



Waldorf

School of Pittsburgh

Parent Handbook 2017-18

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Educational Philosophy

If the child has been able in his play to give up his whole being to the world around him, he will be able in the serious tasks of later life to devote himself with confidence and power to the service of the world.

-Rudolf Steiner

Mission and Values

At the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh, we greatly value collaboration, holism, compassion, beauty, and curiosity. By embracing these values, it is our mission to foster each child's capacity to become an independent thinking, compassionate, and purposeful human being. We educate head, heart, and hands.

Philosophy of the Nursery and the Kindergarten

The Waldorf nursery and kindergarten philosophy is based on the conviction that the young child learns best by imitation of what is beautiful and meaningful. Each child's innate capacity for wonder, reverence, and awe is valued and nurtured in a carefully planned program and environment. Learning is joyous because children are guided to healthy, creative self-expression while they develop the foundations for future academic work.

Philosophy of the Grade School

When the children leave the kindergarten and move into the grade school, they carry with them a reverent and loving experience of nature and humanity. In the elementary grades, the content of the curriculum builds on what has gone before and unfolds in a way that is interesting and meaningful to the children of a particular grade because it addresses the development stages of the growing child. The children in a class form a community and travel the journey from childhood into adolescence together with their class teachers.

The children develop in a natural way through the grades. Some learn quickly and others need more time. Rather than describing the children by how much they know or don't know, Waldorf education emphasizes

experiencing the wonder of the world, recognizing and appreciating each others' gifts, working on skills, and being part of the class community.

Handwork/Woodworking

Our hands separate us from other species of the animal kingdom. When children use their hands it strengthens their will, which assists brain development, preparing it for reading and the crossing over of left-and right-brained thinking. Handwork and woodwork in the Waldorf curriculum enhances the main lesson and teaches valuable living skills.

Eurythmy

The brain discovers what the fingers explore.

The density of nerve endings in our fingertips is enormous. Their discrimination is almost as good as that of our eyes. If we don't use our fingers, if in childhood and in youth we become "finger-blind," this rich network of nerves is impoverished— which represents a huge loss to the brain and thwarts the individual's all-around development. Such damage may be likened to blindness in itself.

Perhaps worse, while a blind person may simply not be able to find this or that object, the finger-blind cannot understand its inner meaning and value.

- Matti Bergestroem, Professor and Neurophysiologist

Eurythmy means beautiful, harmonious rhythm. The core of Waldorf education is based on rhythm and feeling; at the center of this rhythmical education lies eurythmy. Founded early in this century, eurythmy is also known as "visible speech and visible song," providing a vocabulary of gestures for the sounds of language and the entire range of musical experience. The eurythmist attempts to make visible through movement the forms sounds create in the air, ordinarily perceived only by the ear. Eurythmy is not a sign language, nor are words spelled out, or actions and situations mimed. Rather, the eurythmist strives to create the quality, mood, and dynamic force of sound through gesture.

All educational exercises in eurythmy have a rhythmical character. Starting from the center, they work in two directions: the experience of movement in space and the experience of knowledge of the mind. A child only gradually wins the freedom of space, and there are many exercises in development—from simply clapping and walking in different rhythms to group exercises with copper rods which require considerable skill and exact timing. A number of exercises are specially designed as social education, to make the children aware of each other.

All learning—especially the learning of children—should bring about new distinctions of experience, and there are hardly any such distinctions which eurythmy does not meet or enhance. To give one example, when children learn grammar, at a certain age they come to terms with past, present, and future tenses; at another, they feel the difference between active and passive tenses; and later, they realize the function of verb, noun, and adjective. Eurythmy meets all these fine distinctions with appropriate movement and gesture, so that the grammar lessons enter the domain of the whole human being. Eurythmy imparts a knowledge captured in the old phrase, “to know it in your bones,” so different from merely knowing it in your head.

While the school does not have a full-time eurythmist on staff this year, teachers bring eurythmy gestures and movement to circle time activities throughout the year. Our school invites a visiting eurythmist during the school year to teach eurythmy to our students for three to four weeks. At the end of each block, the children perform for their parents and invited guests.

Foreign Languages

Foreign languages play an essential role in the curriculum of the Waldorf School. It was Rudolf Steiner’s plan to have children exposed to two contrasting foreign languages (e.g. a Romance and a Germanic language) beginning in first grade and continuing through twelfth.

Waldorf schools recognize what a profound influence the spoken word has on the physical and mental development of children, how even the sound of a teacher’s voice influences their growth, and how we must strive for a reverent attitude toward the words we speak. This is of

special significance to language teachers: if they are able to bring to their teaching a rich imagination, a sense of beauty, and a sense of humor, their students will gain far beyond the mere basic knowledge of a particular language. Learning a foreign language can open countless doors to various cultures. It even enables us to think differently and to become more aware of our own language and modes of expression. Each language contributes to our appreciation of the world around us. Perhaps it may be said that the teacher of foreign languages in a Waldorf school is dedicating her/his own efforts to the re-enlivening of language so that a true sense of brotherhood may arise among human beings.

Music

Music is a very important part of the Waldorf curriculum. Singing and playing an instrument require a level of listening that engages the child's whole being. Waldorf teachers gear musical instruction to the child's developmental level and integrate it with the curriculum in a way that strengthens learning as a whole. Music conveys an inner logic, wisdom, and beauty that strengthens the sense of self within the context of the whole and creates a sense of harmony and social awareness.

