



PARENT / STUDENT HANDBOOK

We are pleased to welcome your child to an exciting experience at Sly Park Environmental Education Center (Sly Park). Sly Park is an accredited outdoor school operated by the Sacramento County Office of Education located in the El Dorado National Forest.

Sly Park Environmental Education Center
5600 Sly Park Road
Pollock Pines, CA 95726
916-228-2485
www.scoe.net/slypark

Sacramento County Office of Education
PO Box 269003
Sacramento, CA 95826
916-228-2500
www.scoe.net



SLY PARK CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

The mission of Sly Park Conservation and Environmental Education Center is to provide a quality outdoor education experience, focused on appreciation and understanding of the natural environment, while developing an informed environmental conscience.

Sly Park began operations in 1970. We now serve over 7000 students per school year from 25 school districts within the greater Sacramento area.

THE SLY PARK PROGRAM

Sly Park is an outdoor science and environmental education program administered by the Sacramento County Office of Education. Sly Park offers week-long, residential outdoor science and environmental education programs for fifth and sixth graders, as well as day trips for fourth graders.

During their week at Sly Park, students will have the opportunity to learn about science and the environment through a variety of engaging standards-based lessons, hands-on activities, and hikes. Activities typically include the following:

- Hiking through Children’s Forest to learn about forest ecology and ecosystems
- Hiking to the Shelter Building area to learn about and practice basic survival skills
- Hiking to Park Creek to learn about riparian ecosystems and insects
- Visiting the Animal Room to learn about animal adaptations and characteristics and see some live animals
- Taking a virtual tour of the Solar System in the Star Lab Planetarium
- Visiting the Arts and Crafts room to silk screen a keepsake t-shirt
- Visiting the Native American Interpretive Center to learn about what life might have been like in the Sierras hundreds of years ago
- Navigating through the Geocache course
- Facing the challenge of ascending the Climbing Wall to ring the bell at the top
- Hiking to Jenkinson Lake (5-day weeks)
- Evening activities include: Teambuilding Games, Campfire Program, Carnival, Skit Night, and a Night Hike

An essential part of the Sly Park experience is the social growth that occurs throughout the week. In addition to the science curriculum, we focus on these additional concepts:

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| <u>Appreciation</u> | The natural environment is a valuable resource to be respected, enjoyed, and protected. |
| <u>Interrelationships</u> | All living things are interrelated and dependent on the environment and each other. |
| <u>Responsibility & Respect</u> | Students learn to build valuable 21 st century life skills such as meeting new people and getting along with others while cultivating positive self-esteem and self-confidence. Students learn to recognize that personal choices and wise decision-making will impact the environment now and for future generations. |

WHO'S WHO AT SLY PARK

The Sly Park staff includes credentialed teachers, office staff, cafeteria staff, maintenance staff, and administration. All Sly Park staff are fingerprinted and receive CPR training. Sly Park teachers have 1st Aid certification.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT VISITING

In order to maintain the safety and security of the students, **visitors are not allowed** at the Sly Park Environmental Education Center while student programs are in session. You are welcome to call us to arrange a tour of the facilities **before** your child's trip to Sly Park. If you are dropping off or picking up a student, please check in at the Sly Park administrative office first.

COMMUNICATION

Letters to and from our visiting students are encouraged, but we need your help to ensure they are delivered on time. We suggest you mail a letter to your child the day s/he leaves school, or even the week before his/her trip. Please include the following on the envelope:

Child's name and School
Sly Park Environmental Education Center
5600 Sly Park Rd.
Pollock Pines, CA 95726

Students are not allowed to bring or use cell phones while at Sly Park. Because students are very busy and Sly Park's phones are limited to school business, students may not use the office phone to call home. If you have a family emergency, please call the Sly Park office or your child's classroom teacher. Either a Sly Park staff member or your child's classroom teacher will call you in the event of an emergency involving your child.

