CAMP KETCHA
EST. 1964

CAMP KETCHA SUMMER CAMP

HANDBOOK

KETCHA OUTDOORS 2026

american CAMP association ACCREDITED

Table of Contents

Mission and Vision 1

Communication/Parent and Guardian Policies 2

Bus & Transportation 3

Daily Attendance, Late Arrivals & Early Dismissals 4

Health & Safety 5-7

Daily Personal Items 8-9

Behavior Expectations 10-11

Program Information 12-14

Financial Policies & Additional Weeks 15-17

Internet Contact Policy 17

Quick Facts 18

Vision and Mission

About

Camp Ketcha is one of Greater Portland's premier summer camps. The picturesque 107 acres includes rolling meadows and woodlands in the Scarborough Marsh. We have a sandy beach on a private pond, swimming pool, archery range, arts & crafts building, hiking trails, high and low ropes course, yurts, classrooms, large indoor spaces, sports fields and two playgrounds.

Mission

To provide equitable access to outdoor experiences and gear, promoting well-being, sustainability, and resilient communities.

Vision

We envision a Maine community where anyone can enjoy being active outdoors. We believe that access to the outdoors, educational programming, and reliable gear has positive benefits for individuals and communities. We believe that being engaged in nature promotes physical and mental health, builds confidence and resilience, fosters environmental stewardship, and brings diverse communities together.

American Camp Association Accredited

Camp Ketcha is accredited through the American Camp Association by adhering to over 175 standards in the following areas: Site & Food Service, Transportation, Health & Wellness, Operational Management, Human Resources, Program Design & Activities, Aquatics, and Adventure Challenge. For more information on the American Camp Association please visit their website at www.acacamps.org.

Communication

Parent Information

Additional information required for other programs in which your child is enrolled will be emailed to you. Feel free to visit Camp Ketcha after 6 pm on weekdays or anytime during the weekend to acquaint your child with the camp. If you would like a tour, please call or email to schedule one. We are happy to tour you around camp in any season. Keep an eye out for formal Open Houses and Orientations, both in person and virtually! We will offer 2 in-person sessions and 1 virtual session in April/May.

The week before each camp week, you will receive an e-newsletter, The Camp Ketcha Chronicle, outlining specific events happening during the next session. This is also when you will receive information about upcoming specialty camps, bussing, and special events.

If you have any additional questions that you can not find the answer to in this Parent's Guide, please contact us by calling **(207) 883-8977 ex 104 or emailing your question to summercamp@ketchaoutdoors.org.**

Emergency Camp Closing

In the event of an emergency camp closing, we will notify local media outlets, place a sign out front, post it on the website, meet parents at bus stops, and send out a mass camp email if possible. It is important that we have the most up-to-date contact information for this reason. If an emergency were to occur while camp is in session, we may announce an alternative pick-up location- either our Ice House Building off of Black Point Road or our Farm off of Spurwink Road. This change in pick-up location will be announced using the above measures.

Parent/Guardian Transportation Policies

Parent/Guardian Transportation

If families are not using Early Care, they may arrive no earlier than 8:50 a.m. Camp ends at 4:00 p.m. each day. For the safety of each camper, the person picking up the camper must walk up to the camper's assigned pick-up location and sign the child out with the child's counselor. Every person picking up a child must show a photo ID that matches the name on our approved pickup list. Drop-off and pick-up location will stay the same each day unless there is inclement weather. We will assign groups to pavilions/shaded areas on or close-by the upper field for drop off/pick up and have leadership staff available to take you to your child's group until you get the hang of it.

Please enter through the Black Point Road entrance and exit using the Spurwink Road (Rt.77) entrance. Please observe these measures to keep all children safe at Camp Ketcha.

The speed limit on our property is 5 MPH- please drive responsibly for the safety of our campers. Parking is located on the Spurwink Road side of the Employee Parking area.

Early/Late Care

Early care is offered every morning beginning at 7:30 am. Late Care is offered Monday-Thursday until 6:00 pm and 5:00 pm on Fridays. You must sign up and pay for Early/Late Care in advance. For staffing purposes, the above hours are strictly followed. Enrollment in Early/Late Care is only offered by the week. If you are utilizing Early Care and Late Care, you must connect with a counselor to check your camper in and out each day. There will be a designated staff member ready to check in/out children.

First Day Check-In Mondays only (for non-bus riders)

Each Monday, we will have extra staff available at the table outside (inside if it is raining) anytime beginning at 8:50 am (if your child is riding the bus, you do not need to drive them the first day, as long as all of your forms are completed and you have paid all balances due). Head Counselors & Program Staff will be available to walk you and your camper to your group.

