



# **CAMP GRAVATT**

## **Parent Handbook**

### **Summer 2024**

Camp Gravatt  
1006 Camp Gravatt Road  
Aiken, SC 29805  
[www.campgravatt.org](http://www.campgravatt.org)

# WELCOME

Welcome to Camp Gravatt! Whether you are a first-time Gravatt family, a prospective camper, or a seasoned Gravatt veteran, we are excited to welcome you to the 75th summer at our place in the woods that will find a place in your heart. While this handbook is not meant to contain every single piece of information you will need ahead of your child's session at Gravatt, it is designed to provide a general overview of what you and your camper can expect. Please note that we encourage you to view the great deal of more specific information [on our website](#), including a list of Frequently-Asked Questions, or you may always contact us with any questions you may have.

While it is nearly impossible to put into words the feeling that a session at Gravatt gives us, we do hope that this Parent Handbook will answer some of our most commonly-asked questions while giving you a sense of the Unconditional Love that we strive to provide for every camper, every session, every summer. Thank you for choosing our camp, and we can't wait for you to Come Home to Gravatt once again this summer.

Shalom!

Fletcher Spigner, Camp Director  
Bridges Michel, Asst. Camp Director  
Hayden Ifkovits, Asst. Camp Director



# GENERAL INFORMATION



## *Episcopal Tradition*

Camp Gravatt is affiliated with the Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina. While Episcopal worship and traditions are commonly practiced and referenced at Gravatt, we welcome children of all denominations, faiths, backgrounds, beliefs, and traditions. We believe that summer camp, and especially Camp Gravatt, provides an opportunity for campers to grow in their confidence, independence, and spirituality as they learn to interact with others in our community.

## *History*

Gravatt has been home to summer camp for thousands of children since 1949, and is named for The Rt. Revd. John J. Gravatt, Second Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Upper South Carolina. *Camp Gravatt* is part of Gravatt Camp and Conference Center, which hosts a variety of school, corporate, and religious groups throughout the year. Camp existed on what is now the “conference side” of our property for 20 years before moving to its current location on the “camp side” in 1969.

## *Beliefs and Values*

At Gravatt, one of our core values has always been to “put campers first.” Our staff takes this seriously, and strives to provide an experience that makes every camper feel loved, included, and accepted. Our primary goal is to create a place where young people can feel comfortable being themselves, allowing them to push themselves out of their comfort zones, and challenging themselves to grow individually and as a community. We do this not by focusing on activities, but by focusing on the strong relationships that form between campers and their counselors. Indeed, we do not have the mountains or the beach, but our campers come back to Gravatt each summer because of the way Gravatt makes them *feel*.

# CAMP SESSIONS AND SCHEDULE

## *Traditional Gravatt Sessions*

At Gravatt, we have a variety of sessions for various ages and interest levels. Our traditional camp sessions (Elementary, Junior High, and All Ages) range in length from seven days to ten days, and these represent our standard summer camp offerings. The ages for each session are as follows:

- Elementary: Rising 1st-Rising 6th Grades (7 days)
- Junior High: Rising 7th-Rising 9th Grades (10 days)
- All Ages: Rising 1st-Rising 9th Grades (7 days)

## *Gravatt Explorers*

Gravatt Explorers is a combination of on-site Gravatt traditions with off-site excursions. These sessions are for Rising 10th Graders-Rising Freshmen in College, and involves canoeing trips down the Broad River in Columbia and hiking/camping in Pisgah National Forest in Brevard, North Carolina. Outdoor skills are practiced and promoted throughout the session, and participants will grow in their appreciation of the outdoor experience.

## *Family Camp*

Family Camp provides families (of any kind!) a chance to spend a memorable and meaningful weekend together. Families will enjoy all the normal Gravatt activities, and our counselors are on hand to help with little ones and ensure that your weekend is special.

## *Leaders-In-Training (LIT)*

Our LIT sessions are two weeks in length and are for Rising 10th or 11th Graders who wish to grow in their leadership abilities while also participating in camp life. This session provides leadership training directly from Gravatt staff and is recommended for campers who wish to apply for a Junior Staff position in the future.



