the direction of a licensed physician.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Policy:

Upon registering, we ask that you include any additional information that will help us ensure your child has a safe and fun camp experience. In addition to the medical information listed above, please include information regarding sensory, learning, mobility or other needs that your child may have to help us prepare for your camper to have a great time at camp. We pride ourselves in creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for all campers. The more information provided, the better we can prepare for your camper to have an amazing experience!

Brevard Zoo embraces diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion. We believe that these qualities foster valuable talents, perspectives and personality traits that make the Zoo a stronger, more welcoming organization.

Employees, volunteers and guests of all races, religions, sexual orientations, gender identities, exceptionalities, ages and nationalities have the right to feel safe, respected and valued. We reject racism, religious discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, ageism and xenophobia. Simply stated, we will not tolerate acts of hate.

Restroom Policy:

Brevard Zoo restroom choices include:

- Single-occupancy, gender-neutral (unisex) restrooms; and
- Multiple-occupant restrooms with lockable single occupant stalls.

Brevard Zoo guests, employees and volunteers determine the most appropriate options for themselves. In order to remain in compliance with Florida state education laws, single-occupancy restrooms are available in classrooms. Campers will have access to both multiple-occupant restrooms while in the Zoo, as well as single-use occupancy restrooms.

Camper Illness:

Brevard Zoo reserves the right to refuse entrance to Zoo Camp if a child is exhibiting any symptoms listed below. For the wellbeing of all our campers and the safety of others in the program and camp staff, if your camper shows any of the following symptoms below, you will be asked to pick up your child immediately. In the event a camper becomes ill, camp staff will notify the parent/guardian listed at the time of registration followed by those listed as emergency contacts. We ask that your camper be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to camp.

Symptoms:

- Fever
- Severe headache
- Severe/persistent coughing
- Pink eye
- Sore throat
- Vomiting
- Open wounds/severe cuts

Camper Injury:

Camp staff trained in first aid may administer treatment for minor cuts scrapes, splinters and bug bites with permission provided during camp registration. Parents/guardians will be notified at camp pick-up of any minor injuries and treatment provided.

Parents/guardians will be notified immediately of any injury requiring more than basic first aid and/or any injury to the head or face. You may be asked to pick-up your camper based on symptoms and severity.

By enrolling your child in camp, you acknowledge the risks and benefits of play and hold your child responsible for following rules and regulations put in place to help prevent injury.

Camp Absences:

Please notify camp staff if your camper is going to be absent from camp or call 321-254-3453 ext. 219. No refunds will be provided for missed days.

Behavior Expectations

Brevard Zoo's top priority is for all campers to have a safe and enjoyable camp experience. Behavior expectations will be reviewed with campers regularly, and campers may be asked to sign a Camp Code of Conduct:

We expect all of our campers to:

- **Be Safe:** Campers will stay with their group at all times and follow directions given by Zoo staff.
- **Be Respectful:** Campers will treat staff, volunteers, other campers and animals with respect. Campers will clean up after themselves.
- **Be Kind:** Campers will use kind language and keep their hands and feet to themselves. Campers will treat others the way they wish to be treated.

Discipline Policy:

Our staff understands the importance of creating a fun and pleasant camp environment and strives to reinforce behavior expectations in a positive way. However, in the case that a camper repeatedly does not follow established behavior expectations, the following steps will be taken:

- Step 1: Verbal warning and possible break from a camp activity.
- Step 2: Restriction from participation in a camp activity with parent/guardian notified.
- Step 3: Restriction from participation in camp activities and a meeting with the Camp Manager and parent/guardian. You may be asked to pick-up the child from camp, and camper may be asked to not return for the remainder of camp. *Refunds will not be provided for time missed from camp due to behavior concerns.*

Physical altercations, profanity, use of racist/homophobic/sexist remarks or gestures, destruction or theft of property, animal harassment or harm, and/or bullying may result in immediate elevation to Step 3 of the discipline policy.

Additional Information

Camp Staffing:

All Zoo Camps are staffed with year-round Education staff and seasonal camp staff. All camp staff have completed a background check and are trained on child development and best practices in environmental education. Trained Zoo Teen volunteers may also assist with camp activities.

Camp Weather Policy:

Zoo Camp takes place rain or shine! We do our best to plan our day around weather predictions, with many outdoor activities planned in the morning to avoid heat and thunderstorms. While we make every attempt to make-up any activities due to inclement weather, make-up activities are not guaranteed.

