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# 2024 Parent/Camper Handbook



## Welcome to OVS Summer Camp

We are excited your camper will be joining us this summer. Our goal is to provide a safe and caring environment for campers to connect, contribute, and have fun!

This handbook is designed to help you prepare for camp and become familiar with camp policies and procedures. Please take the time to read and review this handbook with your camper, and contact us with any questions.

At OVS, we work with intention to make camp  
a place where everyone:



**Feels at home, safe & secure**

**Practices kindness & respect**



**Supports learning & growth**

**Celebrates new adventures  
& challenges**



**Experiences laughter,  
joy & silliness!**

## **SUMMER CAMP CONTACT INFORMATION**

Camp Office: (805) 646-1423

Summer Camp Director: Ben Malkin, email: [bmalkin@ovs.org](mailto:bmalkin@ovs.org)

Assistant Summer Camp Director: John Rowan, email: [jrowan@ovs.org](mailto:jrowan@ovs.org)

Equestrian Director: George Halkett, email: [ghalkett@ovs.org](mailto:ghalkett@ovs.org)

Health Center: (805) 646-1423, ext. 1238, email: [healthcenter@ovs.org](mailto:healthcenter@ovs.org)

## **CAMP COMMUNITY**

The community at OVS is the basis of your camper's summer experience. Learning to work alongside others and contributing to camp is key to a successful summer. Campers should arrive at camp with a cooperative and positive attitude, ready to learn and play in a group environment. Campers will be guided with respect by camp staff and are expected to treat each other and the faculty and staff with that same respect. As a part of the community, campers will pitch in with crew jobs, cafeteria clean up, grounds and classroom upkeep.

## **COVID-19 and CAMP**

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 case rates locally and the new updates from the Centers of Disease Control (CDC) nationally. As we prepare to open camp, we will follow the current health protocols recommended by the CDC for summer camps to ensure a safe experience for everyone.

## **MONEY and VALUABLES**

Campers are discouraged from bringing money or valuables of any kind to camp.

## **CELL PHONE and SMART WATCH POLICY**

Camp at OVS is a unique opportunity for children to practice independence and make meaningful connections with others in a safe and nurturing environment. In order to maintain that environment and provide the highest level of reward for our campers, we allow very limited cell phone/smart-watch use during the summer program.

Campers are encouraged to leave their phones at home, however if phones are brought to Camp, campers may not use them during the camp day. In the event that a camper does need to call home, a teacher or another school official will contact you on their behalf. We understand this policy may be uncomfortable for some, however we ask that you support it and allow your camper to reap the benefits of independence.

## **MEALS**

Meals are freshly prepared on-site by our OVS Food Service team. Included in tuition, day campers receive morning and afternoon snack as well as lunch. Resident campers receive all meals and snacks. Please make sure to list any allergies on your camper's health forms. If you have concerns about your child's dietary needs, please contact the Summer Camp Director. We can accommodate most needs, but will consult with health and kitchen staff if allergies are severe.

## **COMMUNICATION**

At the start of the program, parents will receive instruction on how to access the online platform where OVS and the Camp Staff will post and share pictures, videos and class updates.

Teachers will communicate class information and updates via the email provided at registration. Please make sure your contact information is current, so you receive the most up-to-date information.

## **DAY HIKES or OVERNIGHT CAMPING (subject to change)**

As an extension of our camp mission, campers may have the opportunity to participate in overnight camping trips or day hike excursions during their session. Camping trips may take place at Lower Campus, Upper Campus, Lake Casitas or Pine Mountain. Camping and hikes may include outdoor education games and activities, and team building exercises. Additional information and the specific schedule for your camper's session will be sent to you by email notification.

## **DRESS CODE**

Campers are expected to wear clothing and footwear that is modest and appropriate for an active camp program. Our goal is to focus on what campers are doing, not what they are wearing. Camp clothing will get dirty and worn so please don't pack your best items. All clothing items should be marked with camper's FULL name in indelible ink or sew on patches. Respect for the camp dress code is an important component of community cooperation, and is expected of all campers.

Attire should be neat, size appropriate, cover undergarments and may not be ripped or torn.

- Campers should wear T-shirts, shorts and athletic type shoes for recreational activities.
- Flip flops not allowed
- Shorts should not be too long, too short or too tight for active play.
- Tops should cover undergarments and may not expose midriff.
- Athletic shoes or sandals with heel straps are required during activities.
- Clothing relating to alcohol, drugs, violence, death, sexual innuendo or containing bad language are unacceptable.
- If worn, jewelry must be modest and may need to be removed for safety purposes.
- Bathing suits should be modest and appropriate for active swimming and play (one- piece encouraged)
- Hair should be one natural color and hairstyles should not be extreme.
- Piercings are allowed in ears only.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Ojai Valley School and Camp expects campers to show respect for each other, the staff, the property of others and the policies and procedures of the school and camp at all times. In recognition of the Camp's responsibilities to the law and to other members of the community, there are major infractions which will be handled seriously and may result in immediate dismissal without refund.

