



Science Adventure School

Summit Bechtel Reserve Family Handbook
Main Street, Glen Jean, WV, 25846

General Phone: 304-293-7190

Emergency Phone: 304-293-6669

Email: SAS@mail.wvu.edu

Message from the Science Adventure School Director

Dear families,

We can't express how excited we are to get to work with your students this fall! We have been hard at work creating hands-on, engaging, adventurous, and empowering curriculum all designed to get your students excited to learn. Throughout the week we will learn about unique qualities in WV and ourselves, tap into our inner scientist, learn new recreational skills, and grow with our friends and teachers.

I want to acknowledge this sensitive time for your family. Transitions are difficult, and we feel lucky to be able to spend this precious time with your students. Please know that our world-class staff team is ready to guide your students through this journey while easing worries and empowering them to overcome challenges. You and your students' well-being will always be our first priority... with fun being a close second!

Inside this handbook you will find essential information about our program, and it will likely answer many of the questions you may have about SAS. Please take some time to familiarize yourself with the contents. If you have any questions, please feel welcome to reach out.

It is my absolute pleasure to welcome you to the SAS family. Let us all continue to engage, explore, learn, and grow.... together.

Cheers to a fantastic 2023/2024 school year! Thank you for allowing us to be a part of it.

In education and adventure,

Ali Jeney

Introduction to SAS

Science Adventure School (SAS) is an adventure-based, outdoor science school that engages 6th-grade students from around the state in an innovative curriculum focused on environmental science education, positive youth development, and STEM education linked to adventure sports. We strive to set students up for a successful life, both personally and for future careers.

Our program uses small group sizes to provide meaningful academic experiences and exposes students to the outdoors and age-appropriate challenges that help them grow. While we work to inspire them intellectually, the SAS program is also designed to help students grow socially, emotionally, and personally as they engage with their peers and teachers in discussions on subjects like handling failure, goal setting, and developing a strong inner voice. These lessons send students back to school with a strong school community.

We currently operate at three different sites around the state with more to come. During the first six weeks of the fall school year, our program is based at the Summit Bechtel Reserve near Glen Jean, West Virginia. We then move north and operate for another three weeks simultaneously at the Jackson's Mill 4-H camp and the WVU Outdoor Education Center. Our curriculum explores the unique ecosystem and assets of each site.

During SAS your child will have the opportunity to:

- Feel like they are on a camping trip with their whole class
- Explore the natural beauty of West Virginia
- Disconnect from technology and build friendships in their school
- Eat a s'more they make themselves
- Sing silly campfire songs
- Touch an earthworm, identify leaves, and learn about WV animals
- Get out of their comfort zone in a supportive, caring environment
- Try out biking, rock climbing, ziplining, canoeing and archery
- Make the memories of a lifetime
- And so much more!

You can find more information about us and our sites at:

- Our website: <https://scienceadventureschool.wvu.edu/>
- You can also connect with us on Facebook

The Family Handbook at a Glance

Schedule	Arrive Tuesday morning and leave Friday afternoon via transportation from their school. Your school will arrange transportation and communicate it to you.
Meals and Lodging	We serve three well balanced meals and 3-4 snacks each day. We can accommodate almost any dietary restriction. Please communicate ahead of time. Outside snacks and drinks are not allowed. Students will stay in a sturdy tent with others of the same gender. Do not send food or drinks with your student.
Health and Wellness	SAS has their own RN on staff and all staff are trained in CPR and first aid. Emergency contacts will be called promptly should something occur. SAS location sites have quick access to EMS services if needed. Medications will be dispensed to your child as indicated on their Participant Information Form. Medications must arrive in their original bottles with all labels intact and will be checked in with the camp's nurse and securely stored.
Homesickness	Homesickness feelings are a normal part of leaving home for the week, talk ahead of time about this, explain that it is normal to feel homesick at times, encourage your student to stay all week, and motivate them for a positive outcome.
Physical Activity	Students should be prepared to walk to each program area, they will be physically active while at the SAS.
Cell Phone Policy	SAS prefers that students do not have phones at SAS to prevent damage and loss. They are not allowed to carry their cell phones with them. We will contact you in the event of an emergency. If you need to reach your child due to an emergency, call the SAS number: 304 293-7190. A staff member will help connect you to your child.
Security	All adults interacting with your child have undergone extensive background checks and child protection training.
Behavior and Commitment	If behavioral challenges arise, they will be managed by SAS staff with assistance from teachers. If challenges remain or it is not possible for the student to continue at SAS, you will be responsible for retrieving your child. Your child will not be forced to do something that they find scary or too uncomfortable. DO NOT SHOW UP UNANNOUNCED.
Pick Up	Early departures are not allowed except in the event of emergency or medical necessity and must be approved and coordinated by a SAS director or coordinator. Students may only be picked up by authorized guardians listed on the student's emergency form who must show ID upon arrival and arrive only between 8am-8pm.