STUDENT SUPERVISION

Teachers from the participating schools reside at Sly Park for the week in a separate cabin. Adult cabin leaders, chosen carefully by the participating schools, reside in the cabins with the students to ensure student safety and to uphold behavior expectations. Participating schools may bring high school students age 16-18 as cabin leaders. However, high school students can't make up more than half of the necessary cabin leaders. Cabin leaders are under the direct supervision of the visiting teachers and the Sly Park Director.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

We expect each student to act responsibly and considerately to ensure the safety and well-being of all students. When students arrive at Sly Park, behavior expectations and consequences for inappropriate behavior are clarified by the Sly Park Director. Behavioral issues are addressed by the Director on a case-by-case basis. Students may be sent home for fighting, student-to-student sexual harassment, threats or bullying, running away, or other safety concerns. Please review the behavior expectations with your child, found on the back of the yellow Student Registration Form. As the parent/guardian, you will be expected to pick up your child if your child is sent home from Sly Park for disciplinary reasons.

MEDICATION, ILLNESS, AND EMERGENCIES

All medication, prescription **and** non-prescription (over-the-counter), must have **both** parent and physician authorization to be administered. If your child regularly takes any prescription medication, or occasionally takes non-prescription medication, vitamins, supplements etc., send it with his/her school teacher and record this information on the Medication Authorization Form with the necessary signatures and detailed instructions. All medication, etc., must be sent in its original container.

The teacher accompanying your child's class to Sly Park is responsible for dispensing all prescription and non-prescription medication, so be sure to provide that teacher with any necessary information.

Sly Park provides basic first aid supplies and over-the-counter medications in case of minor injury or illness. If your child becomes ill and/or has an elevated temperature, s/he will be moved to the sick bay. If your child has a temperature of 100 degrees or higher and/or has persistent vomiting s/he will be sent home. If a child is not feeling well (i.e., headache, scratchy throat, coughing, runny nose) but does not have a fever and/or persistent vomiting, s/he may rest in sick bay, and can return to the program when feeling better. Mild injuries are treated in our first aid station. In case of a life-threatening emergency, 911 will be called. Every effort will be made to notify parents in the event of illness or injury.

Sly Park staff and your child's classroom teacher will work with your child if s/he becomes homesick.

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

Please contact the Sly Park cafeteria two weeks prior to your child's arrival to discuss special dietary needs or food allergies. The cafeteria staff will need the following information:

- First & last name of student or adult
- School name
- Date attending
- Dietary need/food allergy

Dietary needs may include but are not limited to: vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant, gluten-free, no beef, no pork, no chicken, food allergies, etc. The Head Cook can be reached at either 916-228-2320 or at slyparkkitchen@scoe.net

Please note that the Sly Park kitchen provides peanut/nut free food. However, on rare occasions we may use a frozen cookie product processed in a facility that may also process peanuts/nuts. If your child has an Epi-Pen for severe nut allergies, s/he will receive a 100% nut-free cookie.

FACILITIES

There are eight student cabins, each housing approximately 24-28 children and 1-3 cabin leaders. The heated cabins have bunk beds and bathroom facilities with sinks, toilets and private showers. Sly Park also has a cafeteria, gym, outdoor basketball courts, Native American Interpretive Center, science discovery center, animal room, planetarium, arts and crafts room, conference room, and several classrooms. The site covers 33 acres and is adjacent to the El Dorado National Forest.

CLOTHING AND WEATHER

A waterproof raincoat is required year-round. Comfortable clothing appropriate for hiking and spending time outdoors is recommended for Sly Park. The students are outdoors much of the time. Rubber boots or snow boots and a warm coat are good insurance for potential snow from October through May. All items should be marked with your child's name. Please see the last page in this handbook for a list of required and optional items to bring.

The Sly Park Campus is situated approximately 3500' elevation and the climate is generally cooler and wetter than the Sacramento Valley. Temperatures can vary greatly any time of year. Students should bring clothes for all types of weather. To be properly prepared, we recommend checking the Pollock Pines long-term weather report the weekend before your child's trip to Sly Park.

DAILY SCHEDULE

ARRIVAL DAY

10:30 Student arrival and orientation
Move into cabins
12:15 Lunch
1:30 Afternoon activity with Sly Park Hiking Group
5:00 Dinner
6:00 Class Meeting
6:30 Evening program
7:30 Night hike or other activity
8:30 Bedtime snack, get ready for bed
9:30 Lights out!!