SESSION	DATES	GRADE
Family Camp	May 24-26	Ages 1-100
All Ages 1	June 3-9	Rising 1st-9th
LIT 1	June 3-17	Rising 10th-11th
Elementary 1	June 11-17	Rising 1st-6th
Junior High 1	June 19-28	Rising 7th-9th
Elementary 2	July 1-7	Rising 1st-6th
LIT 2	July 1-15	Rising 10th-11th
Elementary 3	July 9-15	Rising 1st-6th
Junior High 2	July 17-26	Rising 7th-9th
Explorers 1	July 17-26	Rising 10th-College Freshman
Alumni Weekend	July 26-28	Summer Staff Alumni
All Ages 2	July 28-Aug 3	Rising 1st-9th
Explorers 2	July 28-Aug 3	Rising 10th-College Freshman

# A TYPICAL DAY AT CAMP GRAVATT

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

- 7:30 Wake Up/Morning Activities
- 8:15 Morning Watch
- 8:35 Breakfast
- 9:05 Duties
- 10:00 1<sup>st</sup> Period
- 11:00 Snack
- 11:15 2<sup>nd</sup> Period
- 12:30 Lunch
- 1:00 Rest Period
- 2:45 Free Swim
- 4:00 3<sup>rd</sup> Period
- 5:00 Snack
- 5:15 4<sup>th</sup> Period
- 6:30 Dinner
- 7:15 Night Activities
- 8:45 Campfire
- 9:00 Shalom Circle
- 9:15 Tent Devotions
- 9:45 Lights Out

Most days at Gravatt start with Morning Activities which can include Polar Bear, Strings and Things, and other Gravatt favorites. This is followed by Morning Watch where the whole camp comes together for some fun and prayer. After breakfast, campers and staff take time to complete duties and the cleaning of their tents/cabins. We have two activity periods before lunch that may consist of Swim, Adventure and Discovery (Ropes Course), Footprints (Christian Formation Program), Archery, Canoeing, Art, GEEP (Gravatt Environmental Education Program), and much more!

After lunch, campers enjoy Rest Period, Free Swim, and then two more activity periods before dinner. After dinner, we hold a different Night Activity each evening, including Carnival, Luau, Talent Show, and, of course, The Dance. Many nights involve a campfire with skits and songs, and every night ends with the whole camp coming together in Shalom Circle.

Campers attend activity periods with their counselors, activity leaders, and other campers of their same age. Rest period is a time for campers and counselors to spend time in their tent/cabin. This is used as a bonding time for the group, a time to rest, or as an opportunity to read or write letters to their families. Free Swim is “structured unstructured time” where campers can swim, play, and enjoy a treat from the canteen.

# REGISTRATION/FEE/PAYMENTS

## *Important Dates/Deadlines*

Camp Registration opens on our website on November 15th each year, and a list of our session dates/rates can be found on our website. Sessions often fill up extremely quickly, and every year most sessions have waiting lists. We encourage you to register your child as early as possible so that you can be placed in the session that best fits your summer schedule.



## *Payments*

A non-refundable \$150 deposit is required to reserve your camper's spot in a session. Your full balance and paperwork is due no later than May 17th, 2024, and failure to pay the balance by that date will result in your camper's spot being forfeited and given to a camper on the waiting list. There are no exceptions to this policy. Your deposit can be transferred to another session if space is available, and we do our best to compassionately accommodate extreme emergencies and circumstances.

## *Scholarships/Tiered Pricing*

We provide tiered pricing so that each family may decide the level at which they are the most comfortable committing to. In addition, the Mac Westmoreland Scholarship Fund provides financial assistance to camper families who may not be able to afford all or part of the registration fee. Information about tiered pricing, scholarship applications, and scholarship qualification requirements can be found on our website.

# DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

## *Drop Off*

You will be assigned a drop off time that will be emailed directly to you prior to the start of your camper's session. The time that you will be assigned will fall sometime between 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm on the first day of your camper's session. Prior to your arrival, you will receive an email with a map, information about parking, where to go once you arrive, etc. Once you come down Camp Gravatt Road and as you enter the property, please be on the lookout for staff members and signage that will direct you to the Pavilion for registration. After you have registered, you will be able to drop your camper off at their tent/cabin where you will be able to meet their counselor and junior counselor.

## *Pick Up*

Camper pick up occurs from 8:30 am to 9:00 am on the last day of your camper's session. When you arrive to pick up your camper, please go directly to their tent/cabin. We ask that you be on time to pick up your camper as we do not have staffing to monitor campers after the session has ended. Upon packing up your camper's items, please make sure your camper is also leaving with their summer camp t-shirt, tie-dye, camp photo, and any leftover medication (each counselor will have their campers' medications with them when you arrive to pick up your camper).



# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## *Medications*

If you are sending your camper to camp with medications, they are required to be turned in at registration. There, you will meet with the Healthcare Supervisor to discuss medication dosage/timing, and any other concerns you might have.

## *General Healthcare Procedures*

Gravatt can provide OTC pain medication and first-aid treatments to handle minor health issues that can occur at camp. Our Healthcare Supervisors serve for one session at a time, and are career healthcare professionals who stay in the Byrd Health Lodge throughout the session to administer medications, provide first-aid to campers and staff, and address any medical emergencies. Additionally, many of our staff members are also certified in First-Aid/CPR, trained in AED usage, or have additional safety certifications. Also, please know that if your child becomes ill, needs to stay overnight in the Byrd Health Lodge, is seriously injured, or needs emergency medical care, a parent will always be contacted.

## *Inclement Weather*

Occasionally, we experience inclement weather at Camp Gravatt. Our staff is trained in the implementation of our protocols in the event of inclement weather. If necessary, campers are moved to a larger structure, such as Collett Dining Hall, until the weather passes. We ask that parents refrain from contacting camp if they are concerned about the weather. If there are any serious emergencies, you will always be contacted.

## *Dietary Restrictions/Accommodations*

In Campwise and during registration, you will be asked to list any and all allergies--this includes environmental, food, and medication allergies. You will also be asked to provide information on any dietary restrictions. This will allow our health staff, along with our kitchen staff, to be able to prepare a healthy week for your camper.



## *Safety Procedures*

Your camper's health and safety is our number one priority while they are with us, and we take this responsibility very seriously. Your camper will participate in waterfront safety drills, safety checks on the ropes course, and be instructed on general outdoor safety during their time at camp. Gravatt also maintains robust protocols for fire, intruders, and full-camp evacuation. Our goal is to always be prepared, and if your camper's health or safety is ever in question, a parent will always be contacted.

# IS YOUR CHILD READY FOR CAMP?



## *Talk With Your Child*

How you talk about camp with your child ahead of time will help them to adjust to life at camp and away from you. If you are positive, encouraging, and tell your child that they will do great, then it is highly likely that they will. Let them know that it's okay to be nervous or miss home, but that you know they will have an awesome time at camp. This will instill valuable and useful confidence in your camper during their time at Gravatt.

## *Help Your Camper Take Ownership*

One of the best ways to prepare your camper for their session is to be sure they are included in all of your pre-camp planning and preparation. If you need to shop for supplies or clothing, have your camper help you pick out those items, and then be sure to have them pack for camp *with* you, as opposed to you packing *for* them. You can also show them pictures or a map of Gravatt so they will have a better idea of what to expect. Allowing your camper to take responsibility and ownership in your pre-camp preparations will help them feel confident and empowered before and during their session.

## *Getting Ready for Gravatt*

At Gravatt, we accept campers as young as rising 1st Grade, however, we recognize that every child is different in terms of their development, temperament, and experience. At a minimum, your child should be able to shower and wash by themselves, use the restroom and properly clean themselves on their own, and be able to serve themselves at mealtimes. Also, to give your child experience with being away from home, we suggest having them spend a few nights at a relative or friend's house prior to sending your child to Gravatt for an entire week. This will help your child develop confidence in being away from you and their familiar surroundings before they come to camp.

# ACCOMMODATING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

## *General Accommodations*

Camp Gravatt is equipped to provide reasonable accommodations for campers who have medical, physical, social, emotional, mental, or behavioral challenges. Our staff is trained to meet a variety of camper needs, but parents should know that Camp Gravatt is not always able to meet the needs of every child in the way that your child's school may be able to.

We will always be honest with you about our ability to accommodate your child, and we encourage you to reach out to our camp director with any questions about your child's unique needs. If we are unable to accommodate your child's needs, we are sometimes able to recommend other camps that are more able to meet your child's needs.

## *Behavior and Social Interactions*

Camp Gravatt has clear behavior expectations for in our Community Covenant that are required to be signed by parents and campers. If your camper struggles with appropriately interacting with their peers, please contact our camp director to discuss your child's specific situation. At a minimum, we expect campers to respect one another and we do not tolerate violent, threatening, or demeaning words or actions. Harassment, bullying, threatening, violent, or intimidating behavior of any kind is not permitted at Gravatt and is grounds for immediate dismissal..