They are as follows:

- Violations involving drugs and alcohol, which include, but are not limited to: Use and/or possession of any harmful drugs or chemicals and/or paraphernalia; use and/or possession of alcohol, use and/or possession of marijuana, use and/or possession of cigarettes, electronic cigarettes or tobacco.
- Use or possession of any weapons is against camp rules. This includes guns (real or play), knives, slingshots, and any other implement designed for or used to harm or threaten others.
- Unauthorized absence from camp, or leaving off campus excursions without permission.
- Violations of honesty, integrity, and consideration of other members of the school community which include but are not limited to: lying, academic dishonesty, stealing, willful property damage, harm to oneself, harm to another camper or threats to others, any activity which would disrupt the operation of camp.
- Campers may not create a hostile environment for one another, which includes teasing, taunting, bullying and/or harassment.
- Involvement in explicit sexual activity.
- Violations involving computers and telecommunications including, but are not limited to: misuse of computer equipment; introduction of computer viruses; unauthorized access of on-line services, misuse of electronic mailing services, including telephones, to harass, intimidate or bully the internal or external part or person of the Ojai Valley School and Camp community; use of the internet, computer software or video games involving acts of violence, racial hatred, drugs, alcohol, explicit sex; and misuse of social media.

## **MEDICATION**

- If a camper has prescribed daily medication that must be taken while at Camp, our Medication Form must be completed and signed by the parent and Healthcare provider and returned to our Health Center by June 1.

## MEETING GUIDELINES for HEALTH and WELLNESS

Our goal is to provide a healthy camp experience that can be run safely. The health and well-being of our campers and staff is our top priority. In establishing our health protocols for camp, we intend to follow the guidance of:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)  
California Department of Public Health (CDPH)  
Ventura County Public Health (VCPH)  
American Camp Association (ACA)

This includes the Field Guide for Campers for the Implementation of the CDC Guidance from the Environmental Health Engineers (EHE), which was prepared for the American Camping Association.

In a combined effort from camp administrators, medical staff, counselors, parents, and campers we want to ensure the health and safety of all participants are protected. Please monitor your children for any COVID symptoms and keep them home if they are sick. Working together we can help to prevent the spread of the virus.

To support these efforts, all campers must submit completed medical forms (Medical Release, Health Questionnaire) to [healthcenter@ovs.org](mailto:healthcenter@ovs.org) by June 1st. Additionally, all resident campers (including Outdoor Activity campers) must complete the Over-the-Counter Medication Consent Form (required) and the Medication Form (if applicable) by June 1st. Please note that the Medication Form requires a signature by the camper's licensed healthcare provider.

All medical releases, orders and recommendations written by a licensed doctor or nurse practitioner must be submitted to the Health Center ([healthcenter@ovs.org](mailto:healthcenter@ovs.org)), which will then confidentially convey the information to the appropriate staff members.

Our Health Center maintains a team of highly qualified and compassionate nurses who care for all campers. In addition, all camp faculty and staff are CPR and First Aid Certified. During off hours, the nurse on duty can be reached by cell phone for emergencies. If a resident camper becomes ill and needs to be isolated, staff will remain overnight with the camper. Ojai Valley Community Hospital is located a short distance from Ojai Valley School, where a physician is on duty 24 hours a day in the unlikely event that an emergency does occur.

## COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

To ensure the safety of the campers and staff, the following protocols will be in place:

Ojai Valley School follows the guidance of the California Department of Public Health and the Ventura County Department of Public Health. Ojai Valley School employees and students need to follow policies that are implemented based upon the guidance given which may include on-campus antigen testing for resident students when indicated. Such guidance may include mask wearing, vaccinations, and testing. Vaccinations are not currently required of students or employees. Please follow best practices to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

**Please do not send your child to camp if they have any of the following symptoms:**

- Temperature is higher than 100.0 F degrees - orally
- Cough
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Fever or chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose

**Circumstances in which a camper is admitted to the Health Center for observation:**

- Fever
- Nausea/Vomiting/Diarrhea
- Injuries, including all head injuries
- Severe pain/headache
- Allergic reaction
- Illness of unknown etiology
- Any health concern which inhibits class participation

