



Family Handbook

Revised Winter 2026



Welcome to the Municipality of Bluewater Camp Program!

Through exciting and active adventures, new friendships, and the support of our caring staff, your child will create wonderful memories that last a lifetime.

We are proud to offer camp programming throughout the year, including **Summer Camp, March Break Camp, and PA Day Camp programs**. While this is our first school year offering PA Day Camps, the Municipality of Bluewater has been delivering a successful and well-loved Summer Day Camp program for over 22 years. We are excited to continue growing and expanding our Bluewater Camps to serve families year-round.

Parent Acknowledgement and Commitment

This Parent Handbook outlines the expectations, policies, and procedures in place to ensure the safety, well-being, and enjoyment of all campers. It includes important information about camper conduct, staff responsibilities, medical and safety procedures, and what families can expect during their child's camp experience. Your cooperation and adherence to the policies outlined in this guide help us create a positive, inclusive, and safe environment for every participant. We look forward to working in partnership with you to make this a memorable and enriching experience for your child

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All About Camp

Day Camps in Bluewater offer children a destination that gets them out of the house, learning and having fun. Each day proposes a variety of new activities and encourages active play and new friendships.

Each camp will offer a new theme with activities that will be loosely coordinated to that theme!

Camp Hours

Drop Off: 8:00 - 9:00 am

Core Programming 9:00am – 4:00pm

Pick Up: 4:00 – 5:00 pm

Please **notify the Recreation Coordinator or Camp Leader in advance** if your child will be arriving late or being picked up early, so we can ensure their safety and participation.

Camp Locations

Campers remain at designated locations unless otherwise noted. Notifications of off-site activities will be posted. Some camps include scheduled trips or off-site experiences. These will be outlined at the time of registration and/ or in your child's weekly camp newsletter. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to review this information in advance and ensure that their child is prepared for such excursions.

Designated Drop-off Locations Include:
Bayfield Arena and Agriculture Park
4 Jane Street, Bayfield
Hensall Arena and Community Centre
157 Oxford Street West, Hensall
Stanley Community Centre
38594 Mill Road, Varna
Zurich Arena and Community Centre
15 East Street, Zurich

Camp Registration

All Camp Registration is done through our booking portal - [ACTIVENET](#).

[Camp Registration Page](#)

When registering please prepare your:

- Emergency Contacts (name, relation, phone number)
- Authorized pick up list (name, relation, phone number)
- Medical information

Supervision Ratios

Our camps welcome children ages **4 to 12**. Campers must be within this age range by the start of their registered program and must be fully toilet trained to attend.

Our standard staff-to-camper ratio is **1:10**, ensuring appropriate supervision and support. Camps operating at our **Bayfield location maintain a 1:8 ratio**.

All camp staff are certified in **First Aid and CPR** and are required to complete a successful Criminal Record Check. Staff training includes program planning, inclusion practices, behaviour management, and the **HIGH FIVE® Principles of Healthy Child Development**, ensuring a safe, positive, and engaging experience for all participants.

2026 Camp Registration Fees

- P.A Day Camp \$30/child (per day)
- March Break Camp \$150/child (per week)
- Summer Camp (per week)
 - o \$150/child
 - o \$170/child - week with trip
 - o \$120/child - 4 day week

A Day at Camp

Time	Activity
8:00 – 9:00 am	Drop-off Free time Stations
9:00 – 9:15 am	Morning Huddle
9:15 – 10:00 am	Planned Activity (craft, science, high and/low energy games, creative play etc.)
10:00 – 10:15 am	Snack
10:15 – 11:00 am	Outdoor Play
11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Planned Activity (craft, science, high and/low energy games, creative play etc.)
12:00 – 12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30 – 12:45 pm	Afternoon Huddle
12:45 – 2:30 pm	Planned Activity (craft, science, high and/low energy games, creative play etc.)
2:30 – 3:00 pm	Snack
3:00 – 4:00 pm	Outdoor Play
4:00 – 5:00 pm	Pick up Free Time Stations

While we follow a general daily schedule to provide structure and consistency, activities may vary from day to day. Special guests, local excursions, seasonal activities (such as skating or splash pad visits), and trip days may require adjustments to our usual routine.

We also believe camp should reflect the interests and ideas of the children attending. Campers will have regular opportunities to provide input on activities, games, themes, and group choices. Whether it's voting on a group wide game, suggesting a craft, choosing between activity stations, or helping shape special theme days, camper voice is an important part of our programming.

What to Bring to Camp

Nut Free Lunch and at least two snacks: Each camp day consists of a morning snack break, lunch and an afternoon snack break. Please note that we are an allergy-aware facility — all snacks and lunches should be nut-free.