Bus Transportation Information

Buses

We have one bus that stops at various locations around Greater Portland. Qualified drivers operate all Camp Ketcha buses. Each bus has one or two Camp Ketcha staff monitors who are equipped with a cellular phone. Custom Coach of New England provides our bus services to and from camp and for large field trips. Drivers are fingerprinted through the DOE and have completed a background check through the company.

Children are expected to demonstrate safe and appropriate behavior while riding on our buses. To ensure the safety and well-being of other campers, Camp Ketcha reserves the right to suspend or expel disruptive children from the bus. If a child is removed from the bus, no refunds will be made. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to transport the child to and from camp. All children riding a camp bus will become the responsibility of camp staff at the point they board the bus in the morning.

All campers MUST be met at the bus stop by a parent/guardian or a person designated in writing by the parent/guardian unless they have prior written arrangements with Camp Ketcha (see below). Every person picking up a child MUST show a photo ID that matches the name on our approved pickup list. Campers will remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop. Campers will be dismissed from their seat once a parent/guardian has been verified as an authorized pick-up.

In case of emergency or bus delays, families will be emailed with all updates. A staff member remains on duty at Camp Ketcha until all bus campers have been picked up.

If the child is not picked up at the last stop at the designated time, the parent will be charged a $1 per minute late fee for under 10 minutes. If the child is not picked up after 10 minutes and before 30 minutes, a $50 fee will be charged. If the child is not met, she/he will be returned to camp, and an additional $50 fee will be charged. If you feel that your child can safely walk home from the bus stop without a parent/guardian, then you must fill out and sign our **Walk Home Permission Slip** and return it to the front office. This can be found on your Camp In Touch Account under Forms.

Conduct While Attending Camp

Our programs follow a 5 finger contract outlining our values to help stay safe (pinky), respect others and the environment (ring), be kind (middle), lead by example (pointer), and have fun (thumb). These are gone over daily as a way to set expectations for program participants. These values guide camper's words and behavior and are a positive support approach to help students with skill-building for self-control and self-advocacy.

Additional Bus Rules

All camp rules apply when riding the bus in addition to the rules listed below:

- Remain seated with seat belts on (if provided) during bus trips
- Keep all body parts and objects inside of the bus.

Please discuss and reinforce these behavioral expectations with your child.

Daily Attendance, Late Arrivals & Early Dismissals

Absence

Attendance is taken every day at Camp Ketcha. If your child will be absent, please fill out our Summer Camp Absence form which will be available on our website and also linked in the Camp Ketcha Chronicle. You can also report absences by calling **207-883-8977** or sending an email to **summercamp@ketchaoutdoors.org** to let us know. A voice mailbox system is in place for messages when camp is closed. It is our policy to contact you if your child is absent and we have not been alerted ahead of time. We unfortunately are unable to allow your child to make up missed days during other weeks of camp.

Late Arrivals/Early Pick-Up

If you know in advance that your child will be arriving late or being picked up early, please send an email or call camp. For early pick-up and late drop off it is very important that you call first since main building staff will need to inform group counselors and coordinate a pick-up/drop-off at the main building. We spend most of our day away from the main building.

Early pickup windows will be during snack and lunch times (10:30-10:45, 11:45-12:15, and 2:15-2:30) in order to ensure proper supervision for groups and for individual campers and to limit interruption of the camp day and activities. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with our pickup policy to ensure a safer and more engaging camp experience for all. While late arrivals and early pick-ups can be emailed, we prefer that you call to ensure that it receives immediate attention. Camp staff are usually out on the property and only periodically able to check email.

Dismissal Policy

Parent Authorization:

Your child will only be dismissed to the people whom you have listed on your summer camp registration form. We will not release your child to anyone else unless we have written authorization from you. If you need to add an approved pickup to your account, please let us know. If a non-custodial parent has been denied access to a child by court order, you must submit documentation to that effect, and we will comply with it accordingly.

Sign-Out Procedure:

All parents/guardians/authorized grown-ups picking up your child must check out with your child's counselor at their group spot on the upper field. You will be asked to produce an ID unless the counselor can recognize and name you. Everyone picking up should have their ID on them in case we have a substitute counselor. We kindly ask all parents to cooperate with us during this time in order to make dismissal as smooth as possible. It is very important that you check out with your child's counselor.

Late Pick-Up:

Camp closes promptly at 6:00 pm (5 pm on Fridays). Any participant picked up after 6:00 pm (5:00 pm) will be charged $1 per minute they are late plus $15. Payment is due upon pick-up. At 6:30 pm, we will follow the *Failure to Pick-Up Child procedures*. In case of an emergency, please notify us immediately.

