



2026-2027 Handbook

StarKidz After School is a fun and welcoming after-school program for elementary, intermediate, and middle school students. We are committed to providing genuine care, respect, and courtesy to children, parents, and one another. Our program serves children enrolled in 4K through rising 6th graders.

Hours of Service

StarKidz After School operates Monday through Friday from **2:30 PM to 6:00 PM**. We close **promptly at 6:00 PM**. Any child not picked up by 6:00 PM will incur a late fee.

We kindly ask families to be respectful of our staff by arriving on time. While we understand that unexpected situations may occasionally arise, our staff depend on leaving at 6:00 PM to care for their own families.

Late Fees

- **6:01 PM – 6:05 PM:** \$5 flat fee
- **6:06 PM – 6:10 PM:** \$15 flat fee
- **6:11 PM – 6:15 PM:** \$20 flat fee
- **6:16 PM and later:** \$50 flat fee

Late fees will **not** apply if your child has a **6:00 PM dance or tumbling class at StarMakers** that evening.

Planned Closures for the 2026–2027 School Year

- **September 7:** Labor Day Holiday
- **November 2:** Staff Development Day
- **November 3:** Election Day Holiday
- **November 26–27:** Thanksgiving Holiday
- **May 28:** Transition to Summer Program

Any additional closures, including any early closures (usually only done for our Trunk or Treat or for recital), will be communicated **no less than two weeks in advance**. A **two-week advance notice** will be provided for any sign-up day that does not meet the minimum required enrollment so that families can make other arrangements. Please refer to the **Fees** section for more information regarding these sign-ups.

Office & Administrative Information

Our Office Manager is **Mrs. Kelly Fuqua**, who handles all financial matters for both StarKidz and StarMakers. The administrative office, located in the StarMakers lobby, is open:

- **Monday, Tuesday, Thursday:** 12:00 PM – 7:00 PM
- **Wednesday:** 11:00 AM – 6:00 PM

On Fridays, Mrs. Kelly is available by **email only** for any billing or payment concerns. Weekly payments should be arranged **no later than 6:00 PM on Thursday**.

For any non-financial concerns, please schedule an appointment with the **StarKidz Director**. Unscheduled conferences can be disruptive to staff who are actively supervising children.

Records

StarKidz After School will provide all required forms, which must be completed and returned at registration. Records are updated whenever new paperwork is received. Please notify the StarKidz Director and the Office Manager of any changes as they occur.

All family information is kept confidential. In accordance with South Carolina law, StarKidz is required to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. This includes physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, as well as neglect.

Immunization Records

State law requires StarKidz to maintain **either a copy of each child's immunization record or an official exemption letter** on file for every enrolled child. Our requirements for immunizations match those of Spartanburg District One and Two. These documents must be submitted **at the time of registration**.

Fees

Invoices are issued on **Thursday**, and payment is due **no later than Friday** for the upcoming week. Although we call it auto-draft, cards are manually processed each Friday between **8:00 AM and 12:00 PM**, unless families are notified by email of a different schedule. Cards must be ready for processing during this time. Please ensure cards are unlocked and funds are available **before 8:00 AM** so that cards only need to be run once. If a card does not go through the first time, it will not be run again until **Monday** and a **\$20 late fee** will be applied. The child may not attend StarKidz until the balance is paid in full.

If an issue occurs with a card that is usually processed the first time, **Mrs. Ashley** will send a text on Friday to notify you of the issue and request correction if possible. If repeated weekly contact is required to resolve payment issues, StarKidz reserves the right to apply an **additional processing fee**.

Families choosing to pay **bi-weekly or monthly** must pay tuition **in advance**.