Appropriate Clothing: Wear “play” clothing suitable for active camp days. Clean, dry indoor shoes are required for campers attending Hensall, Zurich and Varna locations. Due to the primarily outdoor nature of the Bayfield program, indoor shoes are not required at that site. All campers should bring a change of clothing in case of emergencies or inclement weather.

Refillable Water Bottle: Many campers find themselves drinking more water at camp than they do at school. This is due to the increased amount of physical activity throughout the day.

Outdoor Gear:

- Winter programs (Dec–Mar): coat, snow pants, boots, hat, mitts, and any other snow gear needed for outdoor play.
- In rain, appropriate outdoor gear will be required as camp programming continues outdoors.
- Summer Camps are operated outdoors at pavilions, ensure child is prepared for a full day outside. Items such as sunglasses and hats can help our campers stay safe in the sun.

Sunscreen (May-Oct): Make sure it is clearly labeled with your child's name to prevent mix-ups and ensure they stay protected while enjoying camp activities. Camp Leaders will encourage the re-application of sunscreen at both snack breaks and lunch. Campers are expected to know how to apply their own sunscreen with minimal help from our Camp Leaders.

Program Specific Gear: Check the program plan sent ahead of camp for items such as skates, bathing suits, supplies for crafts, or other special equipment

Campers are **not permitted** to bring any electronic devices and we ask that you limit bringing toys from home. Camp is busy, we are moving locations and are full of movement we don't want to run the risk of lost or damaged toys.

Friendly reminder to label everything with your child's first and last name!



Camp Philosophies

Provide a safe, stimulating, child-centered camp experience by playing, laughing and enjoying nature. We do this by:

- ✓ Conducting routine headcounts and ensuring age-appropriate staff: camper ratios (1:10)
- ✓ Focusing on nature-based play and delivering all camps in municipally owned parks and green spaces.
- ✓ Eliminating travel and offering in-house programs that encourage healthy, active living

Deliver a variety of recreational, social, and 'green' activities, ensuring there is something of interest for everyone. We do this by:

- ✓ Providing campers with elements of choice throughout the day.
- ✓ Offering a variety of sport activities, group games, free & nature-based play and crafts.
- ✓ Following a weekly theme, boosted with special activities and projects that excite campers.
- ✓ Integrating green initiatives in weekly projects and highlighting the importance of protecting our planet.

Challenge staff in achieving the highest standard in positive, meaningful interactions with every single camper. We do this by:

- ✓ Requiring all staff be trained and certified in HIGH FIVE, the industry standard for quality children's recreation programming. Staff use this training when program planning, ensuring HIGH FIVE's essential principles (participation, play, mastery, friendship, and a caring adult) are incorporated at camp.
- ✓ Providing staff with comprehensive training days, which include rehearsing emergency scenarios and protocols, leadership training, team building, and learning new songs and games.

Empower children and youth and support their physical and mental health by providing them with opportunities to face challenges and be successful. We do this by:

- ✓ Planning activities which allow for scaffolding; where campers learn a skill or start a project their first day at camp and build upon that progress throughout the week.
- ✓ Encouraging peer-to-peer support and engagement and allowing campers with special interests to take the lead in certain games and activities.
- ✓ Asking that all electronic/hand-held devices be kept at home to ensure campers are engaged in activities and focused on having fun in the moment with peers and staff.

Camper Expectations

Camp-wide rules and expectations have been developed in order to foster a safe and positive camp environment. All campers, volunteers, and staff are to be courteous and respectful; use appropriate language at all times; support and appreciate each other; solve problems in a fair and honest manner; include others in activities; and play without bullying or teasing others.

Parents/guardians are asked to review the following rules and guidelines with their camper(s):

- R** ecognize the rules for all games & activities
- E** ncourage others & show good sportsmanship
- S** tay hands-free
- P** articipate & have a positive attitude
- E** nsure a safe & clean environment
- C** are & be kind to one another
- T** ake turns & play fair

Behavior Guidance & Support

We recognize that children are still learning social skills and self-regulation. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, staff will use positive discipline strategies to help campers understand expectations and make better choices.

If a camper struggles with the rules, staff will have a one-on-one discussion to explain why the rules are in place. If the behaviour continues, the parent/guardian will be notified at sign-out and asked to review the rules with their camper at home. If the behaviour persists, a meeting with the staff, the parent/ guardian, and the camper will be arranged to discuss how staff can best support the camper moving forward. If a camper becomes aggressive or physically violent, the Recreation Coordinator will remove the camper from the program immediately. A parent/guardian or emergency contact will be called to pick-up the camper and a meeting will be arranged with Coordinator to further discuss the situation/options.

Bullying Prevention

We have **zero tolerance for bullying** in any form.