Failure to Pick-Up Child:

If the parent or authorized person(s) fail to pick up the child at the time of the camp's closing, Camp Ketcha will ensure that:

1. The child is supervised at all times.
2. Staff members attempt to contact the parent or authorized person(s); and
3. A ½ hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to the parent or authorized person(s) have failed, and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at camp, the staff member will call the Department of Health & Human Services 24 hour Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline at 1-800-452-1999 to seek assistance in caring for the child until an authorized person is able to pick-up the child.

Health and Safety

Sunscreen Policy
Campers spend most of their time outdoors while at Camp Ketcha. All campers must apply sunscreen to themselves with help from counselors with a minimum SPF of 15 (30+ is preferred) to all exposed skin, including lips, daily. ***Parents/Guardians are responsible for applying the first layer of sunscreen at home before the camper's arrival.*** Please provide enough additional sunscreen for further applications. Camp Ketcha staff will be responsible for follow-up applications according to the schedule below. Please be sure to write your child's name on their sunscreen so that we can ensure it goes home with them.

Sunscreen Schedule
Counselors and campers are required to apply sunscreen the following times at Camp Ketcha:
(CAMPERS ARE EXPECTED TO COME WITH THE FIRST APPLICATION ON)

- AM Snack
- Lunch
- PM Snack
- Before and After Swimming
- Before Late Care

Health Care, Sickness, & Lice
In order to attend, every camper must have a MEDICAL FORM completed, signed by a parent, and submitted no later than 2 weeks prior to the first session your camper is registered for. Information documented on the MEDICAL FORM must be current. Health information about your camper that is required includes, but is not limited to, allergy history, medications routinely taken, dietary restrictions, general health history, physical/emotional/mental health history, physician contact information, and immunization record (you may need to obtain this from your child's pediatrician). It is important that you and your physician provide complete information regarding any physical condition or recent illness that may require our attention while your camper is at camp.

Our camp has a well-equipped Health Office with a Health Officer trained in emergency First Aid and CPR techniques. In addition, all Camp Ketcha staff are trained and certified in First Aid and CPR.

If your child is ill, please do not send them to camp. If your child becomes ill while at camp, you will be contacted to pick them up. If a camper has a fever of 100.0 degrees or more, they must stay home for 24 hours or until fever-free for 24 hours WITHOUT medication.

Campers with fever, cough, shortness of breath, headache, muscle ache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, abdominal pain, vomiting, and/ or diarrhea must go home or stay home for 24 hours or until free of symptoms for 24 hours WITHOUT medication.

In case of injury, the Camp Ketcha staff and/or Health Officer will take necessary measures to ensure proper emergency care, which may include: treatment by staff for minor injuries, phoning you as the parent for your instructions, calling local emergency care providers, or transporting the camper to a doctor or emergency care facility when needed.

You will be notified as soon as possible regarding any communicable diseases affecting children in the program. We report outbreaks of diseases to local health authorities. Children absent due to contagious diseases can return to Camp Ketcha when accompanied by a signed physician's statement indicating they are no longer contagious. Children absent due to lice may not return until there is no sign of lice or eggs. The child will be inspected for lice by Camp Ketcha staff before they can return to the program.

It is very important that you provide us with complete emergency contact information (other than yourself). In the case of any injury that requires medical attention, we make every attempt to contact you before treatment. In the event you cannot be reached, we will have your written authorization on file to treat an injury.

Immunizations
At Ketcha Outdoors, we do require that all children be vaccinated following the Maine DOE vaccination schedule. Up-to-date records of these immunizations are required before starting care at Ketcha Outdoors. Required immunizations can be found here: (Copy link and place in your browser.)
https://www.maine.gov/doe/sites/maine.gov.doe/files/inline-files/Immunization%20Requirements%20for%20Schools.2_2023.pdf

Medical Exemptions
The following are medical contraindications for which medical exemptions may be certified by a physician for immunizations.

Pertussis vaccine: 1) fever greater than or equal to 40.5 C (105 F); collapse or shocklike state (hypotonic-hyporesponsive episode), or persistent, inconsolable crying lasting three or more hours within 48 hours of receiving a prior dose of pertussis vaccine; 2) seizures occurring within 3 days of receiving a prior dose of pertussis vaccine; 3) encephalopathy within 7 days of administration of a previous dose of pertussis vaccine; 4) anaphylactic reaction to pertussis vaccine or a vaccine constituent; or 5) the student has reached the seventh birthday.

*Diphtheria or tetanus toxoid*s: 1) anaphylactic reaction to diphtheria or tetanus toxoids or a toxoid constituent.