General Information

Student Schedule Sample

The schedule at SAS will closely resemble this example. We have to occasionally change the activities due to weather or other issues, but often times our “back up” plans are more fun than the originals!

Time	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
7:00 AM		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast
8:00 AM		Archery	American Chestnuts	SAS Olympics
9:00 AM				
10:00 AM	Arrival & Welcome!	Science Behind Archery		Move-Out
11:00 AM	Move-In	Wildlife		Closing Ceremony
12:00 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30 PM	Site Orientation & Team	Afternoon Discussion	Afternoon Discussion	Departure!
1:30 PM	Development	BMX	Rock Climbing	
2:30 PM			Science of Climbing	
3:30 PM		Science Behind BMX	Rock Climbing	
4:30 PM		Soil Science	Science of Climbing	
5:30 PM	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	
6:00 PM	Shower Hour	Shower Hour	Shower Hour	
7:00 PM	Evening Discussion	Evening Discussion	Evening Discussion	
8:00 PM	Evening Activity	Evening Activity	Campfire	
9:00 PM	Bedtime Prep	Bedtime Prep	Bedtime Prep	

Curriculum

Students will experience two types of science learning: STEM and Environmental Education. STEM lessons tend to be more structured around an activity, while Environmental Education is

open and designed for students to explore natural science at their own pace. Occasionally, students have difficulty switching mindsets from highly structured to open exploration or vice versa, but we think it's important for them to experience both! You can help by encouraging them to try both kinds of activities fully.

Food and Hydration

Students will be eating alongside other students, their teachers, and Science Adventure School Staff for meals. Your child will be provided with a healthy and plentiful breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as well as nutritional snacks as needed throughout the day. We have established daily meals and snacks in accordance with the WV Child Nutrition office for daily caloric intake suitable for children in this age range. In addition, your child will be encouraged to drink water frequently, while milk, and other nutritional beverages will be provided. Each meal will be served in a dining facility or packed daily and enjoyed at the activity locations.

We are equipped to accommodate most dietary restrictions your child may require. Please let us know before your child comes to SAS so that we are fully prepared to accommodate these restrictions (this will be included in the information packet required to secure your child's spot). Should your child have a food-related allergy, please be sure this information is included in their registration and medical release forms. Please also let us know if your child has a limited menu of food they enjoy. That way we can be sure that they have access to enough of the foods they will eat. **It cannot be overstated that the earlier this information is communicated to us, the better prepared we are to ensure your child's safety and enjoyment.**

Lodging

Students are provided lodging at Science Adventure School. At the Summit Bechtel Reserve, students will be lodging in spacious 4-person canvas tents which are sturdy and protective from the elements. Teachers will be in a separate tent. Two to four members of staff will provide supervision to students. Students of the same gender will be assigned to each sleeping area. We will work with the families of trans or non-binary students to provide supportive accommodation. Boys and girls will stay in separate areas. Additionally, we have a supportive network of teachers, leaders, and facilitators who stay interspersed throughout the site and will ensure that rules regarding sleeping arrangements are strictly enforced. If your student has a sleeping bag, we ask that they please bring it with them. If not, there is no need to purchase one, we're happy to provide sleeping bags. It is perfectly acceptable to bring blankets and pillow as an alternative.

The bathhouse areas are equipped with flushing toilets and showers. Students are encouraged to bring toiletries like shampoo, toothpaste, bodywash, etc. but those items will be provided if the student does not bring their own. Adequate time will be given for your child to take care of their personal needs while at SAS as well as during various activities throughout Science Adventure School.

