



# BEYOND THE BELL

JCC Rockland's School Age Care Program

2024-2025

PARENT  
HANDBOOK



**JCC Rockland**  
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[jccrockland.org](http://jccrockland.org)

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# PURPOSE & PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRAM

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

JCC Rockland's Beyond the Bell school age care program provides quality after-school childcare for children in grades K-5 (5-11 years old) at several sites in Rockland County. We offer homework assistance, snacks and supervised activities geared for your child's age group, developmental needs and personal interests.

## PHILOSOPHY OF BEYOND THE BELL:

Beyond the Bell is committed to enhancing the overall well-being of children who attend our school age care program. Our program is designed to both enrich and complement your child's school experience. To that end, we strive to provide:

A safe, healthy, stable environment.

A capable, sensitive, caring and energetic staff who understand the needs of children in an after-school environment and who take part in ongoing staff development. Well-organized, age-appropriate activities and games for recreation and skill acquisition.

## STAFF

We strive to provide the best staff for all of our programs. All Beyond the Bell staff go through an interview process and references are checked. All staff also go through a background check and fingerprint clearance process from the State of New York.

We have several levels of coverage at each site.

**Site Leader** – the point person who oversees the day to day operations at their site.

**Assistant Site Leader** – helps support the Site Leader and is in charge in the Site Leader's absence.

**Head Counselor** – A staff member who is 18 or older and has a minimum of two years' experience working with school age youth. They must also demonstrate a high level of leadership skills.

**General Counselor** – Staff members who are 16 years or older and serve as general staff in the program helping and assisting with all aspects of the program.

We hold trainings throughout the school year on topics such as; child development, program development, working with children with special needs and many more. All of our staff are mandated by New York State to complete a minimum of 16 training hours a year. Many of our staff exceed this. All staff members 18 and older and many of our 16 and 17 year old staff are CPR and First Aid certified. We also have staff at each site that hold MAT certification allowing us to administer medications as prescribed by your physician during our program hours. See your Site Leader for forms and details about medication administration.

## CURRICULUM & SAMPLE SCHEDULE

The Beyond the Bell program offers a variety of activity choices including arts and crafts, organized group games, outdoor play, table games, homework assistance, and special events. Daily nutritional snacks will be provided. Each site has its own daily schedule of activities to meet the needs of their participants and parents.

### SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

While each site has its own specific schedule, the following schedule gives you an idea of a typical day at JCC Rockland's Beyond the Bell School Age Care Program.

- **2:15–3:15pm** Children arrive or are picked up for the program. Attendance is taken and all children scheduled for that day are accounted for.
- **2:15pm** a small snack is available for children to enjoy (for early schools)
- **3–4pm** Open/Free play: several stations are set-up for children to choose from and have some time to unwind from their day at school.
- **4–4:30pm** Snack time for the entire site
- **4:30–5pm** Homework Time and/or Gym or Outside play  
Homework space is provided for children to be able to work on their homework assignments.
- **5–6pm** Gym or Outside Play and Specialty Stations/Activities
- **6:00pm** Program Ends
- Parents may pick up at any time during the program.

## HOMEWORK POLICY

We ask each family to inform their Site Leader of their preference as it relates to homework. You will be able to fill out a homework form stating if you would like your child to start, complete, or not do their homework at the program during their first week of attendance. You can update this information at any time during the school year. Staff will be provided in each room during homework time to provide as much assistance as possible to each child. Our staff are trained to help make sure children clearly understand the directions and to redirect and focus them as needed, however they are not able to work one on one and provide tutoring service. Our staff will talk with parents or attach notes to homework if a child is having a difficult time or something should be brought to the parent or teacher's attention. Staff will remain in the homework room for a maximum of one hour or until the last student is done (whichever comes first). Children are able to continue completing their homework assignments independently, without staff assistance, after the hour of designated time is over with staff supervision in the program space

# ABSENCES & DISMISSAL

## ABSENCES

If your child will be absent from Beyond the Bell on a day they are scheduled to attend, please do at least one of the following:

- Send a note a minimum of one day prior to inform the Site Leader and School staff Speak directly with the Site Leader the day before

- Call or text the Site Leader's cell phone the day of the absence

- E-mail the Site Leader the day of the absence

It is critical that you notify the BTB program and your child's school in the event of an absence so your child will be accounted for and not considered missing. If your child is absent due to illness, please let us know when you call to inform us of the absence.

## DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Upon regular school dismissal, all Beyond the Bell participants will be directed to the assigned area to meet the BTB staff. Once they are present in the BTB program space daily attendance will take place and all children registered for that day will be accounted for within the first ten minutes of the program. If a child who is scheduled to attend has not arrived at the program, the following steps will take place:

- The Site Leader checks their voicemail and text log for any missed messages.

- The absentee list at the school is checked.

- The classroom teacher is contacted.

- A phone call is placed to the child's parent – all numbers will be used in an attempt to reach the parent.

- The school principal is notified.

- The JCC Rockland COO is informed.

- If the child is still unaccounted for at this point the local police are contacted.

- Once the child is located, all those who have been contacted will be made aware.

## DISMISSAL FROM BEYOND THE BELL / DAILY SIGN OUT

All children MUST be signed out daily. The staff will check children out to authorized persons ONLY. We ask everyone who arrives at the program to provide identification when picking up a child. Those individuals who are on the pick-up authorization list or emergency contact list may pick up that child any day unless otherwise stated. The adult who is picking up the child must sign out with the date and time of pick up each day. If there is a change in your pick up schedule or there is an alternate pick up person, please make sure to send a note in the day before or speak with the Site Leader directly. A voicemail message will not be accepted as we want to be able to provide you with confirmation that your change has been received.

## LATE ARRIVALS

If your child participates in any after school activities and will be arriving at BTB late, please let the Site Leader and their classroom teacher know the following:

- Activity they are attending
- Where the activity is taking place in the building
- Schedule of attendance at this activity
- Time to expect them at BTB

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

All participants are expected to conduct themselves appropriately and follow school rules while attending Beyond the Bell. We believe that discipline:

- Is based on logical consequences
- Places the responsibility on the behavior
- Keeps options open
- Is an active teaching process that emphasizes teaching a person to act in a way that will result in more successful behaviors.
- Is a learning opportunity

The following actions will be taken when a child exhibits inappropriate behaviors or is found in possession of anything that can be deemed harmful to themselves or others during the BTB program:

**Step 1 – Verbal Reminder** – Staff will use verbal cues to redirect, correct and remind the child about appropriate behaviors.

**Step 2 – Discussion Time** – When a child uses inappropriate behavior, the child will receive Time In. This is where the child and a staff member will sit and discuss the behavior and options as well as actions that can be put in place for the child to better handle a similar situation going forward.

**Step 3 – Take a Break** – This is when the prior two steps have been met with resistance or complete disregard. The child is given a short period of time (no more than one minute per age of child, not to exceed ten minutes) to relax and reflect on the situation. During this time, the child will be separated from others in the program but in the view of staff. The child may be asked to use this time to write or color about the situation.

**Step 4 – Parent Alert** – Parents will always be notified at pick up of any behavior issues that came up that day (this will take place during your regular pick-up conversation with staff) or a call will be placed prior if the situation justifies such action be taken. You will receive an email or phone call if a parent/staff conference is necessary. During this conversation or exchange a date and time will be arranged for a private conference to take place and further discuss the behaviors and plan of corrective action.

## SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

If the behavior of a child causes bodily harm with visual signs of abuse, the act is done with malice or there is continued behavioral issues, the Site Leader in conference with the COO may place a child on suspension for one to five days. If upon the child's return to the program the behaviors that caused the suspension or other issues arise the child may be expelled from the program at the discretion of the COO.

This policy will be followed by all Site Leaders and their staff. Special considerations will be handled on a case by case basis at the discretion of the COO.

A set of Site Rules will be constructed at the start of every school year with participation and suggestion from all staff and children in attendance. They will be positive in nature and will then be posted at the sign out area as well as in other locations throughout the program space.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

We gain so much from our participant's parents. Your insight into what may be at the root of your child's behavior. Your ideas and possible strategies that will help us guide your child's behaviors or work with their special needs.