Measles or mumps vaccine: 1) pregnancy; 2) known altered immunodeficiency (hematologic and solid tumors; congenital immunodeficiency; and long-term immunosuppressive therapy); 3) anaphylactic reactions to egg ingestion or to neomycin; 4) anaphylactic reaction to measles or mumps vaccine or a vaccine constituent.

Health and Safety Continued...

Rubella vaccine: 1) pregnancy; 2) known altered immunodeficiency (hematologic and solid tumors; congenital immunodeficiency; and long-term immunosuppressive therapy); 3) anaphylactic reactions to neomycin; 4) anaphylactic reaction to rubella vaccine or a vaccine constituent.

Inactivated polio vaccine: 1) anaphylactic reactions to neomycin or streptomycin; 2) anaphylactic reaction to polio vaccine or a vaccine constituent.

Varicella: 1) pregnancy; 2) immunosuppression; 3) anaphylactic reaction to a vaccine component; 4) recent recipient of antibody-containing blood product."

Medications
ALL medications (prescriptions and non-prescriptions) must be brought to camp in original containers, and an Authorization to Dispense Medication Form (on our website) must be filled out and accompany the medication. Parents/Guardians must deliver prescriptions in person to Camp Ketcha health office staff at drop-off or arrange a time with the Camp Nurse or Camp Director prior to the first day of camp. You may not send any medications in a camper's backpack.

In Case of Emergency or Illness - while at camp
In the event of a medical emergency that cannot be treated at camp, we will contact 911, and then we will contact you immediately. For a medical concern that does not require emergency services, you will be contacted first. A child with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher, vomiting, suffering from diarrhea or any other illness symptoms will be sent home for the day and may not return for 24 hours. We ask that you do not bring your child to camp with these or any other symptoms of illness.

We seek the counsel of parents whenever a camper is ill, abnormally homesick, or whenever something extraordinary occurs; please do not be alarmed if you receive a call from us. Be sure to indicate on the Registration form and Health History form how we may reach you. Please provide an emergency contact person and phone number. The emergency contact person needs to be someone other than Parent/Guardian 1 or Parent/Guardian 2. We will make every effort to contact you first in an emergency.

Visitors
Visitors are not permitted during the camp day unless approved ahead of time. Appointments should be made with the office staff if there is a need to meet with a staff member or child at Camp Ketcha. Our staff is trained to approach anyone unfamiliar and connect them with the Camp Director or other main building staff members.

While we encourage visitors with dogs on leashes during the offseason during our off hours, we do not allow dogs on the property during summer camp hours from 7:30 AM-6:00 PM. Please be mindful that many campers are not comfortable around dogs. We want all campers to feel safe at Camp Ketcha so please leave your pet in the car at pick up or drop off.

Daily Personal Items

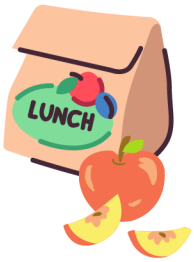
What to Wear to Camp Ketcha

- Weather Appropriate Clothes- This may include a hat to protect from the sun, layers, and rain gear.
- Closed toe sandals or sneakers- This is for your child's safety while at camp. Your camper will be unable to participate in many of our program areas without the proper footwear.
  (they will have to sit out and watch other children participate ☹)
- All items (clothing, water bottles, backpacks, etc) must be labeled with camper's name

Sweatshirt or jacket (we do have a nice ocean breeze).

Rain coat and rain boots on rainy days.

Water Bottle labeled with your child's name *if a camper does not have a water bottle they will be provided a Camp Ketcha bottle at the cost of $3. It is crucial that all campers are hydrated while participating actively throughout the day.



LUNCH & 2 HEARTY SNACKS in an insulated lunch box with ice packs each day. Please pack any utensils needed. Camp Ketcha does not have refrigeration, a microwave or stove available for lunches. We also have a carry-in/carry-out policy for waste.

Backpack to store belongings.

Swimsuit and beach towel, *rash guard or swim shirt highly recommended* (Plastic bag to store it)

Sunscreen labeled with your camper's name. ***Campers should arrive at camp with the first application already on.***

Bug Repellent, preferably lotion labeled with your camper's name.

Extra Change of Clothes! A camper should bring a change of clothes just in case they get dirty, wet, or messy during activities like gardening, animal care, or art.

Daily Personal Items Continued ...

The following items are not permitted at Camp Ketcha:

1) Cell phones, cellular-enabled smart watches, video games, or any other electronic device
2) Knives, sharp objects, or weapons of any kind
3) Drugs, tobacco, or alcohol
4) Fireworks/sparklers
5) Lighters or matches
6) Pets or animals of any kind
7) Trading cards, including Pokémon, sports cards, magic cards, etc.
8) Personal sports equipment, unless required during a specialty camp.
9) Vehicles

Articles brought to camp are the responsibility of the camper. CAMP KETCHA IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST OR STOLEN ARTICLES, including clothing, trading cards, and personal sports equipment brought to camp. Please leave valuables at home. Please note that Camp Ketcha does not allow drugs or alcohol of any sort on the facility during camp sessions.