Bullying includes repeated behaviours intended to hurt, exclude, intimidate, or embarrass another person. This may include:

- Physical aggression
- Teasing or name-calling
- Social exclusion
- Threatening behaviour
- Inappropriate online behaviour (where applicable)

Campers are expected to treat others with kindness and respect at all times. If bullying behaviour is observed or reported, staff will intervene immediately and address the situation in a supportive and developmentally appropriate manner.

Our goal is always to help campers learn, grow, and make better choices – while ensuring all children feel safe and included.

Family Communication

You are encouraged to review the schedule carefully in order to be aware of important reminders, theme days and other special features

During sign-out, Camp staff will share information with parents/guardians regarding their child's camp experience, development, attitude and overall participation in the day camp program.

Communication

Parents will receive the Parent Handbook, Camp Policy & Procedure Manual, and Camp Newsletter at least 7 days before camp starts. The newsletter will include daily schedules, special events, guest visits, and any additional items your child should bring. This ensures families have all the information needed to prepare for a fun and safe camp experience.

Parent Involvement:

Parents, guardians, or family members may be invited to participate or assist on camp trips when appropriate. All volunteers must follow camp policies, including supervision and safety guidelines, and may be required to complete a brief orientation or screening before joining. Participation is always optional, and families will be notified ahead of time if help is needed.

Registration & Attendance

Cancellation & Refund Policy

Full Refund	Notice provided 7+ business days before camp start date
50% Refund	6-4 business days before camp
No Refund	3 or fewer business days before camp starts Missed camp days (illness, appointments, travel etc)

All refund are subject to a Program Administrative Fee

Cancellations and refund requests must be made in writing to reccoordinator@municipalityofbluewater.ca

Waitlist

If a camp is full, we strongly encourage you to add your child to the **waitlist**.

If a spot becomes available due to cancellation or if additional spaces are opened – families will be contacted **in order of the waitlist**. Our team will reach out directly if a space becomes available for your child.

Joining the waitlist helps us gauge interest and determine if additional spots can be added.

Payment & Subsidy

Payment is required within 5 days of registration to secure your child's spot in camp. If you wish to pay in person, please select "Use Payment Plan" at checkout. This option allows you to complete your payment at the Municipal Office using cash, cheque, or card.

If payment is not received by the 6th day after registering, your child's spot will no longer be held and may be released to another family.

We are pleased to accept child care fee subsidy through Huron County Social Services Department. Families interested in subsidy support are encouraged to contact the department directly for eligibility information or to apply. Approval must be confirmed prior to the start of camp to secure your child's registration.

Applications can be submitted at <https://occms.huroncounty.ca/childrenservices>

Safety & Health

Safe Arrival and Release

Drop-Off:

Please notify the Recreation Coordinator if your child will not be attending camp or will be arriving later than 9:00 a.m. In accordance with our Safe Drop-Off Policy, if your child has not arrived by 9:30 a.m. and we have not received notice, camp staff will contact the primary parent/guardian to confirm your child's safe arrival.

Pick-Up:

For your child's safety, only individuals listed on your registration form or those with written authorization from a parent/guardian may pick up campers. Anyone picking up a child must show photo identification each day, regardless of staff familiarity. Campers may self-sign out only if prior written permission is on file. Any minor listed as an authorized pick-up must also have signed parental consent. If you need to update your authorized pick-up list, please contact the Recreation Coordinator directly. Staff will not release a child to anyone who is not properly authorized or unable to provide ID.

The Municipality follows and Safe Arrival and Release policy found in the Camp Policy & Procedure Manual.

Illness & Injuries

The safety and well-being of all campers, volunteers and staff are of utmost importance. To help keep everyone healthy, we ask that campers stay home if they are feeling unwell or showing signs of illness. This includes a fever (38°C / 100.4°F or higher), vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours, a persistent cough, sore throat with fever, unexplained rash, pink eye, chills, body aches, or symptoms of a communicable illness. Campers may return once they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, or as advised by a healthcare provider.

All Municipality of Bluewater staff are trained in Standard First Aid & CPR-C. Staff will treat minor injuries (i.e., bumps, bruises, scrapes) and complete a Participant Incident Report Form detailing the incident. The form will be presented for comments and signature at sign-out.

The Day Camp Coordinator will contact the parents/guardians or emergency contact for any camper who becomes ill or seriously injured while at camp. Please ensure all contact information provided at registration is accurate and up to date.