Electrical outlets are not generally available in student accommodations. Headlamps are good to read by at night, but your student may also wish to bring a portable lantern to give them more light during the evenings. If your student does not have a headlamp or flashlight, we are happy

to provide one as supplies allow. All students must be in their bunks by 9:15, all lights must be out by 9:30pm.

Physical Activity

Science Adventure School is situated in a wide variety of terrain types. Your student should be prepared to be physically active during their time at SAS. Please be sure your student brings a good pair of shoes to walk in.

Hiking shoes are not required, any athletic shoe will work. If available, a second pair of shoes will be helpful in case of rain or walking through wet terrain. Each day will feature walking to and from each class site, which may sometimes be up steep hills.

Outside Temperatures

Because of our location, temperatures can vary wildly throughout the day. Mornings can be cool, afternoons hot and humid, and night chilly, or it could be completely the opposite! Please consider packing multiple layers to deal with the temperature variation. Warm jackets, fleece, hats, and sleeping bags will be available to all students.

Research

Science Adventure School has a research and evaluation program to help us improve our work and assist in soliciting financial support to keep the cost low for attending students. This research plan has been fully approved by WVU's research ethics committee. You will get paperwork that explains the research and will have the opportunity to opt your student out of participating. If you and your student choose to participate, they will get a survey that will ask them questions like "How much do you like science?" and "Do you think you'd like to do science in the future as a job?" They may also be asked to participate in an interview, which will ask similar questions. We will not ask your student any sensitive information.

Success Practices and Procedures

Student Health and Wellness

Injury or Illness

If your child becomes ill or sustains an injury, they will receive care at our Health Center by a registered nurse. In addition, we require that every SAS instructor have a First Aid/CPR certification. Many of our staff are Wilderness First Aid certified, Wilderness First Responders, lifeguards, EMTs, or paramedics. We are ready to handle a wide range of medical issues that may arise. In the event of an injury or illness, the emergency contact(s) on the child's information forms will be called, briefed, and consulted for any action.

Medication

All medications brought to SAS **must be listed on the Medication Consent Sections of the Participant Information Form** (either prescription or over the counter). All medications brought to SAS **must be in their original prescription or manufacturer bottle with the original label intact**. Medications will be presented to the SAS RN/Health Provider upon the

student's arrival at SAS and securely stored in the SAS designated health center.

Prescription medication and over-the-counter medication will be dispensed to your child by a Registered Nurse or a specifically trained medication administration assistant. Our health provider staff will consult the child's medical form prior to dispensing medication. SAS operates via a set of Standing Medical Orders reviewed annually by our Medical Director which outlines when over-the-counter medications and treatment may be indicated for use. Guardians will always be contacted before dispensing non-prescription, over-the-counter medications if permission is not provided on the participant information form. Should there be a specific medication you do NOT want our health provider staff to dispense to your child, this should be clearly stated on the medical form.

Lice

We have adopted a "No Nit" policy. Prior to camp, we strongly recommend having your student checked for lice. If your student is identified as having lice or nits, staff will contact you. You must pick up your child within 6 hours of the phone call informing you of the lice and/or nits. Students may only return once they have been identified as free from lice and nits and proof of treatment must be presented upon returning. In the meantime, students identified as having lice will be separated from other students and will not be able to participate in SAS activities. If lice are discovered during camp and after the initial screening has been conducted the other students in that student's group will be re-screened, and the families of other students in that student's group will be advised by email correspondence.

Homesickness

We understand this is a first-time camp experience for so many of our students and they can sometimes get homesick or miss family. While every effort will be made on our behalf to ensure your child feels welcome and encouraged, we do understand this situation may occur. We encourage all our students to stick out the full three nights and give it their best. Our experience has proven that students who are homesick the first day or two are the students who wish they could stay longer on days three and four.

We ask that you work with us and talk with your child to empower and encourage them as they gain the confidence and build friendships to support their decision to stay. It's helpful to teach students about homesickness (this is a feeling that tells you you're missing home and that's okay!), let them know it is normal, and talk about things that might help. If you aren't sure how to best encourage your student, reach out to a SAS admin and we will work together. Homesickness often occurs at 'down times' like a rest hour, bedtime, and mealtimes. SAS staff are ready to engage the students in activities to help during these times to ease the feelings of homesickness. Motivate your child for a positive SAS outdoor school experience.