Lost and Found
The camp experience is an opportunity for children to learn responsibility for their personal belongings. Please discuss with your child prior to attending camp the importance of caring for and keeping track of their personal belongings. **Label all clothing and equipment with the camper's full name.** Any unclaimed items left behind will be held for a period of two weeks, after which they will be donated to a local charity.

Throughout camp sessions Lost and Found will be located at the main building. If what you are looking for is not in the lost and found please contact the main office. Camp Ketcha is not responsible for lost or damaged articles. We make every effort to get clothing back to children prior to leaving camp each day. Oftentimes if something is missing it will get turned in the following day.

Behavior Expectations

Behavior & Discipline

Our programs follow a 5-Finger Contract that is to stay safe (pinky), respect others and the environment (ring), be kind (middle), lead by example (pointer), and have fun (thumb). These are gone over daily as a way to set expectations for program participants. These guidelines are a positive support approach to help campers with skill-building for self-control and self-advocacy. We strive to create a supportive, nurturing, and joyful environment where everyone shares a sense of belonging and acceptance. Our goals are to support confidence and self-awareness and to build social skills.

Ketcha Outdoors views discipline as the positive use of guidance and language that will teach children the appropriate responses to sometimes challenging situations. We believe that discipline is not punishment, but using these experiences to teach, guide, and redirect children with the purpose of raising responsible, resilient, and confident children who will grow up to care for themselves and others.

We strive to create an open, trusting relationship with parents/guardians that welcomes communication between parents/guardians and staff regarding their child's experiences at Ketcha Outdoors. If a child's behavior is interfering negatively with the functioning of the program or the safety of others, we will notify the parent or guardian to set up a meeting with the director and the appropriate head counselor. Staff will work cooperatively with the family to develop and implement strategies to provide extra support by creating a behavior plan.

If it is decided that Ketcha Outdoors cannot reasonably accommodate the child's support needs, the family may be asked to withdraw the child from the program. Camp Ketcha's philosophy is to help each child develop respect for oneself, others, and the environment, and our goal is to help all children who attend Camp Ketcha to be successful in our program. Camp Ketcha program supervisors reserve the right to suspend and/or dismiss the child from the program without reimbursement for violent or inappropriate behavior that causes risk to the camper, others, or the environment.

Discipline Policy

In the event of negative or unsafe behavior, we follow a progressive discipline approach designed to provide learning opportunities and maintain safety. These steps include:

1. **Redirection and Reflection:** Counselors will guide campers to reflect on their behavior and redirect them to safe, more positive actions. Counselors may ask campers to take a break or ask a supervisor to come speak to the camper.
2. **Removal and Intervention:** If behavior persists, the camper may be removed from the group to speak with leadership staff or the camper support specialist, either on the spot or at the office. This allows the camper to reset before rejoining activities.
3. **Parent/Guardian Involvement:** If additional support is needed, we will contact the camper's family to collaborate on strategies and provide input on the next steps to build a behavior plan. We will share the situation that took place and aim to work collaboratively to ensure the behavior is addressed.
4. **Reset Opportunity:** In some situations, we will ask for the camper to have an early dismissal or a "home day" to reset, which gives our team time to create support for the camper to return to camp successfully
5. **Dismissal:** For repeated or serious infractions, the leadership team may determine that it is time to transition out of our program. Serious infractions include but are not limited to violence or threats to others, continued elopement, or bullying/harassment.

NO REFUNDS will be made for campers suspended because of discipline problems.

Behavior Expectations Continued...

Essential Eligibility Criteria

Camp Ketcha takes the health and safety of our community very seriously. This includes the physical and emotional safety of our campers and our staff. Camp is a magical place where campers have the opportunity to grow, meet new and different people, experience challenges, and gain a sense of community. To help you identify if your child is ready for Camp Ketcha, please evaluate the following criteria prior to registration.

What does camp readiness look like?