In the event of behavioral issues we like to work collaboratively with parents to find the best solutions. Working with parents help us to make changes that will not only benefit their child but all children in the program. It is also our policy to handle all behavioral situations that occur between two or more program participants in a discreet and personal way. We ask for your assistance in implementing this policy: Parents may only discuss the situation with and reprimand their own child. You may request a conference with all parties involved where the Site Leader and/or Chief Operating Officer will mediate.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### HAND WASHING

Children and staff must wash their hands with soap and warm running water as needed. Staff and children will wash their hands whenever hands are contaminated with bodily fluids and always wash:

- Upon arrival to the program
- After using the bathroom
- Before and after caring for a sick child
- Before any food service
- Before setting the table
- Before and after eating
- After handling any animals
- After playing outdoors

## HOUSEKEEPING

The program will keep the premises (including furniture, fixtures, toys and equipment) clean, safe, disinfected and free of debris and potential hazards. Materials dangerous (toxic) to children will be kept secure in a way that is inaccessible to children, away from food storage and preparation areas. Staff will protect children from potential hazards, such as caustic or toxic art materials, cleaning agents, medications, hot liquids and exposure to extreme heat or cold.

All garbage and refuse containers will be durable and will be constructed of materials that do not absorb liquids. All bathrooms will have toilet paper, soap and disposable towels kept at the reach of all children in the program. Signs showing proper hand washing will be posted.

## SICK CHILDREN

The staff will conduct daily health checks (consisting of a brief visual observation) of each child that enters the program. At that time, a decision is made whether the child's condition suggests illness that will warrant further observation or for the child to be sent home.

Any children that show signs of illness will be isolated from other children. Parent(s) will be notified and asked to pick up the child from the program. While waiting for pick up the child will be kept as comfortable as possible with a quiet place to rest under the supervision of staff.

### **Children and Staff exhibiting the following symptoms should be kept home:**

- Fever of 100 or higher
- Thick, runny, discolored discharge from the nose
- Discharge from the eyes
- Sneezing and/or profuse coughing
- Head lice
- Diarrhea

### **JCC Rockland Beyond the Bell will send a child home when:**

- The child exhibits one or more of the symptoms listed above
- The child has a fever of 100 or higher and shows signs of illness
- The staff observe signs of a contagious disease or a severe illness
- If a child is sent to the program with these symptoms, parent will be contacted and asked to pick up the child from the program. If we are unable to contact the parent, we will contact those who appear on the Emergency Contact and Authorized Pick up lists.

**Under the leadership of the Site Leader, the entire staff serve as good health role models and give daily instruction in good hygiene and the following good health habits:**

- Washing hands after going to the bathroom and before handling food
- Covering mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing
- Developing good eating habits
- Dressing appropriately for the weather

## MEDICATION

Beyond the Bell staff may administer medication. These medications need to be in their original container. The medication must state the child's name, type of medication, date filled and dosage instructions. The original insert (directions) from the medication, a picture of the child, a written medical/prescription from is required to dispense these medications. A completed Action Plan form must be submitted and a guardian has to complete a face to face training of the staff that will be supervising the child in need of medication. The action plan paperwork is available at each site. Please see your Site Leader or contact the Beyond the Bell office for the medication paperwork. This includes inhalers, epi-pens and OTC drugs as well as any other medication prescribed by your physician.

## MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

The Site Leader & Staff will treat any minor injuries that occur with basic first aid. All injuries are logged in an incident book at the site. In the case of a serious injury an incident report will be filled out and a copy will be provided to the adult picking up the child from the program that day. In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called. Parent and/or those listed on your Emergency Contact & Authorized Pick-up lists will be informed. Upon the advice of medical professionals, staff will accompany your child to the hospital if necessary.

## ALLERGIES AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Prior to acceptance, the health information on the third page of registration must be completed and on file in our office. This information includes doctors & dentists names & contact numbers as well as medication and allergy information. If your child has any allergies, please remember to indicate this on the health information form. You will be notified if any of our participants or staff have been exposed to a contagious disease. We urge you to contact us immediately if your child has been similarly exposed or contracts an illness that could be contagious.

## FOOD & NUT POLICY

Beyond the Bell is a nut aware program. We avoid items that contain nuts, may contain nut products and try to avoid products produced in a factory that uses nuts. We continue to monitor the needs of our participants throughout the school year and will adjust this policy as needed. If the school where BTB is being held is or becomes a nut free space we will follow and become nut free as well. We do ask that NO outside food is brought in to the program unless it is approved by your child's Site Leader.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

It is the responsibility of our staff to protect the health and well-being of the children in attendance at our program and to maintain a safe environment.

## OUTDOOR WEATHER SAFETY

All children are expected to go outside daily (weather permitting). Outside play gives children an opportunity to breathe fresh air, exercise and freedom of movement after being indoors for their school day. All children should be dressed for the day's weather and need closed toe shoes in order to participate in outdoor and gym activities.

The BTB staff will monitor the local weather and determine if it is safe for the children to participate in outdoor play that day.

