



Children & Youth



Club J Parent Admission Agreement & Handbook 2026-2027

Orange County's finest after school care and enrichment program



Merage Jewish Community
Center of Orange County

1 Federation Way
Irvine, CA 92603

949-435-3404
jccoc.org

Table of Contents

About Club J	3-4
mission, goals, philosophy, schedule, late pick up policy, school's out	
Club J fees and payment policies	5-6
Fees and proration's, Club J and Enrichment Only participants, modification and termination policies, refund policy	
2026-27 Calendar	7-8
Special schedules, holidays and School's Out Days, camps	
General Information	9-11
Transportation, school pickups, sign-in/out, absences, snack, staff, behavior management, Parental and children's rights, guardian documents, personal possessions	
Health and safety.....	12-13
Medications, illnesses, guide to when to return from illness	
Emergency Procedures.....	14-15
Parent Handbook Confirmation*.....	16
*This signed confirmation is required for enrollment in Club J	

Abbreviations used throughout this handbook:

IUSD	Irvine Unified School District
NMUSD	Newport Mesa Unified School District
TR	Turtle Rock Elementary
BC	Bonita Canyon Elementary
TVT	Tarbut V'Torah Jewish Day School
VV	Vista Verde Elementary
NCE	Newport Coast Elementary
A	Anderson Elementary
L	Lincoln Elementary

About Club J

Club J mission

Club J's mission is to provide a quality program that strives to promote a multitude of Jewish values as well as the development of each child's physical, emotional, and social growth. Club J gives the opportunity to enrich and enhance the lives of children within our community and promotes friendships that last a lifetime.

Our commitment is to the individual child: helping the child in the process of growing up and participating in group situations, in relating to his/her peers, and in broadening his/her range of interest and experience to different and new areas.

Club J Goals

- ★ Provide a caring, nurturing, and safe environment where every child feels welcome.
- ★ Foster confidence and promote positive self-esteem.
- ★ Encourage children to explore new interests and discover new talents.
- ★ Offer engaging, age-appropriate activities and experiences.
- ★ Create opportunities for fun, friendship, and lasting memories.
- ★ Promote teamwork, respect, good sportsmanship, and positive social interactions.

Club J Philosophy

We believe that the success of an after-school program is measured primarily by the levels of self-esteem and the sense of belonging demonstrated by each child. Attainment of physical skills and creation of craft projects are important secondary priorities.

At our program, we believe that the heart of a great after-school experience is the positive relationship between the counselors and every child. Our counselors strive to create a welcoming, supportive environment where children feel safe, valued, and encouraged to grow. By building meaningful connections, they help foster each child's confidence, self-esteem, and sense of belonging. To ensure high-quality care and leadership, all of our counselors are either college graduates or are currently pursuing a college degree and participate in multiple inservice training days throughout the school year..

Parents are a child's first and most important "counselors" and an ongoing communication between after school and home is critical to the success of the after-school program.

Program content is age appropriate, reflecting the general skills and interests of individual age groups. Program variety and opportunities for free choice should increase as children move to higher grade levels in our program.

Age of Children

Club J offers quality after school care for children in Kindergarten through 6th grade.

Regular schedule

Club J is available on all school days (except for important Jewish holidays when the JCC is closed.)

- Choose from a two, three, four or five day program offered Monday – Friday
 - Hours
 - ◆ Monday–Thursday: Programming ends at 5:45 pm. Courtesy Pickup until 6:00 p.m.
 - ◆ Friday: Programming ends at 4:45 pm. Courtesy Pickup until 5:00 p.m.
 - ◆ **If an emergency prevents you from picking up your child, please call the front desk at (949) 435-3400 and request that a message be given to the Club J staff.**
- Enrichment classes are offered Monday – Thursday from 4:00–4:45 p.m. and from 5:00– 5:45 p.m.
- On Fridays we offer Fun Friday/Shabbat activities

Late Pick Up Policy

We understand that unexpected situations may occasionally cause delays. If you anticipate being late, please notify the program as soon as possible. A **\$25 late fee** will be charged for any child picked up after 6:00 p.m. The late fee will **increase by \$1 for each additional minute** after 6:00 p.m. (for example, 6:01 p.m. = \$26, 6:05 p.m. = \$30, and 6:10 p.m. = \$35).