- Campers can use established coping mechanisms following an event that causes frustration, sadness, anger, or other difficult emotions.
- Campers can ask for help and communicate their basic needs.
- Due to the nature of our program, campers go between program areas throughout the day. Campers can navigate transitions and get from location to location throughout the day.
- Campers can stay with their group throughout the camp day.
- Campers are able to independently navigate hills, uneven trails, and rough terrain.
- Campers can follow verbal directions.
- Campers can manage their basic personal hygiene independently, which includes toileting, hand washing, and changing in and out of a bathing suit.
- Campers can contribute to a safe camp community.
- Campers must be able to function in a group setting in a positive and cooperative manner that displays tolerance and respect for self and others.
- Campers can stay away from technology and electronic devices for the full duration of the camp day.
- Campers can manage the sensory stimulation of a frequently large, loud, and energetic group environment.
- Campers can demonstrate age-appropriate social and emotional skills in managing personal boundaries, relationships, communication, stress, and conflict.

What support can our staff typically provide?

- Staff are able to help campers talk through difficult moments and provide peaceful conflict resolution as needed.
- Staff can provide age-appropriate support and coaching with basic needs such as changing, toileting, and hand washing.
- Staff can support campers through transitions with visual schedules, reminders, and positive incentives.

What support can we not safely provide?

- Extensive behavioral support that requires 1:1 support of a camper. **Please note that if your child receives 1:1 support at school, they will need 1:1 support at camp. Camp Ketcha does not provide 1:1 services, but we can accommodate them when provided by parents, the school, or a third-party service.* Parents/Guardians are not permitted to be a child's 1:1 support while at Camp.*
- We are not able to accommodate medical issues requiring treatment beyond the scope of our health center and Camp Nurse, as outlined in our Standing Orders prescribed by our Camp Doctor.

If you are unsure about whether your child meets the Essential Eligibility Criteria, please contact us to discuss their needs/interests and possible accommodations to support them. We would love to learn about your child and how we may be able to provide a healthy and safe camp experience. Our camp may be able to accommodate a camper if it does not significantly alter the fundamental nature of the camp experience, jeopardize the health and safety of the camper or other campers/staff/volunteers, or place an undue administrative or financial burden on the camp. If Camp Ketcha ends up not being a good fit for your child, then we are happy to help connect you with another camp better suited to their needs and interests.

Camp Staff & Group Ratios

Camper groups have ratios based on age and in compliance with the State of Maine day camp ratios and the American Camp Association. The ratios are as follows:

- Rising grades pre-K to 2nd grade (minimum age 4) - 1:5
- Rising grades 3rd to 4th - 1:6
- Rising grades 5th to 8th - 1:8

Exceptions to the ratios occur during Early & Late care during the first hour and last hour of care.

Staff

Our staff are hired for their enthusiasm, creativity, and supervision skills after a thorough background check. We provide all staff with thorough and intensive training including child development, child abuse & neglect prevention, emergency procedures, risk management, water safety, and much more. Staff are First Aid and CPR certified and all waterfront staff have lifeguard certifications. 80% of our staff are over the age of 18, junior counselors are aged 16 & 17, and are always under the supervision of a Senior Counselor. Junior Counselors, ages 16-17 work only with campers up to age 10. Camp Ketcha does not hire counselors at the age of 15 unless they have successfully completed our CIT program and have been invited to apply early.

Rainy Days/Inclement Weather

Camp Ketcha will continue to run our regularly scheduled camp programming on rainy days in our designated rainy-day spaces for each group and try to stay outside as much as possible. Raincoats, warm/dry layers, and extra clothes should be sent with your child, as we try to be outside in the rain as much as possible. Camp Ketcha does not offer refunds of any amount for rainy days or inclement weather.

Camp Ketcha Swim Program

Swimming

- All campers will be scheduled for one swim period each day while they are at camp (weather permitting). Exception: Specialty campers may miss swimming because of full-day field trips.
- Campers will swim in our pool or our pond.
- Our pool is 3ft in the shallow end and 9ft in the deep end.
- The pond is separated into two areas: the shallow end used for our youngest campers, with a maximum depth of 4ft, and the deep end of the pond, which includes a shallow end and a deep end with a swim dock.
- All campers will participate in a Swim Evaluation on Monday or their first day of camp so that our staff can determine where each child is safe to swim. If campers choose not to swim test on Monday, they are not guaranteed to swim that week, or will automatically become a purple/red if time does not allow for extra swim tests.
- Swim skills sessions will be provided twice a week for cottontails through chipmunks (Grades Pre-K to 4th). Swim skills are 15-20 minute mini skill practice sessions by swim level. We do not teach full American Red Cross swim lessons.
- Campers may retest throughout the Summer to update their swim level. Please speak to the Camp Director about scheduling a new swim test.
- All lifeguards are certified and trained.
- We follow the Red Cross and Licensing ratio of 1:20 for lifeguards to swimmers. This ratio does not include camp counselors who are also required to swim with your campers or supervise from the side.
- Campers who test into the Purple or Red swim level will need a flotation device to enter the water. Camp Ketcha has these available for use, but campers are welcome to bring their own. Flotation devices must have a coast guard approved seal and be in good condition.