**Outdoor play will not take place if:**

- It is raining
- It is snowing
- Frigid temperatures
- Excessive heat

## **ADMISSIONS & SCHEDULE CHANGES**

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES**

Schedule changes can take place at any time. All changes in your child's attendance must be made on a Schedule Change Form that you can get directly from your Site Leader or the BTB office. The forms can be turned in at your site or directly to JCC Rockland. All forms will be processed within two business days. Confirmation that your Schedule Change Form has been received will come from JCC Rockland directly. We do not offer make up days, exchanges or credits for days missed for any reason. Change in days may be made at any time, provided that the original contracted amount is not reduced and space is available. If space is available you will be contacted by the JCC or your Site Leader to confirm the change. Reduction in your child's contracted days will go in to effect the following month the Schedule Change Form is submitted. There is a \$35 processing fee per change per child.

### **INFORMING THE SCHOOL**

All children that participate in the Beyond the Bell program need to submit a note to their classroom teacher informing them of the days the child will attend BTB for the school year. An updated note should be sent any time there is a change in attendance or on special early dismissal days. JCC Rockland sends an updated list to the school's office once a month.

### **EXTRA DAY POLICY**

We understand that occasionally families are in need of an extra day of child care. We are happy to help when space is available. If you need to add an extra day for a particular week, you must contact your Site Leader directly to confirm space and fill out the appropriate form. We ask that all requests for adding an extra day be made a minimum of 24 hours in advance. There is a \$35 extra day fee that will be charged to your account within three business days of the form being received.

### **LATE PICK-UP POLICY**

The BTB program ends at 6pm Monday thru Friday. We ask that parents arrive on time. If for any reason you will be running late, please call the Site Leader on their cell phone and inform them of the situation and your estimated time of arrival. You may at this time inform the Site Leader that you have made arrangements for an adult from your Authorized Pick-up list to be on their way. This will help the staff to reassure your child that you are safe and on your way or who will be picking them up. Please note there is a fee of \$35 per child for every fifteen minutes or part thereof after 6:00pm. These fees will be charged the next business day to your account. If a child is picked up late on a continuous basis their enrollment may be terminated without any refund for fees already paid.

## RIGHT TO REFUSE SERVICE POLICY

JCC Rockland's Beyond the Bell School Age Care Program reserves the right to refuse services for the following reasons:

- Failure of parent or child to adhere to all BTB rules, policies and procedure guidelines
- Parent or child are physically or verbally abusive to staff or other program participants
- Failure to pay tuition on time as scheduled
- Failure to provide full, current and updated information, records and forms as requested
- Failure to arrive for pick up on time (by 6:00pm daily)
- Child continues to exhibit inappropriate behavior and all other options to correct the behavior have been exhausted
- When the Site Leader, Director of the program or Chief Operating Officer of JCC Rockland, at their discretion, believe that continued service is not in the best interest of the child or for the program as a whole

## NO REFUNDS OR CREDITS WILL BE ISSUED

## SNOW DAYS & EMERGENCY CLOSURES

BTB will be closed when school is canceled in the morning or dismisses early due to weather or any other emergency takes place, this includes if the school remains open all day but cancels ALL after school activities. If the weather is harsh and schools do not close early the BTB program will be open at the **discretion of the Director of the program**. If the program is going to close, you will be notified with a phone call and e-mail as early as possible. If there is a question about the status of the BTB program please feel free to call the office at 845.362.4400 ext.633, we also post updates online at [www.jccrockland.org](http://www.jccrockland.org) and on our Facebook page. Please check these sites for updated information during bad weather. If the BTB program remains open during harsh weather we ask that you pick up as early as possible to ensure a safe ride home for you and our staff. Based on JCC operations, we may offer care for snow day and emergency coverage at an additional fee.

## PERSONAL ITEMS

We ask that all toys, electronics, phones, watches, trading cards and all other personal items be left at home or in the child's backpack. BTB has a wide variety of toys and activities to keep the children busy. We are not responsible for any item brought in that becomes lost, stolen or damaged. All clothing, outerwear and shoes should be labeled. We do our best to help the children keep track of their personal items. Any items purchased or acquired from school must stay in their backpack for safe keeping.