Please Note:

- **Tuition is not generally prorated for any reason.** Full-time students are charged in full regardless of attendance, including holidays, early release days, staff development days, sickness, weather and other acts of God. The only exceptions are:
 - **October 12–14:** Tuition will be prorated at \$60. Students attending during the winter break of **October 15–16** will be charged **\$70 for both days** or **\$40 for a single day**.
 - **November 2–3:** Because StarKidz will be closed to allow StarKidz Staff to attend Disney World with Starmakers, tuition for this week will be prorated at **\$60**.
- If an account becomes past due, StarKidz will **not provide school pickup**, beginning the Monday after payment is due. Families must make alternate transportation and childcare arrangements until the account is current.
- A **\$50 fee** will be charged for all returned checks. StarKidz reserves the right to require **cash payments** for future transactions. Checks must be made payable to **StarKidz**, with the child's name written on the memo line.
- **Teacher Workdays and Holidays** require advance sign-up and incur an additional fee if your child attends. Hours of operation on these days are **7:00 AM–6:00 PM**. Once signed up, charges are **non-refundable**, except in the case of illness with a doctor's note. A minimum of **18 students** is required for StarKidz to open on these days.
 - Fee: **\$30** for current StarKidz students (in addition to regular tuition)
 - Fee: **\$45** for non-StarKidz students
 - *Friendzgiving is included in weekly tuition*
- **Half days** incur an additional **\$20 fee**, in addition to regular tuition, for current StarKidz students.
- If a child is unable to attend due to illness or quarantine, the **full week's tuition** will still be charged.

Families wishing to unenroll from StarKidz must provide a **two-week notice**. Please refer to the **StarKidz After School Tuition Policy** for additional details.

Departures

Each child must be **signed out** at dismissal by an **authorized individual**. Children are not permitted to sign out themselves or another child. All authorized individuals must be of **legal driving age** in order for a child to be released into their care.

Either written authorization signed by a parent, **and/or verbal consent**, or a text to Mrs. Ashley's cell from a known number with the name of who is picking up is required for dismissal to anyone **not listed** on the child's enrollment form. **No exceptions** will be made to this policy, as it is in place for the **safety of your child**. Identification will be required if the person at the door does not know the person picking up the child.

Parents are required to list **at least one emergency contact** other than the child's parents. We will always attempt to contact parents first and the emergency contact only if a parent cannot be

reached. StarKidz reserves the right to **withhold dismissal** if the individual picking up a child is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

By law, StarKidz cannot deny a parent access to their child due to divorce or custody situations **unless a court order is on file** specifying such restrictions. A copy of the court order must be kept in the child's file for reference.

Children who attend evening dance or tumbling classes that dismiss **at or after 6:00 PM** must be picked up from the **StarMakers lobby** or the **Tumbling Warehouse**. If a child attends a class that **begins after 6:00 PM**, arrangements must be made to pick them up from StarKidz **by 6:00 PM** and then return them for class. Children may **not remain unattended** at StarMakers while waiting for a later class to begin.

If a child is dismissed from a dance or tumbling class **before 6:00 PM**, they will be sent back to **StarKidz** and must be **signed out at the StarKidz building**.

StarKidz closes **promptly at 6:00 PM**.

Sick Child Policy

StarKidz staff will notify parents if a child becomes ill while in our care. If staff determine that a child needs to be picked up, parents must make arrangements for prompt pickup. This decision is **non-negotiable**.

Illnesses or conditions requiring pickup include, but are not limited to:

- Rash (other than heat rash)
- Fever (temperature of **100°F or higher**)
- Pink eye
- Head lice
- Vomiting (**one occurrence**)
- Diarrhea (**two occurrences**)
- Any condition that prevents the child from participating safely and productively in program activities

Parents may provide StarKidz with a **non-prescription pain reliever** for their child. The medication must be clearly labeled with the child's name and proper dosage instructions specific to that child. Please **do not send medication with your child** or in school or dance bags.

Children should **not attend StarKidz** if they have shown signs of illness or fever within the previous **24 hours**. If a child is sent home due to illness, they may not return to StarKidz the following day, as the required 24-hour symptom-free period will not have been met.