Repeated late pick-ups disrupt our program and require additional staffing beyond scheduled hours. For this reason, families who demonstrate a pattern of repeated late pick-ups will have their child's enrollment reviewed. We reserve the right to reevaluate continued participation in the after-school program if late pick-ups become a recurring concern.

Our goal is to work together with families to ensure a safe and positive experience for all children while maintaining appropriate staffing and program operations.

School's Out days

When our local schools are closed, we offer schools out programs or holiday camps from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. On School's out days children participate in a variety of activities at the JCC including swimming, sports, arts, cooking and much more. Pre-registration is required; a minimum of 15 participants required to run programming.

Monthly rates for Club J program

Club J fees are set for the entire school year and are prorated for the months listed below. Proration percentages are based on the number of weeks (5 days or more) within a given month and how many weeks each school has off. Questions regarding proration should be directed to the finance department at the JCC.

School proration's by month

<u>Month</u>	<u>Proration</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Proration</u>
August	60% All Schools	January	No Prorate
September	No Prorate	February	25% NMUSD
October	20% VV	March	20% VV
November	No Prorate	April	50% TVT
December	25% All Schools	May	No Prorate
		June	95% All Schools

Types of participants in Club J

- **Club J participants:** If your child is a Club J participant, your child comes to Club J a minimum of 2 days per week. Being a Club J participant either allows your child to be picked up from a school that we provide transportation/pick-up to or allows your child to be brought to the afterschool program at 3 p.m.
- **Enrichment only participants:** Children who participate in enrichment only are brought to Club J by a parent, guardian, or other authorized persons at 3:00 p.m. They are signed into Club J to take the class they have signed up for, and are to be signed out when the class ends.

Payment policies

- A one-time \$50 registration fee holds your child's spot in Club J's afterschool program
- Enrichment only participants will be charged in full upon receiving their application.
- Club J fees are charged automatically to a credit card on file the 1st of each month.
- Material Fees for certain enrichment classes are charged at the time of class submissions for the upcoming session.

- All students are allowed one change to their original registration of enrichment class selections. An administrative fee of \$25 will be charged for each additional change.
- If you drop Club J during the school year and start up again within the same school year, you will be charged a \$75 drop fee/child and re-enrollment.
- Full payment must accompany all registration for classes and programs.
- Fees may be paid in person or by mail.
- You may pay by check, VISA, American Express or Mastercard. Only members in good standing (current payments for the duration of the program) can register or receive members-only discounts.

Modification or termination conditions

If you wish to change your child's schedule a notification must be made in writing by the 15th of the month prior to the new schedule taking effect. No price adjustments can be made any time after the 1st of month for a schedule change.

If you wish to withdraw from the program, you must inform the JCC in writing by the 15th of the month for withdrawal for the following month.

Refund policy

There are NO refunds on Club J after school program fees, registration fees, or enrichment classes. The JCC reserves the right to cancel any class for insufficient registration.

Club J Holidays & Special Schedules

School Year 2026-2027

Holiday/Event	Day	Dates	Program
Club J Begins	Monday	8/24	Bus and Transportation Begin
Club J Enrichments	Monday	8/31	Enrichment Classes Begin
Labor Day	Monday	9/7	Children's Dept. CLOSED
Rosh Hashana	Friday	9/11	Children's Dept. CLOSED
Yom Kippur	Monday	9/21	Children's Dept. CLOSED
VV Fall Break	Mon-Fri	9/28-10/9	Fall Break Camp – VV
Staff Development	Monday	9/28	School's Out – TVT
Staff Development	Friday	10/9	School's Out – NCE
Parent Conferences	Friday	10/9	School's Out – TR
Columbus Day/Indigenous People's Day	Monday	10/13	School's Out – IUSD & VV
Fall Conferences	Tuesday	10/27	School's Out – BC
Parent Conferences	Friday	10/30	School's Out – TVT
Staff Development	Wednesday	11/4	School's Out – NMUSD
Veterans Day Observed	Wednesday	11/11	All School's Out
Thanksgiving Recess	Mon-Tues	11/23-11/24	School's Out – IUSD & VV
Thanksgiving Recess	Wednesday	11/25	All School's Out 3:30PM Camp Close
Thanksgiving	Thurs – Fri	11/26 – 11/27	Children's Dept. CLOSED
Winter Break Begins	Friday	12/18	Children's Dept. CLOSED