## COMMUNICATION

Parent communication is one of the most important aspects of Beyond the Bell. Staff communicate with parent(s) each day to let them know how their child is doing. You can expect the following regular communication from our staff:

- Daily check-ins at pick up
- Verbal communication is the most common type, but written communication is also sometimes necessary
- Periodic surveys
- Remind text alerts
- Emails
- Flyers

We encourage parents to inform us of any changes happening in their life, including; moving, hospitalization of a family member, alterations in a parent's relationship, etc. These situations may influence the way your child relates with others. Staff can better provide for a child's needs when they are made aware of the situation.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Any difficulties a child may have at school will effect their behavior at BTB as well. Parents are asked to inform us of any such problems so that we can be sensitive to their child's needs. The staff work as a team with the school and family. This enables us to provide the best environment for the child's growth and development.

JCC Rockland will keep you informed with flyers and emails about upcoming programs, activities and events for your entire family.

## SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

JCC Rockland's Beyond the Bell School Age Care Program will work with families to devise a plan that will enable us to meet the individual needs of each child. We are required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make reasonable accommodations to provide fully inclusive school-age care for any child with special needs. Reasonable accommodations include adapting space and activities so that all children can participate fully. When the participation of a child requires a level of staff or resources that go above and beyond the reasonable accommodations, we will invite the family to take part in a conversation to help us identify additional sources of support before determining that we cannot accept or continue the enrollment of the child.

## CULTURAL DIVERSITY STATEMENT

JCC Rockland's Beyond the Bell School Age Care Program will strive to hire staff that can relate to the child in his/her home language and culture in order to maximize the congruence between home and the BTB program site. JCC Rockland will prepare written information, such as handbooks in the child's home language whenever possible or necessary.

## REPORTING ABUSE, MALTREATMENT AND/OR NEGLECT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

JCC Rockland School Age Care programs serve as mandated reporters. Any staff member that notices signs of abuse, maltreatment or neglect will contact the Mandated Reporter hotline at 1.800.635.1522. The staff person that notices the situation to be reported will be the one to make the call. If it is a counselor in the program they will make this call with the support and assistance of the Site Leader. The SAC Director will be notified of all calls and reports that are filled immediately.

No staff member can be left alone with a child or group of children at any time. Only staff 18 years of age or older may be head of group. All staff members must have completed SCR forms and clearance letter as well as a fingerprint clearance on file. Staff will NOT question children about suspected abuse, maltreatment or neglect.

Once the report is filed the Child Protective Services case worker will inform us of steps and actions that must be taken. We will follow the directions given fully. Our staff will not take any actions unless instructed to by the CPS worker.

The public hotline to report abuse, maltreatment or neglect is: 1.800.342.3720

## EARLY RELEASE DAYS

Beyond the Bell offers coverage on early release days for no charge to those children who are regularly scheduled to attend the program on that day of the week. If it is not your child's regular day, you may add the day for a \$35 fee.

Early release programs run from dismissal time until 6:00pm. Half day programs will take place at your regular Beyond the Bell site unless otherwise noted, in which case the program will take place at JCC Rockland in West Nyack and children will be bused from their site to the JCC.

A separate online registration form must be completed for each child participating on these days a minimum of one week in advance, regardless of their typical day of attendance. **If you fail to register at least a week in advance, you will be charged the \$35 day rate, regardless of your child's typical Beyond the Bell schedule with no exceptions.**

## VACATION DAYS AT THE J (SCHOOL BREAK PROGRAM)

For school closure days, JCC Rockland offers our Vacation Day at the J Program for an additional fee. It runs from 8:45am – 4pm.

Lunch and snacks are included daily. No outside food is permitted.

All Programs are held at JCC Rockland in West Nyack.

## CONTACT LIST

### **Eliza Millman**

Chief Operating Officer

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### **Reed Silverman**

After School Administrator

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### **Rachel Appell**

Director, Beyond the Bell

Office: 845.362.4400 ext. 207

rachela@jccrockland.org

## SCHOOL ADDRESSES:

**New City Elementary** – 60 Crestwood Drive, New City, NY 10956

**Link Elementary** – 51 Red Hill Road, New City, NY 10956

**Valley Cottage Elementary** – 26 Lake Road, Valley Cottage, NY 10989

# BTB HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My signature below indicates that I have reviewed JCC Rockland’s Beyond the Bell School Age Care Parent Handbook 2024-2025 located at [jccrockland.org/after-school-programs/](http://jccrockland.org/after-school-programs/)

I understand that this Handbook contains information regarding the program’s policies and procedures which affect me as the child’s guardian.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the program’s policies.

Print Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....