Cancellation, Transfer and Refund Policy:

A \$50 fee will be applied for all cancellation requests for Summer or Winter Camps. All transfer requests are contingent on space available in the requested camp week, and transfers will not be accommodated if the wrong age group was purchased. A \$10 fee will be applied to all cancellations for Mini Camps. Refunds and transfers will not be issued within two weeks of the program start date. Payment will not be refunded if a camper does not attend. We reserve the right to cancel due to inclement weather or insufficient enrollment. You will be notified and a full refund will be issued under these circumstances.

Camp Contact Information:

For general camp registration questions or notification of camp absences, please contact the Education Registrar at 321-254-3453 ext. 219.

For all other questions, please contact:

Bri Forte, Camp Manager

bforte@brevardzoo.org

321-254-3453 ext. 214

or

Amy Shea, Education Curator

ashea@brevardzoo.org

321-254-3453 ext. 238

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I register for camp?

All camp registration must be completed online. Please visit <https://brevardzoo.org/education/zoo-camps> for registration and information on upcoming camp sessions.

Upon registering, payment is due in full. If camp registration becomes full, we will add your name to the waitlist, if desired. No guarantees can be made to accommodate those on the waitlist.

What is the authorized pick-up list, and can I add someone to this list?

The authorized pick-up list is a list of contacts that are authorized to sign out your camper. Anyone not on this list will not be allowed to pick up your camper. Upon registering for camp online, you will be able to add names as desired. Should you wish to add additional names after registration, you can email our Education Registrar at brevardzooregistrar@brevardzoo.org from the primary contact email. If you wish to add additional names on the first day of camp, you must fill out and sign a waiver. Staff can provide those upon request. **We require all correspondence and alterations to be made by the primary contact indicated during registration.**

What will my child experience while at Zoo Camp?

We strive to provide our campers with a fun and unique experience! A typical week includes activities such as: time in the Zoo to explore with the group, Keeper Chats/Experiences, camp-themed games, take-home crafts/activities, private animal encounters and nature exploration.

During Summer Camps, campers entering 1st- 4th grades may have the opportunity to experience Treetop Trek. Campers entering grades 5th-6th may experience either our Africa Kayaking or Wetlands Kayaking. Campers entering Kindergarten-6th grades will experience the PawsOn Play Lagoon Splash Pad (weather permitting).

How are campers grouped?

All campers are grouped by age/grade. During Summer Camp, campers are grouped by:

- Entering Kindergarten
- Entering 1st-2nd grades
- Entering 3rd-4th grades
- Entering 5th-6th grades
- Entering 7th-9th grades.

Please note these are the grades that the camper will be entering during the upcoming school year.

During Winter and Mini Camps, campers are grouped by:

- 1st-2nd grades
- 3rd-5th grades

Please note these grades are their current grade. Winter and Mini Camps are not currently available for Kindergarteners or middle school students.

My child has a sibling or friend who is also attending camp. Can they in the same group?

If campers are in the same grade, please indicate that they would like to be in the same camp group on the registration form and contact our Education Registrar at brevardzooregistrar@brevardzoo.org to confirm. We will do our best to accommodate placement requests, but they cannot be guaranteed.

Our camp programming is designed with the developmental needs of each grade band in mind; therefore, campers in grades that are not grouped together will not be in the same camp group.

We reserve the right to cancel the registrations of children that were not registered for the correct grade/age.

Are there accommodations for children with exceptional needs?

Please indicate on your registration form any exceptional needs of which you would like us to be aware. The more information provided the better we can meet the needs of your camper.

Will my child be able to interact and touch animals?

At this time, we are not allowing guests to touch animals. Campers will, however, be able to interact in settings such as giraffe and aviary feedings, as well as get up close with our animal ambassadors!

Can I drop my camper off early or pick them up late?

We do not allow early drop-off or late pick-up. For Summer Camp, staff are at the designated gate at 8:15 a.m. for drop-off, and 3:15-3:45 p.m. for pick-up. For Mini Camps and Winter Camp, staff are at the designated gate at 7:45 a.m. for drop-off, and 3:45-4:15 p.m. for pick-up.

If you are more than 15 minutes late to pick up your camper, a fee may be applied.

What should I do if I need to pick up my camper early?

Please let camp staff know at drop-off if you are planning to pick your camper up early. When you arrive, go to the Zoo's administration office to the left of the main entrance, and they will provide directions from there. Early pick-up cannot be accommodated within 30 minutes of regular camp dismissal.