## *Physical Accommodations*

Camp Gravatt strives to accommodate the individual needs of all campers. However, we recognize that an outdoor setting does not always lend itself to campers with physical limitations or disabilities. If your camper has special physical needs, we encourage you to reach out to our camp director so that we can best understand your child's individual needs and determine if/how we can accommodate them. In certain circumstances, we can adapt our programming to meet the needs of your child without excluding them from the overall Gravatt experience.

## *Emotional, and Mental Health*

At Gravatt, we love and include everyone. We also know that some campers may arrive at camp with mental health concerns. Our staff is trained in how to handle the basic emotional needs of our campers, and we also provide Mental Health First Aid training for our staff. We also want parents to know that, while we are prepared to compassionately handle minor mental health issues, our staff is not able to treat or address campers with significant mental health issues. If you believe your camper has any type of serious mental health challenge (i.e. suicidal, desires to harm themselves or others, etc.), please contact our camp director before registering to determine if/how we can appropriately accommodate your camper while they are with us.

# PACKING FOR CAMP

## *Needed Items*

- Fitted and Flat Twin Sheets
- Pillow and Pillowcase
- Sleeping Bag and/or Blanket
- Warm weather and active clothing for the number of days in your session plus a few extra
- Plenty of socks and underwear
- Pajamas
- White T-shirt for Tie-Dye (or a pillowcase!)
- Large Bath/Beach Towels—we recommend one towel for showers and one for swimming
- Washcloth or similar scrubbing item for the shower
- Toiletries (Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Shampoo/Conditioner, Soap, Deodorant etc.)
- Extra Contacts (w/solution and containers) or Glasses if needed
- Sunscreen
- Bug Spray
- Reusable Water Bottles
- Sunglasses, Hats, Bandanas
- Closed toed shoes, old pair of tennis shoes, flip flops/sandals (please note that closed toed shoes are a require on our ropes course and at other activities)
- Rain Jacket or Poncho
- Flashlight & Batteries

## *Optional Items*

- Bible
- Book of Common Prayer
- Stuffed Animals
- Books
- Battery powered fan
- Backpack or small bag
- Paper, Pen, Envelopes, Stamps for Letter Writing
- Quiet Activities for Rest Period
- Hammock



# CAMP GRAVATT STAFF

## *Permanent Staff (Counselors)*

Our staff of college and high school-aged counselors are on site all summer and provide direct supervision in tents/cabins while also coordinate various programming (campfires, night activities, etc.) throughout each session. Your child's counselor will meet you in the tent/cabin when you drop off your camper, and will ensure that they have a great week with us. Our Counselors and Program Staff undergo a formal application process, criminal background check, and receive two weeks of staff training prior to the summer.

## *Junior Staff (Junior Counselors and Work Crew)*

Junior Staff members are Rising 11th-12th graders who spend a portion of the summer assisting the tent counselor with supervision, programming, and other aspects of camp life.

## *Program Staff*

Our Program Staff consists of college-aged students and graduates who coordinate various program areas such as Ropes, Waterfront, Footprints, GEEP, Art, Leadership, Healthcare, and Administration. Program Staff members are generally the most experienced Camp Gravatt staff members, some of whom, this summer, will have been on staff for up to seven years.

## *All Staff*

Staff are trained to handle a variety of camper situations that may arise, with a focus on behavior management, homesickness, child development, emergency preparedness, and much more. Training continues throughout the summer through observations, evaluations, and feedback.



# THANK YOU!

Thank you for reading the Camp Gravatt Parent Handbook for the Summer of 2024! This handbook was meant to provide a general overview Camp Gravatt, along with basic information about what to expect as you sign your child up for Camp Gravatt 2024. Additional information, including dates, deadlines, rates, policies, procedures, and other specifics, can always be found on our website, and we encourage you to view the detailed information that can be found there.

We want your camper's experience at Gravatt to be meaningful, fun, and rewarding, and we encourage you to reach out to us with any questions you may have. We appreciate that you trust us with your child at camp, and we want you to feel comfortable with your child's experience while they are with us. We invite you to visit our website and follow us on social media so that you can stay connected with us, and if you have any questions at all, please feel free to let us know. Thank you!

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