Inclement Weather Policy

StarKidz After School follows **Spartanburg School Districts 1 and 2** schedules regarding delays and closures due to inclement weather. If Districts 1 and 2 announce school closures, **StarKidz will be closed.**

In the event that **any district** announces an early dismissal due to weather, **parents are responsible for picking up their child directly from school.** StarKidz will not provide transportation or care during early dismissals.

Snacks

StarKidz provides an after-school snack for all children upon arrival each afternoon. Parents are welcome to send an additional snack with their child; however, all extra snacks must be eaten during designated snack times.

StarKidz does not provide additional snacks for children who attend late-afternoon or evening dance and/or tumbling classes. We understand that some children may need something to eat to hold them over before class, and parents are encouraged to send an extra snack if needed. Snacks are available for purchase in the StarMakers lobby as well.

Required Items for After School

- The following items are required for your child's participation in **StarKidz After School:**

K4–2nd Grade

- Washable markers
- Crayons
- One pack of construction paper
- One pack of copy paper
- Glue sticks
- **Dancers and Tumblers Only:** One pack of hair ties

3rd–6th Grade

- Colored pencils
- Dry erase markers
- Two packs of wide-ruled notebook paper
- Clorox wipes
- Kleenex
- **Dancers and Tumblers Only:** One pack of hair ties

Items From Home

Tablets, iPads, cell phones, and other electronic devices are not permitted at StarKidz. The only exception is electronic devices issued by the school, and these devices may be used for school purposes only.

Any item that becomes disruptive or is in violation of StarKidz policies will be **confiscated** and returned to a parent at pickup. All cell phones must be **turned in upon arrival each afternoon** and will be returned to the student at dismissal.

StarKidz is **not responsible** for the loss of or damage to any items brought from home or school.

Toys, blankets, and pillows are **not allowed** and will also be confiscated and returned to parents at pickup.

Behavior and Discipline

StarKidz is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for all children. Our staff uses **positive discipline techniques**, and **physical or emotional punishment is never permitted**. Staff members clearly communicate expectations and provide reminders and redirection before using time-outs or removing privileges.

All StarKidz participants are expected to follow these guidelines:

- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Use inside voices while indoors
- Treat others with kindness and respect
- No taunting, bullying, or intimidation

If staff are unable to redirect or correct undesirable behavior, parents will be contacted and asked to assist in resolving the issue. If behavior does not improve, StarKidz reserves the right to **suspend** or **permanently remove** a child from the After School program. In the event of removal due to disciplinary action, no refunds will be issued for any fees already paid.

Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to:

- Inflicting physical or emotional harm to oneself, other children, or staff
- Damaging property
- Receiving **three (3) disciplinary write-ups**. When a write-up is issued, a parent must sign it; failure to do so will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Ignoring or repeatedly disobeying staff instructions in a manner that endangers the child or others

Homework

All children report to their assigned **homework room** immediately upon arrival. If a child does not have homework, they may read or engage in a quiet activity during homework time.

StarKidz staff will assist students with completing their homework. Students are allocated **up to one hour per day** for homework; however, this time may be interrupted by dance or tumbling classes. Staff **cannot assist with long-term projects, assignments requiring a computer, one-on-one tutoring, or reading** until a child is able to read independently.

While staff will make every effort to ensure students complete their homework, **parents are ultimately responsible** for reviewing assignments daily. Students in **grades 3–6** are expected to inform staff of their homework, as agendas are often not provided in folders. If parents have questions about homework that is not being completed, we ask parents to communicate with us so that we can work together to support the student's success.

Due to the noise level at StarKidz, **studying for tests** may be difficult for some students and may need to be completed at home.

Safety

A **fire and emergency escape plan** is posted in the lobby and in all rooms. Fire and storm drills are conducted periodically to ensure children know how to respond safely in an emergency. StarKidz staff members are **certified in First Aid and CPR**.

Questions

Questions regarding the program may be directed to the **StarKidz Director** in person, by email, text, or phone call. For monetary concerns beyond general questions, please contact the **Office Manager**.