

# Outdoor Education at Camp Ocean Pines

**Parent & Family Guide, 2023-2024**

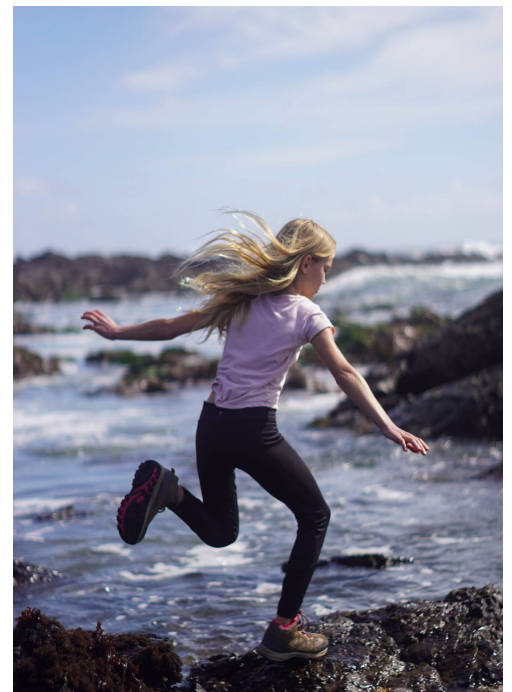
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Your child is about to experience the adventure of a lifetime at Camp Ocean Pines! Here at nature camp, we awaken curiosity and create connections for every child through hands-on nature exploration. During their time at camp, your child will develop leadership and social skills, participate in marine science and forest ecology programs, and have fun doing traditional camp activities like archery and campfire. The safety, happiness, and well-being of each child at camp is our top priority. We make sure all are well-fed, cared for, and smiling.

If you have any specific questions or concerns, first touch base with your student's teacher, who should be able to provide you with any group-specific information. If you have questions about our camp facilities or the way our program is designed, feel free to contact us. No question is "too silly." Nature camp can be a big deal for kids AND parents - we want to make sure that you feel confident that you are sending your child to a place where they will be safe. Please share in your child's excitement about the trip to camp and help them prepare for their time away from home by reading through this packet and completing all attached forms. Your support and encouragement are essential for your child's success. Thank you!



## Nature Camp Rules: The F.A.C.T.S. of Life!

We cannot explain every rule for every situation. Students should understand that this is a school experience, and if something is not okay at school it's probably not okay at Camp. We want kids to make smart, responsible choices.

**Fun** = What am I doing to ensure that I, all my friends, and all the adults are having fun?

**Attitude** = Am I choosing to be positive, helpful, and respectful? To do the right thing? Am I helping others to stay positive, and to always be excited to be at Camp?

**Community** = How am I making this community better? Am I looking out for my friends? Keeping my cabin clean? Am I sharing food at the table? Am I treating the animals with kindness and respect?

**Try New Things** = Am I willing to do stuff that I've never done before? Do I encourage and support others to try new things, too?

**Safety** = How do I keep myself and other people safe? Am I getting enough sleep, and drinking water? Do I help my friends up a steep hill? Do I keep my eyes open when I'm near the ocean?

## Location & Facilities

Camp Ocean Pines is located on the central coast of California halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles. Paso Robles is approximately 30 miles east and San Luis Obispo 40 miles south. Our site is in a pine-oak forest overlooking the ocean, an ideal location for an amazing outdoor experience. Our ACA (American Camp Association) accredited camp includes forest trails, nature center, target sports, educational live birds of prey, and strawbale cabins with bathrooms inside!

## Naturalist Staff

We hire a diverse array of seasonal staff to work with your students. They all have unique backgrounds and experiences, and we appreciate the individual ways in which they enrich our program. All of our staff are certified in First Aid and CPR, and they carry first aid kits with them during program.

Additionally, all of our naturalists are mandated child abuse reporters and meet all state requirements for working with children.

## Chaperones

Your child will be supervised overnight by chaperones that the school provides. These chaperones may be faculty, parents, or local high school students, depending on the school. Chaperones are selected and screened by the school and will be responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of students throughout their time at camp.

## Student Groups

The teachers will be responsible for breaking students into science camp groups.

- **Cabin Groups** Your child will be assigned to a cabin group of 4-9 students. (Our cabins each have 10 beds.) This group sits together at meals and stays together during free time blocks.
- **Activity Groups** During lessons and activities, the students will be in teaching groups of 10-15 students. Each teaching group will be led by a Naturalist, who will lead the activities, handle

group management, and keep the group on task. One or more chaperones will also be assigned to each group to help supervise a great experience.