Camp Ketcha Swim Program

Swim Levels:

PURPLE: *Level 1: Beginning Swimmer - Life Jacket Required*

- The camper has difficulty swimming across the width of the pool without touching the bottom.
- The camper cannot touch the bottom of the shallow end of the pool.

RED: *Level 2: Beginning Swimmer - Life jacket required*

- The camper has difficulty swimming across the width of the pool without touching the bottom/edge of the pool and/or recovering from a floating position.

YELLOW: *Level 3: Shallow Water Competency*

- The camper can swim across the width of the pool and back (may stop after the first length before swimming back)
- The Camper is able to regain a standing position from back and front floating (testing guard may assist)

GREEN: *Level 4: Deep Water Competency*

- The camper is able to swim across the width of the pool without stopping or resting.
- The camper is able to regain a standing position from the back and front floating.
- The camper demonstrates the ability to tread water in the deep end of the pool.
- The camper is able to jump into water over their head, return to the surface, and swim to the ladder.

Program Information

Sample Day Camp Schedule

**** This schedule is for sample purposes only. It depicts the time blocks for a typical day. The Schedule is subject to change at the director's discretion.

7:30-9:00	**Early Care**
9:00-9:20	**Sign in and opening circle**
9:20-10:20	**Program block #1**
10:20-10:40	**AM Snack**
10:40-11:40	**Program block #2**
11:40-12:10	**Lunch**
12:10-1:10	**Program block #3**
1:10-2:10	**Program block #4**
2:10-2:30	**PM Snack**
2:30-3:30	**Program block #5**
3:30-4:00	**Closing circle and check out**
4:00-6:00 (5:00 pm Fridays)	**Late Care**

Group Requests

You may request, in writing, that your child be placed with a friend. This request will not be fulfilled until the other family requests this match-up as well. Please note that it is not always possible to accommodate group requests, and it is difficult to manage last-minute or multi-friend requests. Requests must be emailed to summercamp@ketchaoutdoors.org at least one month before the start of the session.

Surveys

Your valuable feedback helps us grow! Program surveys will be sent out to parents/guardians at the end of the summer. We appreciate your cooperation in filling these out, as they help us plan and design our program to better meet the needs and desires of our campers and their families. We value your input and welcome feedback sent to **summercamp@ketchaoutdoors.org** at any time.

Tipping

As an accredited member of the American Camp Association, tipping is not permitted at Camp Ketcha. Please share your appreciation in person or send a note to those people you wish to thank. Some parents choose to contribute to the Scholarship Fund, Pie in the Face Contest, or Annual Campaign as a way of expressing extra thanks. We always encourage positive reviews on Google and other online platforms as well.

Financial Policies & Additional Weeks

Additional Weeks and Services

You may register for additional weeks of camp, bus transportation, Early and Late Care, and other programs at any time, provided space is available. Check your weekly Camp Ketcha Newsletter for program openings or newly added programs. All additional weeks & services, and cancellations must be in writing. Please email **registration@ketchaoutdoors.org** to discuss changes in enrollment. Payment will be due according to our payment schedule when adding camp programs.

Summer Payment Information

It is the goal of Camp Ketcha, as a non-profit organization, to offer high-quality programs at a reasonable cost. The following policies help us to properly allocate staff and resources and ensure that our prices remain as low as possible.

DEPOSIT: A $50 deposit per week and a yearly registration fee of $25 must accompany your registration. This deposit is applied to the total camp tuition. Deposits and registration fees are not refundable under any circumstances.

BALANCE OF PAYMENT: The balance of all camp fees is due by auto-payments according to the following schedule.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE:

Payment will be due in installments chosen by you at the time of registration (up to 5). Installments will be charged on the 1st of the month by Autopayment, either with a credit/debit card or ACH. You may also choose to pay in full or log in anytime to make an unscheduled payment to your account.

If we do not receive full payment for camp sessions on time, your child's spot may be given away, and they will not be allowed to attend Camp Ketcha until a payment is received. A $25 late fee per camper will be charged if your automatic payments are declined and if they are not corrected within two business days.

Financial Policies & Additional Weeks Continued...