School Year 26-27 continued

Holiday/Event	Day	Dates	Program
Winter Camp	Mon - Thurs	12/21 - 12/24	12/24: 3:30pm Camp Close No Camp 12/25
Winter Camp	Mon - Thurs	12/28 -12/31	12/31: 3:30pm Camp Close No Camp 1/1
MLK Day	Monday	1/18	All School's Out
Staff Development	Friday	2/12	School's Out - TVT IUSD VV
Presidents Day	Monday	2/15	All School's Out
NMUSD Ski Week	Tues - Fri	2/16-2/19	Ski Week Camp - NMUSD
Parent Conferences	Friday	3/19	School's Out - TVT
Spring Break - IUSD VV	Mon - Fri	3/29 - 4/2	Spring Camp Week 1
Spring Break - NMUSD	Mon - Fri	4/5 - 4/9	Spring Camp Week 2
Spring Break - TVT	Mon - Wed	4/19 - 4/21	Spring Camp Week 3 4/21 1:00pm Camp Close
Passover	Wed-Fri	4/21-4/23	Children's Dept. CLOSED
Passover	Wed-Fri	4/28-4/30	Children's Dept. CLOSED
Memorial Day	Monday	5/31	Children's Dept CLOSED
Last Day of Club J	Thursday	6/2	Last Day Enrichments Last Day of Pickups

General Information

Pick-up/transportation

We are proud to provide programming and transportation convenient for students of Tarbut V'Torah, Newport Coast Elementary, Anderson Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, Turtle Rock Elementary, Bonita Canyon Elementary and Vista Verde Elementary. All Club J participants who are enrolled in a 4:00 p.m. class will be picked up at TVT and Vista Verde by the Club J counselors and walked to the JCC. Bus transportation is available from Newport Coast Elementary, Bonita Canyon Elementary and Turtle Rock Elementary at an additional cost. If your school is not listed and you are interested in transportation please contact Hilaria Duran (hilariad@jccoc.org) to see if transportation is possible.

Sign-In and Sign Out

All children brought to the JCC by the bus are checked in by the counselor on the bus. If a child does not show up for the bus the parent is called. **If a parent is call a \$10 finders fee will be charged.** When children are picked up from Vista Verde and Tarbut V'Torah the same protocol is followed. Children are then signed out by an authorized parent at the end of each day. Those children signed up for just enrichment classes are signed in by the parent and out by the parent at pick up time.

- **ID required:** Anyone wishing to pick up a child at Club J is required to show a photo ID. The name must match a pre-approved authorized pick up list provided by the child's parent or legal guardian in order for Club J staff to release the child.

Absences

In the case of anticipated absences such as vacations or unexpected absences due to illness, please contact Hilaria Duran by noon at (949) 435-3400 x 268 or hilariad@jccoc.org to ensure pick-up efficiency. **If a call or email is not logged and the bus driver/pick-up counselor has to search for your son/daughter a \$10 fee will be charged to your account.** Days cannot be made up or transferred due to illness or vacations.

Snacks

A Kosher snack is provided each day at 3:30 pm.

Example snack menu (items may vary):

Monday	Carrots and Celery with ranch dressing, Graham Crackers
Tuesday	Apples and Ritz crackers
Wednesday	Cheez-its and Oranges
Thursday	Pretzels and Edamame
Friday	Cereal and Raisins or Craisins

Discipline and behavior management

Our approach is centered on creating a safe environment where children not only feel supported but are also given the tools to grow socially and emotionally. With the guidance of their counselor, we view these situations as important teaching opportunities. We work closely with the children to help them build confidence, resilience, and strategies to navigate these interactions. Through repetition and consistent check-ins, children begin to recognize patterns, understand our responses, and develop their own response and skills that will serve them well beyond this immediate moment. While it may take some time, we've found that this approach leads to long-term growth for them to eventually navigate these instances on their own.

At Club J we train counselors to use the following methods of behavior management:

- We discuss rules during our training sessions.
- We compliment and praise appropriate behavior.
- We give a great deal of encouragement.
- We display positive behavior ourselves.
- We use distraction, suggestions or redirection ("Have you tried...?")
- We use "When-then..." statements: "When we finish our projects, then..." This is far more effective than using "If you don't...then we can't".
- We problem-solve with children.
- We remove children from a problem area ("It appears that you're having trouble in this area right now—please join me [over here], and you can come back later".)
- We give choices. ("Here are your choices: You may share the ball or sit and watch as others play - it's your decision.")