DEPARTURE DAY

7:00 Breakfast
8:00 Cabin clean-up
8:30 Cabin inspections, move out
9:15 Slide Show
9:45 Last activity with Sly Park
Hiking Group
11:30 Lunch
12:00 Departure

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:00 Wake up
7:30 Breakfast
8:00 Cabin cleanup/get ready for day
8:45 Morning hikes/activities with Sly Park Hiking Group
11:45 Recreation Time
12:15 Lunch
12:45 Rest Time
1:30 Afternoon hikes/activities with Sly Park Hiking Group
4:30 Recreation Time
5:00 Dinner
6:00 Class Meeting
6:30 Evening program
7:30 Night hike or activity
8:30 Bedtime snack, get ready for bed
Telescopes on Tues. & Wed. nights, weather permitting
9:30 Lights out!

SLIDESHOW

Throughout the week Sly Park teachers take pictures of their students engaged in the variety of activities that are part of our educational program. Every Friday these pictures are used in a slideshow that the students watch. The slideshow is available to download for about one month on the Friends of Sly Park website at www.friendsofslypark.org. There is no cost to view or download the slideshow.

F.A.Q.'s

Are the cabins heated and air conditioned?

Every cabin has central heating, but the cabins are not air conditioned.

Are there restrooms and showers in the cabins?

Yes. Every cabin has restrooms inside with sinks and private toilets and showers.

Are the students required to shower while at Sly Park?

Students are expected to shower every full day that the program is in session. To conserve water, and to ensure that each student has the opportunity to bathe, showers are limited to **five minutes**.

What kind of bedding should I send for my child?

For the sake of comfort at night, a sleeping bag and pillow are recommended; it is also nice to have a fitted sheet to cover the mattress. Sheets and blankets are also acceptable.

Should I send bottled water with my child?

Every student should bring a reusable water bottle. The drinking water at Sly Park is excellent – there is no need to send bottled water.

Can I send a camera with my child?

Yes. We recommend sending an inexpensive camera labeled with your child's name.

What type of footwear should I send with my child?

Shoes should be sturdy, comfortable and have good tread for hiking. We don't recommend sending brand new shoes, as they can cause blisters. Two pairs of shoes are strongly recommended in case one pair gets wet or causes blisters.

What if my child gets homesick?

The Sly Park staff and the teachers from your child's school will work with your child to help them be successful during their Sly Park trip. Occasional homesickness is normal. Because we focus on overcoming challenges and trying new things, in most cases, students are not sent home due to homesickness.

I've heard that students get to silkscreen a shirt. Is that true?

Students will have the opportunity to silkscreen a t-shirt, sweatshirt, pillowcase, tote bag, or other cloth item with either Sly Park's traditional butterfly logo or this year's unique design. Bright, solid colors are recommended.

It is strongly recommended that students' personal items are labeled with their name.



| WHAT TO BRING | |
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| <p><u>Required Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sleeping bag or 2 sheets & 2 blankets Pillow & pillowcase 2-5 pairs of pants 5 shirts 5 sets of underwear 5 pairs of socks (extra in winter) Pajamas 1 jacket or coat 2-3 sweaters/sweatshirts/hoodies Shirt, hoodie, pillowcase, etc. for silkscreening Rain poncho or waterproof raincoat Gloves Beanie 2 pairs of hiking shoes Snow boots if snow is possible Bath towel, hand towel & washcloth Toothbrush & toothpaste Soap & shampoo/conditioner Comb or brush Water bottle 2 large plastic bags (for dirty clothes) | <p><u>Optional/Suggested Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fitted sheet Extra blanket Shower shoes/flip flops Slippers Lip balm Hand lotion Sunscreen (non-aerosol) Insect repellent (non-aerosol) Deodorant (non-aerosol) Backpack Camera Stamps for letters home Deck of cards Books/magazines Non-electronic games Flashlight Earplugs |
| Watch the weather reports and pack accordingly | |

| DO NOT BRING |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knives, weapons, or dangerous objects Clothing inappropriate for school Aerosol sprays Valuable items Cell phones, tablets, or other electronics Candy, gum, snacks, food, soda, etc. Hair dryers, curling irons, or straighteners |

If your child leaves something behind call 916-228-2485.
Sly Park is not responsible for lost, misplaced, or stolen items.