Medical and Accessibility Support

At the time of registration, you will be asked to provide information about your child's medical history, including any medical conditions, allergies, or behavioral concerns. Please share any and all information that may help our staff safely support your child while they are at camp. Campers with medical information or allergies will have an Individual Emergency Action Plan in place to ensure their safety and well-being throughout the program. If your child may require additional support for behavioural needs, please contact the Recreation Coordinator. While we are not able to provide internal 1:1 support at this time, we are very welcoming of families arranging their own 1:1 support. In some cases, additional communication or conversations may take place prior to the start of camp to make sure we are fully prepared to provide a safe, positive experience for your child.

Medications

If a camper requires medication while at camp, a Medical Information Sheet must be completed at sign in. Medications need to be provided in their original packaging. Medications will be kept in a secure location by a staff member with the exception of epinephrine auto-injectors and puffers (which may be carried by campers with permission from parents/guardians). The staff member will administer medication as directed on the Medical Information Sheet, record their actions on a Medical Administration Log and present the form for review at sign-out. Any information shared regarding your camper's medical condition(s) is/are confidential and communicated only to pertinent staff. If you wish to set up an appointment to speak with staff about your camper's needs in more detail, please contact the Recreation Coordinator, at 519-280-0103 or reccordinator@municipalityofbluewater.ca.

Thank you for following our Bluewater Camp safety measures! Your cooperation helps us keep our campers and staff safe, ensuring everyone can enjoy a fun and worry-free camp experience.

Camp Operations

Camp Staff

The Municipality of Bluewater Camp staff share one thing in common: they are committed to providing each 'Bluewater' camper with a positive and lasting camp experience. The Municipality of Bluewater has high expectations of every staff member and those are reflected in the Municipality's hiring policies. Potential staff members, including those previously employed at the Municipality of Bluewater, submit an application each year to join the staff team. Applicants who have qualifications in a variety of program areas (i.e., sports, crafts, music, drama) are hired to ensure the week is filled with a variety of high-quality programming. All staff members must also successfully complete a vulnerable sector police check. Staff receive extensive training prior to the start of camp and hold many standard certifications. Staff are trained in the HIGH FIVE principles of Healthy Child Development and are also Standard First Aid & CPR-C certified.

Snacks & Meals

Each camp day includes time for a morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snack. Please pack nut-free foods—no peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts, or foods containing nut by-products. Whenever possible, use reusable containers to help reduce waste. Campers should bring enough food, but the camp also carries a limited supply of healthy snacks for children who may still be hungry. Occasionally, programs may include food-related activities such as cookie decorating, freezies or cooking. At registration, please indicate yes or no if you give permission for our staff to provide snacks or food to your child. Campers are prohibited from sharing food.

R-Zone Policy

The R-Zone Policy promotes Respect and Responsibility for all participants, visitors, and staff in municipal programs, facilities, parks, and trails. It sets expectations around behavior, including no violence, vandalism, or inappropriate conduct. For more information, please visit: <https://www.municipalityofbluewater.ca/parks-recreation-and-culture/rzone-policy/>

Photography

Photos and videos may be taken for promotional use. If you do not consent to our staff taking photos/video please select no on the Photo and Video Release Question at the time of registration. If you wish to change your' consent after registration, please notify us in writing to reccoordinator@municipalityofbluewater.ca

Lost & Found

The Municipality is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen personal items. Please ensure you label your camper's belongings. Items left behind are stored at camp in a lost and found bin until the end of the program. The lost and found bin will be on display at sign-in and sign-out each day.

High Five

As an organization working toward the new accreditation standard through HIGH FIVE, the Municipality of Bluewater is committed to ensuring every child and youth in its programs has a safe, positive, and enriching sport and recreation experience.

The Municipality creates a culture of quality by training all staff in HIGH FIVE principles of healthy childhood development, which encourages a holistic approach to quality assurance by involving everyone in recreation.

HIGH FIVE is Canada's only comprehensive quality standard for children's programs, offering a holistic approach to healthy child development based in years of research.

Quality matters because research shows people are more likely to stay active for life if they have positive experiences in sport, recreation and physical activity as a child.

HIGH FIVE holds true to the following five Principles of healthy child development that the research indicates are essential for providing a positive experience for kids:

HIGH FIVE: Principles of Health Child Development



- 1. A Caring Adult**
- 2. The Opportunity to Make Friends**
- 3. The Opportunity to Play**
- 4. The Opportunity to Master Skills**
- 5. The Opportunity to Participate**





Get in touch with us

Community Recreation Coordinator
reccordinator@municipalityofbluewater.ca
519-280-0103

Manager of Facilities, Parks & Recreation
facilities@municipalityofbluewater.ca
519-236-4351 ext.240

Day Camp Coordinator (June - August)
daycamp@municipalityofbluewater.ca



www.municipalityofbluewater.ca



Municipality of Bluewater



@visitbeautifulbluewater