No Tolerance Policy: Our program follows a no tolerance policy for behavioral and conduct issues. Further participation will be reviewed and the JCC reserves the right to dismiss the student if concerns cannot be resolved.

Grounds for termination

At Club J, we turn every situation into a positive learning experience for all children. If we believe Club J is not the right fit for a child we will have a parent meeting and discuss other options for where the child may succeed.

Parent Conferences and Concerns: Conferences can be arranged by emailing Marianne Barth at marianneb@jccoc.org, Audra Martin at audram@jccoc.org, or Estella Calito at estellac@jccoc.org

Parental and Children's Rights

Parents are expected to observe an acceptable code of conduct in and around the Club J area. The following behaviors are not acceptable:

- Physical or verbal punishment of the children
- Physical or verbal punishment of other children
- Physical or verbal punishment of staff
- Threatening staff, other parents or other children
- Swearing, cursing, threatening/obscene gestures
- Not following policies designed to protect the safety and security of everyone at the JCC

Guardian Documents

Club J requires copies of all appropriate legal documents relating to custody matters or any other matters that deal with your child. Written authorization is required to release your child to designated adults. Please notify us, in writing, of any changes to custody during your child's enrollment at Club J or to any of the forms which you filled out for Club J. If you have any questions regarding Club J's custody and guardian arrangements, please contact the Director or Assistant Director.

Responsibility for Personal Possessions

Personal possessions are not covered by the JCC insurance and are not the responsibility of Club J or its staff. Therefore, we urge you not to allow your child to bring valuables to Club J (cell phones, tablets, iPods, etc).

In addition, please do not allow your child to bring toys, radios, squirt guns or iPods to the JCC unless these are part of a pre-planned activity.

Please label all clothing that comes to the JCC.

Lost and Found

Our counselors try to make sure every child keeps track of his or her belongings, but inevitably, items are lost. Unclaimed/unlabeled articles are placed on the lost and found rack, and parents are invited to come and claim their belongings at the pick up table.

Several times during the school year, unclaimed items will be donated to a charitable organization. We strongly advise that all items be clearly labeled with the child's name so that found items may be returned to the appropriate individual.

Health and Safety

Medical requirements

The primary obligation and responsibility of our after school program is to provide the safest conditions possible for all of our children. No child will be permitted to attend after school without a complete registration form including a signed authorization for medical treatment. Children arriving at the JCC without a signed form on file will have their parents called to come pick them up.

Medication

If it is necessary for a child to take medication during after school hours, we require a note from the doctor indicating instructions for dosage, RX number, doctor's name and phone, date of expiration. The medication must be in the original container.

Non-prescription medication will not be allowed without written permission by the parent.

Illness

Please keep your child at home when he/she is unable to participate in activities including outdoor play due to illness, fever, diarrhea or vomiting, or generally feeling "not quite right." Children developing an illness during the course of the afternoon will be isolated from other children until a parent or authorized person can come and pick up the child. We request that you pick up your child within a one hour period, as there is no staff to care specifically for sick children. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before they may return to Club J.

Parents will be informed when children have been exposed to a communicable disease while participating in after school activities.

If a child has been sent home from school due to illness, your child will not be able to be dropped off at Club J.

If a child has been sent home or has been absent one or more days, the parent may expect a call from the staff to inquire about the nature of the child's illness or other reasons for absence. Please notify Club J, in writing, if your child will be unable to normally participate in any activity because of health restrictions.

Communicable diseases

Please contact the director immediately if your child has contracted a communicable disease such as strep throat, impetigo, measles, German measles, or chickenpox. Please be prepared to give the following information:

- Incubation period and the date the child was last at the JCC.
- Doctor's recommendation for child and others who have been exposed to the child.

Common Illnesses

Below is a table of common illnesses that you are required to report to Club J administration. This is not an all-inclusive list, please ask your doctor if your child has an illness that is not listed below.