Use the **TEEM** acronym: **T**ALK daily about being away from home for SAS; **E**XPLAIN that feeling homesick is common; **E**NCOURAGE your child to stay at camp despite feeling homesick; **M**OTIVATE your child for a positive experience.

We understand that being away from home takes practice. However, if the decision is made for the child to leave SAS, we will support that decision. If your student must leave early, it will be

the responsibility of the parent or guardian to travel to Science Adventure School to pick up your child. Hours for pick up are 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM. **Please do not show up unannounced**, as this can seriously impact the quality of programming for all students and pose a security risk for Science Adventure School. Also note that the person picking up the child must be identified on the student's participant information form. We will never release a student to a guardian who has not been previously established in writing.

Additionally, we understand that for many, SAS is the parent's or guardians' first time being away from their children for this long too! Know that you are not alone in missing your student, and for many parents or guardians, this is hard week for you as well.

Risk Management

Outside Food and Drinks

At Science Adventure School we eat three delicious meals and have an endless supply of snacks! Due to allergies and to avoid risk of attracting animals to camp, outside snacks and drinks are not permitted. If your student has a restricted diet due to medical needs, please make note of that on their medical form and the Science Adventure School Staff will make appropriate accommodations and be in contact with you about these. Do NOT send food with your student without prior approval of a SAS staff member.

Onsite Security

All adults who will interact with your child have passed extensive background checks, completed WVU Child Protection training, and have completed the BSA Youth Protection Training.

Access to Science Adventure School is restricted, and only SAS staff members and instructors, supporting nursing and medical team members, and authorized personnel may receive clearance to enter and exit the location. **If a parent or guardian needs access to the site to pick up a child for any reason, you will need to bring photo ID and will be escorted by a team member if brought on site.**

Cell Phones and Contacting Your Child

We strongly advise you do not send a cell phone with your child. Cell phones are not allowed during programming time as they distract students from fully experiencing SAS. Should you choose to send a phone, it will be collected upon your student's arrival and placed in a locked, secure location, except for one designated contact time. If a student has a personal or medical emergency they will have access to a coordinator, guide, or director's phone to contact a guardian. Staff carry students' emergency contact information with them at all times.

There will be one designated phone time on Thursday evenings when students will have the option of checking in with a parent or guardian.

If you need to contact your child at any point during their stay because of an emergency, you can contact our office phone which gets routed directly to the field after hours during programming months. If you have general questions, comments, concerns, or other things you would like to discuss, we would love to hear from you via email at SAS@mail.wvu.edu.

We understand that it can be nerve-wracking the first time your student stays away from home! We will be providing updates via our Facebook page and uploading photos throughout the week to our photo sharing platform so that you can see what your student is up to.

Behavior and Commitment to the Program

Challenge by Choice

We understand that your child may not choose to participate in every activity or lesson we offer. That's alright with us!

Your child will never be forced to do something that they find scary or too uncomfortable. We will encourage all our students to step out of their comfort zone and try new things that they may have limited experience with. However, we respect your child's individuality and choice not to participate in certain activities. Students who choose not to participate will be given a different activity or be put in an "encourager" role so that they will be able to participate in a more comfortable role.

Behavior

Although the outdoor and experiential education environment often curtail typical behavior problems, we understand there may be issues that arise that are beyond our control.

If a child is having a behavior issue that SAS staff or a teacher cannot work through with the child or that causes a safety concern to self or others, we will remove the child from the environment. Our first action is to discuss what may have caused the behavior and what the student may need in order to resume the activity. If the child does not want to continue or does not follow through with improved behavior, the parent or guardian will be responsible for retrieving their child.

Family and Community Resources

EMERGENCY

911 (Statewide)

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

988lifeline.org | Call or Text 988

Poison Control

www.poison.org | 800-222-1222

HELP4WV

www.help4wv.com | Call or Text 844-HELP4WV (435-7498) | Help with addiction or mental health

Libera

<https://www.liberawv.com/> | Support and resources for women and teens

WV Child or Adult Abuse Reporting

800-352-6513

WV Emergency Management

emd.wv.gov | 304-558-5380

WV State Police

www.wvsp.gov | 304-746-2100 (Charleston – Main office)

304-293-6400 (Morgantown - Crimes Against Children Unit)