**Circumstances in which a parent is to be notified:**

- Any illness or injury requiring further medical assessment
- Camper sustains head injury, or any type of facial injury
- Fever over 100.0 F degrees – orally
- Suspected joint sprains
- Any illness, or symptoms of an illness, that differs from student's historical information
- Dental emergencies
- Demonstration of psychological behavior out of character from student's historical information
- Before and after any doctor's visit to relay information regarding diagnosis, treatment and laboratory results
- If a camper requires medication
- Before any credit card number on file is used for medical services or medication purchased

**Circumstances in which a day camper may be sent home:** (if your child is experiencing any of these symptoms, please keep them home)

- Fever over 100.0 F degrees – orally
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Any unusual discharge or drainage from the eyes, nose, ears or wounds
- When diagnosed by a doctor as having a communicable disease requiring isolation
- If camper has pediculosis (head lice) and has not received treatment
- When diagnosed with a condition that requires 24-hour observation by a nurse
- Camper requires treatment out of the scope of the school nurse practice
- Camper is found to be a threat to himself/herself or to others
- When diagnosed with an illness requiring intensive education and treatment (example: Diabetes)

**When a day camper may come back to camp:**

- If camper has been fever-free for at least 24 hours
- If vomiting and/or diarrhea have stopped for 24 hours
- If symptoms of cold/flu are over, may attend school with a minor, clear fluid nasal drip
- If eye irritation and drainage have stopped and medical treatment received
- If an infectious wound is properly covered and medical treatment received
- If after being diagnosed with a communicable disease that requires isolation (i.e., Chicken Pox), the doctor provides a written release for the student to return to school
- If pediculosis is being effectively treated
- Following a mental health crisis, a doctor provides a written release for the student to return
- Following surgery, significant injury, or having received a new diagnosis of a major illness, a doctor must provide a written release to attend school and explicit instructions regarding care, medication administration and follow-up treatment

# GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

## DAY CAMPERS

### DAILY DROP-OFF and PICK-UP SCHEDULE

- Day Camp Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 4:30 p.m. Our Camp Office will send out communication with specific instructions prior to Opening Day.
- Each family will be given a name card to be displayed in your car during your pick-up session.
- We ask that you please have your name card visible in your right-hand visor or dashboard, so we can see your camper's name. Additional name cards are available upon request.

### DAY BUS

OVS provides day bus service for campers living in the Ventura area. Our transportation department continues with all necessary health precautions by customizing our buses with socially distanced seating and protocols for safe loading and unloading of passengers. The bus stops are located at:

Marina Park Beach, 1400 Greenock Lane, Ventura

### DAILY ATTENDANCE and COMMUNICATION

Parents should contact the Camp Office if the camper will not be attending that day, or will be picked up/and or leave early for any reason throughout the day.

### BRING TO CAMP

- Bathing suit appropriate for active swimming
- Backpack/Book bag
- Water bottle (OVS will provide every camper with a water bottle upon arrival)
- Pool towel
- Sun hat/baseball cap
- Sunscreen

### EQUESTRIAN

(In addition to the items listed above, the following equipment is required for campers who are registered in Equestrian Program:

- Riding boots
- Equestrian helmet (ASTM-SEI approved)
- Breeches, or long pants
- Shirt with sleeves

# GENERAL CAMP INFORMATION

## RESIDENT CAMPERS

### **ARRIVING AT CAMP and DEPARTING FROM CAMP**

Resident Campers should arrive at camp at 2:00 p.m. on the Sunday their session begins. Please plan your travel accordingly. Unfortunately, we are not able to accommodate early arrivals. All campers are required to provide a negative COVID test result taken within 72 hours from the start of camp. Results must be submitted to [healthcenter@ovs.org](mailto:healthcenter@ovs.org)

At the end of your camp session, all resident campers must be picked up by 10:00 a.m. on the Saturday that their session concludes.

### **DORM LIFE and CREW JOBS**

Resident campers will have their own dorm rooms and will be assigned a bathroom, shower and sink to share within their cohort group. Dorm counselors will have their own room or apartment that is separate but in the same wing of the dorm.

Resident campers are responsible for the daily cleaning of their rooms, making their beds, doing their personal laundry and other jobs related to their living environment. This will include cleaning common areas of the dorm, dining hall and recreational areas. As campers work together to care for the camp and the community, valuable skills are learned and independence and responsibility are strengthened.

We also encourage parents to mail letters to their resident campers. Resident campers will receive mail (either email or post) each evening at dinner.

Please address mail to CAMPER: Your child's name at 510 Country Club Dr. Ojai, CA 93023.

### **LAUNDRY**

Campers will be guided by counselors and instructed in the cleaning of their own laundry. Washers and dryers are located on campus in/near each dormitory. Laundry will be done as scheduled on the weekends, and detergent will be provided. Campers are responsible for gathering their items (in their laundry bag) and after washing and drying, returning their items to their dorm room. Counselors will supervise laundry time, and campers will learn valuable skills as they prep for the start of a new camp week.