Refund/Cancellation Policy

Any deviations from our refund and cancellation policy will be up to the discretion of our Executive Director and Director of Operations. ***All cancellations must be in writing.***

If you cancel in writing by April 14th:	Will receive a refund minus the $25 annual registration fee and a $50 cancellation fee per camper/per week ($75 total).
If you cancel in writing between April 15th and May 14th:	Will receive a refund minus the $25 annual registration fee, your deposit of $50 per camper/per week, and an additional $50 cancellation fee per camper/per week ($125 total)
If you cancel in writing after May 15th:	No refund or credits will be given. This includes "no-shows" who do not communicate cancelling prior to the start of their camp week, and for campers who are asked to leave for behavioral reasons.
Medical Emergency Cancellation for severe medical issues:	A doctor's note must be sent to us within one week of you notifying us in writing to request the cancellation. The Ketcha Outdoors admin team will review your request and if approved you will receive a refund of what you have paid minus the $25 annual registration fee, your nonrefundable deposit of $50 per week and a $50 late cancellation fee.
Cancellation due to school schedules being pushed back (due to snowdays, school closures, etc):	No refund will be given in the event that the school schedule changes between registration and the start of camp. Please keep yourself informed on your district/school current plan for snow days and their anticipated last day of school.

Financial Policies & Additional Weeks Continued...

Behavioral Dismissal Policy
Camper fees are non-refundable if a camper is removed for disciplinary reasons. Physical violence or bullying toward another camper or staff member will result in immediate dismissal from the camp program, and you will not be refunded for the current week. Additional weeks will be refunded minus a $50 non-refundable deposit per week and a $50 late cancellation fee.
Termination of Service
We reserve the right to terminate service for the following reasons:

- Failure to pay tuition or complete the required forms and documentation on time
- Lack of parental cooperation in regards to behavior and safety concerns
- Failure of the child to adjust to the camp after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Physical abuse or verbal threats, or harassment by a parent/guardian towards Ketcha staff
- Inability to meet the needs of the child
- Failure to comply with the polices set forth in the Summer Camp Parent Handbook
- If a child's behavior threatens the well-being of anyone at our facility
- Possession or use of weapons on the premises
- If a situation arises where parental expectations cannot reasonably be met by Ketcha Outdoors staff after a period of negotiation.
- Any other reason as deemed necessary by the Ketcha Outdoors leadership staff

TERMINATION NOTIFICATION: Management or the Nominated Supervisor will advise families in writing that their child's enrollment will be terminated following all attempts to rectify any non-compliance.

Internet Contact Policy

Off-Season Camper-Staff Contact
At Camp Ketcha, our pledge is to put your children in the company of the most trustworthy and appropriate young adults we can hire. The effort we put into screening and selecting our staff is part of that pledge.

However, we do not recommend them as babysitters, nannies, or child companions outside of camp. Our staff works with your child in the context of a visible, well-scrutinized community that has many built-in checks and balances. Counselors are supervised by senior staff and are guided by clear, firm policies regarding behavior. Their actions are also visible to a community full of co-workers and campers. In general, we discourage our staff from having contact with your children after camp since we cannot supervise it. We hire our staff for the camp season.

We do not take responsibility for their behavior off-season. We also recognize that campers and counselors develop close, trusting relationships with one another at camp and that these relationships are healthy, wholesome, and beneficial to campers and staff alike. We are aware, however, that many campers will naturally want to keep in touch with their favorite counselors after camp.

Therefore, our official policy is to forbid the exchange of contact information of any kind between campers and our staff, whether paid or volunteer. However, we know campers can "find" their counselors if they persist. Our recommendation is for you as parents to be aware of your child's online activities and supervise them as you would any other aspect of their life in your home. Likewise, if you, as a parent or legal guardian, wish your child to exchange such information with a camp staff member, that is, of course, your right. However, by doing so, you understand you accept full responsibility for overseeing whatever contact occurs as a result.

Quick Facts

Camp runs for 10 weeks (with a shortened 11th week) in 2026
June 15th-August 26th, 2026 (no camp on July 3rd)

Camp Hours: 9 am-4 pm. Monday through Friday
Early care begins at 7:30 am, and late care ends at
6:00 pm Monday - Thursday and 5:00 pm on Friday.

(207) 883-8977

summercamp@ketchaoutdoors.org

336 Black Point Road

Scarborough, Maine 04074

www.ketchaoutdoors.com

Directions:
From I-95 South
Take I-95 North to Exit 42, Route 1 Scarborough
Go straight through the light to Haigis Parkway
Take a left onto Route 1
Drive 1.3 miles; turn right onto Route 207 Black Point Road
Drive 2.8 miles, Camp Ketcha is on the left right before Route 77

From I-295 North
I-295 South, take Exit 2 Scarborough/Old Orchard Beach
Drive 2.1 miles on Scarborough Connector, merge onto Route 1
Drive 1.1 miles; turn left onto Route 207 Black Point Road
Drive 2.8 miles, Camp Ketcha is on the left right before Route 7

KETCHA OUTDOORS