Illness	When to return to Club J
Chickenpox	When all of the blisters have dried into scabs, usually about six days after rash onset.
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye)	Twenty four hours after medical treatment begins.
COVID 19	Follow CDC guidelines and record data.
Diarrhea (infectious)	When diarrhea has stopped. For some infections, the child must also be treated with antibiotics before returning to Club J.
Diarrhea (uncontrolled)	Uncontrolled diarrhea is an increase in number of stools, compared with a child's normal pattern along with watery stools that cannot be contained by the diaper or use of toilet. A child may not return until uncontrolled diarrhea stops, or until a medical exam indicates that it is not a communicable disease.
Fever (axial temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher.	When the child has been fever-free for twenty four hours (without the aid of fever reducing medicine).
Impetigo	Twenty four hours after antibiotic treatment has begun.
Lice (head)	When the first treatment is complete and no eggs (nits) are present
Rash with or without fever or behavior change	When a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not that of a communicable disease.
Ringworm	Twenty four hours after treatment has begun and ringworms must be covered with bandages.
Scabies	Twenty four hours after treatment has begun.
Streptococcal sore throat	Twenty four hours after antibiotic treatment has begun. Child must be fever-free for twenty four hours.
Vomiting – two or more episodes within 24 hours	Twenty four hours after vomiting has ceased.

Emergencies

Emergency Reporting

All minor accidents are reported in writing on an "Ouch Report" that will be left in your child's backpack. Minor accidents such as cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water; bruises and bumps will also be treated with ice.

Injuries of a serious nature such as to head, neck or back, suspected sprains, and broken bones will generate an immediate call to parents or, if the injury appears quite serious or questionable, a call to 911 will occur first. Parents are responsible for fees that occur when 911 is activated.

In order for us to reach you quickly, it is imperative that your emergency contact information be kept accurate and current. Regardless of our ability to contact you in an emergency, we will act to obtain the care required by your child.

Medical and Dental Emergencies

In the event of a medical or dental emergency, our first response is to secure care for the child.

Parents will be called and informed immediately in the case of a medical emergency. You will be requested to pick up your child at the JCC or to meet your child and a staff member at a designated treatment center.

JCC staff will fill out all proper reporting forms which will be maintained in the director's office and a follow up call will be made to check in on the child.

Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

We as Californians are aware of the ever-present possibility of an earthquake or other emergencies occurring and creating dangerous conditions. The safety and welfare of our students is of the utmost concern to us.

Public safety officials have stated that the school environment provides the safest possible protection during a time of general emergency. In the event of a natural disaster or a similar emergency, a written disaster and emergency preparedness plan is maintained in each classroom and the office, which specifically outlines a course of action for the following areas:

- Designation of administrative authority and faculty assignments
- Contingency plans for fires, floods, and earthquakes
- Means of emergency exit
- Emergency transportation arrangements
- Means of contacting local agencies, including the Fire Department, Law Enforcement agencies, Civil Defense, and any other designated adults
- Relocation sites equipped with necessary survival supplies to last at least 72 hours.

If an emergency occurs during the day, you may be asked to pick up your child should the school close early. Please be sure you or your designee is available by phone at all time

Emergency Protocols

Pool emergency

In case of a pool emergency, the lifeguard or other aquatic staff will blow one long whistle alerting counselors and staff to quickly evacuate the pool area. Once the group is out of sight of the pool, the counselor will begin a head count and wait to receive further instructions. If needed, a "Code Blue" medical emergency call will be made by aquatic staff.

Fire Alert

When the alarm goes off, children and staff will exit to the closest exit possible. Staff will take their role and report to their supervisor. No one re-enters the building until the all clear is sounded.

Search and rescue:

In the event a child is lost, the following procedure should be put into effect:

- Remain calm and contact the Director immediately.
- Decide whether the child has run-away or is lost – procedure may change.
- The Director will organize a search team of staff while counselors remain with other children.
- The Director will assign people to check all places in the building using walkie talkie for constant check in.
- If assumed that the child has gone off JCC property, one person will search by car.
- If child is not located, The Director will contact police and parents.
- Continue search.

Please sign Parent Handbook Confirmation (page 16) and return to Club J.
Thank you!



**The Merage Jewish Community Center of Orange County
Club J After-School Program
Parent Handbook Confirmation 2026-2027**

I, _____
parent of _____ (name of child),
acknowledge I have read and agree to abide by the policies and conditions
set forth in the parent handbook of the Club J at the Merage Jewish
Community Center.

Signature

Date

JCC children's program information:

Audra Martin, Children and Camp Director, (949) 435-3400 ext. 265, audram@jccoc.org
Marianne Barth, Children & Camp Assistant Director, ext. 261, marianneb@jccoc.org
Estella Calito, Children & Camp Assistant Director, ext. 328, estellac@jccoc.org
Hilaria Duran, Office Manager, (949) 435-3400 ext. 268, hilariad@jccoc.org