## Health Information

The lead teacher/group leader is ultimately responsible for all medical care and decisions regarding the wellbeing of students. While all staff are CPR/First Aid certified, we do not employ a camp nurse and will not administer any prescription or over-the-counter medications.

**Medications** Camp Ocean Pines staff are not permitted to administer oral medications. School staff and/or adult chaperones will be in charge of administering any required medications as per the health history forms provided. Camp is happy to provide secure locations for medications if needed.

**EpiPens and Asthma** Children requiring an EpiPen or inhaler must carry it with them at all times. If the school or parent is not comfortable with this, please assign an adult that will be with this student to carry the item(s). Please make certain to indicate this on your child's health form so that both the school and all camp staff are aware.

## Food Service

With advanced notice the camp kitchen is happy to provide meals that are vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, etc. Please communicate your child's needs to their teacher, so Camp can be informed. Participants with extreme allergies or medical conditions are asked to bring their own food, which we are glad to store in our kitchen facilities.

All meals are served in the Dining Hall. In order to minimize the possibility of outdoor creatures and rodents being attracted to the cabins, no eating or drinking is allowed in the cabins. Help us avoid problems with animals by not allowing students to bring any food, snacks, or treats with them to camp.

## Birthdays

If your child's birthday occurs during their stay at camp, we promise to make it a memorable experience with a dessert, song, and candles to blow out! **Please let your child's teacher know.**

## Forms

Please fill out and return all required forms in a timely manner to your child's teacher (or parent coordinator). This will help them provide pertinent information to camp staff, which will allow more time to plan the best week of outdoor education camp for your child. Thank you!



## Other Concerns

We welcome all students at Camp Ocean Pines! If you have a student(s) with a special need (sleepwalking, bedwetting, snoring, health condition, in a wheelchair, etc.) please let us know in advance so that we can work with you to ensure that they have a positive camp experience.

## Electronics

Camp Ocean Pines is a place to celebrate and enjoy the great outdoors—to take a break from everyday life and electronics. For this reason, please don't allow your child to bring a cell phone, tablet, computer, or any other electronics! (Exceptions: digital cameras are welcome, as are e-readers. We encourage reading!) Cell phones and other electronics brought by students will immediately be collected and given to the teachers to return at week's end.

## What to Bring

Weather in Cambria can be very unpredictable. Days can be chilly and foggy, or warm and sunny, so students should be prepared for warm weather, cold weather, rain, and everything in between. If it's safe, we will still hike and do activities in the rain.

- clothing for warm weather (shorts and t-shirts)
- clothing for cold weather (pants and at least one warm sweatshirt/jacket)
- one pair of comfortable close-toed shoes
- one extra pair of shoes that can get wet (old sneakers or water shoes - NOT flip flops or slides)
- backpack/daypack to carry during the day
- reusable water bottle with your name on it
- flashlight
- warm sleeping bag or twin bedding and blankets
- pillow with pillow case
- sunscreen
- toiletries
  - comb/brush
  - bath towel
  - toothbrush and toothpaste
  - soap and shampoo
- excitement and enthusiasm!

**Optional items:** Camera, binoculars, sunglasses, flip flops (for shower only), book for reading, money for camp store (\$20-\$40 is the recommended amount), hat for extra sun protection

**Don't bring:** Electronics (cell phones, tablets, computers), hair dryers, weapons (no pocket knives), lighters, valuables, gum/candy, drugs, alcohol, or anything else that your child cannot take to school.

Please make sure that all clothing is comfortable and can get dirty. Placing your name on as many items as possible will allow us to return items if they get lost.

## Luggage

Please send luggage that is manageable for your child. Each child is responsible for carrying their own luggage from the parking lot up a hill to the cabins. Luggage labeling is always a good idea!

## A Typical Day at Camp

8:00	Breakfast
9:00	First 3-hour daytime activity block (or two 1.5 hour activity blocks)
12:00	Cabin time - for students to change, grab anything that they forgot at the cabin, etc.
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Rec field time
2:00	Afternoon activity block (1.5 hour)
3:30	Student choice activity block (1 hour)
4:30	Cabin time for students to shower, take a nap, etc.
5:30	Dinner
6:30	Rec field time
7:00	1.5-hour evening activity block
8:30	Evening announcements
9:30	Lights out

On off-site days, we will pack a lunch after breakfast and leave camp around 9:15 am. We usually return to camp between 3:00-3:30 pm for the student choice activity time and cabin time.

