

Zoo Camp Information

Goal: The goal of Cameron Park Zoo Camp is to foster an appreciation for the natural world through fun, educational activities.

Age Groups: Children are grouped together based on the grade they will enter in the fall. The age groups are: K-1st grade, 2nd-3rd grade, 4th-6th grade. Children will only be placed together if they are in the same age group as listed above and based on availability. Zoo Tales is for pre-school children ages 3-5 and must be potty trained. Explore Waco Camp is for children ages 12 and up.

Registration and Fees: Full Day camp (9:00 am - 4:00 pm) and Half Day camp (9:00 am - 12:00 pm) is available for these age groups. Full Day camp is \$200/week for members and \$220/week for non-members, and Half Day camp is \$120/week for members and \$140/week for non-members. Registrations will not be processed without payment; there will be no exceptions.

Instructor Information: Most instructors are college students or certified teachers on their summer break. We require that all our instructors pass a criminal background check and have experience instructing children.

Student/Teacher Ratio: We have one instructor per 10 children for all age groups. We also have Zoo Crew (teen volunteers) who assist the teachers.

Grade Requirements: We do not make exceptions to the grade requirements when parents request for children from different age groups to be placed together. All of our activities and lessons are age appropriate. Placing children in the incorrect age group compromises and disrupts the activities for the entire class.

Placing Friends Together: If your child is attending camp the same week as a friend, they will be together if they are the same age and there is space available. Zoo Camp is very popular and the classes fill up quickly!

Outside/Inside Activities: We try to spend as much time outside exploring the zoo as possible, however there will be a combination of both indoor and outdoor activities. Our lunchtime (full day campers) is a time when they can relax or play on the playground. There is no naptime.

Snack: We supply a morning and afternoon snack for the children. These are items such as: animal crackers, pretzels, goldfish, Nilla wafers, granola bars, etc. We also serve water with the snacks. We will make exceptions for and work around any food allergies a child may have. (i.e., peanut butter). You are welcome to pack your child's own snack if you prefer.

Lunch: Children MUST bring their lunch with them from home if they are attending full day camp. The children are NOT allowed to buy their lunch from the cafe. Lunches will be refrigerated, but microwaves will NOT be available for use.

Medications: If your child requires any prescription medications throughout the day, you may come and administer it.

Extended Care: We are not offering extended care this year due to ongoing COVID restrictions.

Animal Contact: Campers will have the opportunity for up-close encounters with several of our Animal Ambassadors.

A typical day at Zoo Adventure Camp includes:

- Zoo walk
- Classroom lessons with pictures and bio-facts (bones, pelts, feathers, etc.)
- Games and activities that reinforce the concepts being taught that day (biodiversity, camouflage, etc.)
- Morning and afternoon snacks
- Lunchtime at Pavilion
- Animal encounters - children will get up-close encounters with our Animal Ambassadors
- Behind the Scenes tours
- Keeper talks
- Arts and crafts project

This is a basic list to help you understand our busy day at the zoo. Schedules will vary depending on the grade level and the weekly theme. **Please note that the half day camp is not a separate camp, but instead the morning portion of the full day camp.**

By the end of each week: The children will have seen the entire zoo. There will be a combination of both inside and outside activities. These will include active games, quiet inside games, learning and problem solving activities, arts and crafts, scavenger hunts, and journal writing/drawing. Activities are geared towards the grade-level or age group.

Zoo Camp Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

We want your child to get the most out of their time at the zoo. Activities will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. and will end at 12:00 p.m. for half day campers and 4:00 p.m. for full day campers.

If you arrive late, please ask the admissions booth to radio the Education Department. We will send a Zoo Crew to take your child to their group.

If you need to pick up your child early, please bring a note that morning and give it to your child's counselor. When you arrive to pick up your child, please ask the admissions booth to radio the Education Department.

For your child's safety, please follow these procedures when picking up and dropping off!

1. The sign in area is located outside the front gates. You must sign your child both in and out every day.
2. Pick up is outside the front gates, same area as morning sign in. You must give the code word each day when picking up your child and sign your child out. Your child will not be released to you without the code word.
3. Thank you for following these procedures. This will provide safety for your camper and allow us to begin and end camp as smoothly as possible each day.

Car Pool Information

Please provide a written note expressing your permission for your child to leave with another family. The note must provide dates and contact information where you can be reached during that time along with your signature. We will not be able to release your child to another family without written permission.

Zoo Camp Cancellations, Session Date Changes and Refunds

In the event that you would like to make a change, please do so in writing and include your child's name, grade, and session date(s). You may email these requests to conniek@wacotx.gov or education@cameronparkzoo.com. To insure program quality for all participants, we will not make exceptions regarding class sizes. Please note that campers may not make up missed days in another week of camp.

Please also take into consideration the following policies when changing your session date(s) or canceling your registration:

Session Date Changes:

Due to the number of session date changes requested, we will allow one change at no cost and each additional change will be charged \$20.00. We will change the session date for your child's zoo camp only if there is an available spot for the week you are requesting.

Cancellations and Refunds:

If your child is unable to attend, you are welcome to find a replacement in the same age group. All cancellation/replacement requests must be made in writing and mailed, faxed or emailed to the address/phone number/email address listed below.

Cancellations/refunds will incur a \$20.00 fee (per registration).

Cancellation requests received less than 2 weeks prior to your scheduled session date will only be eligible for a 50% refund. No refunds will be issued for no-shows or after the start date of the session for which you are registered. Refund processing can take 2-3 weeks.

Send cancellation and date change requests to:

Cameron Park Zoo Adventure Camp
1701 N. 4th Street
Waco, TX 76707

Fax: 254-750-8469

Email: conniek@wacotx.gov