### **CALLS HOME**

Camp is about leaving home and building the confidence needed to take care of yourself and find your place in a new community. It is also a time for parents to trust their children and allow for the growth and maturity camp can offer. To that end, we will limit parent contact (other than letters and email messages, which can be sent to [ovs@ovs.org](mailto:ovs@ovs.org)) to weekend communications.

Resident campers will be discouraged from calling parents in the first few days of the session (to help with acclimation to camp) and will be encouraged to call home on the first weekend. Parents may call or email the Camp Office to leave important messages for campers during business hours, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. We understand this policy may be uncomfortable for some, but we ask that you support it. This will allow your child to experience independence and personal connections at camp.

Campers with phones may use them from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday evenings. Campers without phones may use the camp phone or computers during this time. This is a great opportunity for campers to share the events of the week and for parents to hear of their adventures. On check-in day, parents may notify staff of the best means of communication. Resident camper cell phones or smart watches will be collected upon arrival and will be returned upon departure.

### **WEEKEND EXCURSIONS (subject to change)**

Saturdays or Sundays and some weeknights, resident campers and staff may travel to local parks or local beaches in Ventura County. Camp Counselors accompany campers and provide guidance, supervision and added fun.

## **HOMESICKNESS and SEPARATION**

First time separation anxiety is a common issue for campers and parents. It is important to recognize that this is normal, and that learning to live apart from parents is an element of growth and maturity. The camp environment is an ideal place to experience this growth. Camp is a nurturing place, so it provides love and support without a parent being present. It is this absence of a parent that allows for a child's understanding that they are a unique individual, capable of solving and dealing with issues on their own. There is no greater skill we can help a child identify than that of self-power.

There are a number of very clear and concise concepts to help both parents and children deal with homesickness:

- Do not be afraid of the topic. It should be openly discussed. Remember your attitude sets the tone for your child.
- Communicate that some fear and anxiety is normal and there will be other children at camp with the same type of concerns.
- Make sure your child knows that the camp staff have dealt with these issues and are trained to assist them through any difficulties they may experience.
- Please do not make a deal with your child "that if you don't like it, I will come get you." The first time a child is unhappy, they may hold you to that promise, and you will be left without any options. You can promise that if there are any problems you will be working with the Director and the counselors to make sure the child is supported.
- You should discuss the topic often enough so that your child becomes comfortable with the concept and is ready for the challenge.

At camp we will work with your child to help him or her acclimate to the program. We will respect their ability to overcome their fears and trust that they can handle change. We will redirect them into fun and interesting tasks and activities and guide them gently towards positive solutions. It is typical for most children to adjust within 2-3 days and once they do, they carry that feeling of pride and accomplishment with them throughout camp and beyond. Parents will be contacted if a child does not respond to staff coaching and is still upset or anxious after the first few days. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's ability to acclimate to camp, please contact the Summer Camp Director.



# RESIDENT CAMPER PACKING LIST

This is a general packing list. Everyone has different preferences for the number of items to pack. Ojai is quite hot in the summer, averaging in the 90s F (32 C) so it is best to bring plenty of clothes that are lightweight. Weather can always change so bring a few warmer items as well to be prepared if needed.

## Summer Pack List:

- 4 Shorts
- 2 Pants
- 4 Shirts/Tank Tops
- 3 Bathing Suits
- Sleepwear
- Sweatshirt
- Jacket
- Sneakers
- Tennis Shoes
- Flipflops/Sandals
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Personal Garments (Underwear, Socks, etc.)
- Beach/Pool towel

## Essential Items:

- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Sunscreen
- Body Wash
- Face Wash
- Hairbrush
- Bath towel

## Optional:

- Throw Blanket
- Costumes for Dress Days
- Journal/Reading Book

A reminder that OVS will provide a camp shirt for each camper. All bodies are different so keep in mind for your child to bring modest clothes. This goes for bathing suits as well. Bikinis are okay, it is recommended to cover more surface and be secure, for example, high-waisted bottoms with a square neck top. Feel free to pack any clothing items that go along with dress up days. The Dormitory has limited space to store belongings, so please do not pack additional items. Remember camp clothing will get dirty and things may be lost. Please pack casual clothing appropriate for active play.

Sunscreen is a MUST. We do not provide hair dryers or towels. A blanket is optional but in the Girls' dorm (Reed Dorm), it can get quite cool, so if you feel more comfortable bringing your own you are encouraged.

Campers will wash their clothes once a week. Laundry detergent will be provided.

If your camper brings a phone, it will be collected by the Resident Coordinator. Each Saturday evening, phones will be returned to the Campers for use from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Residents will be allowed to bring snacks; however, candy, electronic devices and toys are not allowed.