Students sing with teachers beginning in the youngest Early Childhood classrooms. Beginning in first grade, they play the pentatonic recorder; in third grade, they will play a stringed instrument; and in sixth grade, students will have a choice to switch to play a woodwind instrument.

The long-term goals of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh's music program are to:

1. Provide the best possible experience of choral and instrumental music throughout the entire school, building on the foundation established by class teachers in the early years;
2. Ensure that every child in the school is actively engaged in music as a necessary balance to other aspects of the curriculum;

3. Develop in each young person effective social abilities, clarity of tone, and capacity for listening, as well as an understanding of music that encompasses the whole human being.

Arts in Education

The arts—drama, painting, music, drawing, crafts, and handwork—are integrated into the entire curriculum, including math and science. Educating through the arts brings vitality and wholeness to learning, balancing intellectual development.

Form drawing, which was introduced by Dr. Steiner, is unique to Waldorf education. It is designed to enhance eye-hand coordination, fine motor skills and spatial orientation.

Coordination, patience, perseverance, and imagination are schooled through practical work. Other activities—such as woodwork, house-building, gardening, and blacksmithing—give children an understanding of how things come into being and a respect for the creations of others.

In painting, children come to experience the feeling that colors arouse in all of us through stories about them—the challenging nature of red, the stillness and contemplative nature of blue. It is the “soul nature” of the colors that Waldorf education strives to introduce to young children. As the child matures, the artistic method matches development so that in the adolescent, for example, the experiences of intense likes and dislikes, right and wrong, are paralleled with exercises in black and white.

Games/PE

Movement is an integral part to every day at the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. In our Games/PE weekly classes, Grades students are given the opportunity to work on physical and social skills that reflect their stage of development.

Computer Science

As students enter the Upper Grades (6th–8th Grades), the use of computers is introduced in a thoughtful manner. This work includes

class discussions about the use of social media, understanding how to present one's self in the healthiest manner online, and how to be a discerning user of the internet. Beginning in 6th Grade, students begin to study word processing, keyboarding, and internet research. Throughout 7th Grade, students write essays using word processing and continue learning fundamentals of academic research using the internet. In 8th Grade, students study the structure of computers in conjunction with the Industrial Revolution studies and work on computer programming. Through these Upper Grades years, students are also invited to participate in the after school Robotics Club.

Every child is an artist.

The question is how to remain an artist when he grows up.

- Pablo Picasso

Festivals and the Rhythm of the School Year

In our Waldorf School, our annual celebrations and observances of the seasonal and cultural festivals help to develop children's relationships to their larger environment. These yearly rhythms are repeated just as we keep to daily classroom routines and rituals, thus creating a safe, secure environment where learning and growing can occur. These annual observances become opportunities for experiencing nature's seasonal changes. We bring to the children age-appropriate songs, stories, verses, games, and activities for the various turning points of the year.

Year by year, the child's awareness and relation to the cycles in nature is deepened by these observances. We also hope to bring in this experiential way an understanding of the seasons of life itself.

SEPTEMBER

First Grade Rose Ceremony and Opening Assembly

This festival on the first day signifies the beginning of school. To symbolize the entrance of the first graders into the Grades program, each name is called and s/he receives a rose from a student of the eighth grade. Intended as a welcoming to and reuniting of all the members of the Grades, this in-school festival is open to all members of the community.

Michaelmas

Michaelmas, the harvest festival, takes place in late September. It is the time of year to gather the harvest and our strength for the year ahead. In our community-wide weekend celebration, we may plant seeds and bulbs for the future, challenge ourselves through deeds of courage and strength, and with the fruits of the harvest season, make applesauce and cider.

OCTOBER

Halloween

At the end of October, the Early Childhood and Little Friends participate in a Halloween Journey, visiting the archetypes of the farmer, fisherman, wizard (wise one), baker, etc. While on their outdoor journey around the grounds, children recite verses and songs, and receive a treasure to take home from each stop.

The Lower Grades (1-5) celebrate Halloween by participating in an afternoon of folk dancing and storytelling. Called the Halloween Hoe-Down, this uplifting experience allows the Grades to intermingle and have a healthy social experience while sharing dances and songs learned in individual classes.

The Upper Grades (6-8) celebrate Halloween by having Spirited Hair Day where all students are welcome to style and dye their hair in any way they choose (must be temporary). They also hold an in-school dance in the afternoon periods and may bring costumes without masks.

NOVEMBER

Martinmas

Each year the Waldorf School celebrates Martinmas with a traditional lantern walk. The students make their own lanterns in the classroom, which stand as symbols for their individual light. Typically a walk outside with lit lanterns as the sun goes down sets the scene for preparing ourselves for the approaching darkness of winter.

Thanksgiving

Gratitude, reverence, and wonder are three of the most important attitudes we can help our children cultivate. This holiday's main motif—the giving of thanks—can elevate it into a celebration that nourishes on many levels. During this harvest festival, we call to mind the forces of heaven and earth that provide us with food, clothing, and sustenance, and we have the opportunity to remember and thank all who have supported us. In our school, traditionally, the Early Childhood programs

invite the families of their students to a Stone Soup Celebration. The students bring in and chop the vegetables for our soup and bread is baked to share. During the celebration, the story of stone soup is told and the families then enjoy a meal of soup and bread that has been prepared by the students.

The Grades children participate in a Thanksgiving Assembly and school-wide food or clothing drive.

DECEMBER

Advent and the Winter Spiral

Advent, from the Latin “to come,” is the period including the four Sundays preceding Christmas. A month-long festival, Advent is a time of quiet preparation and waiting. It is signified in classrooms in many ways, one of which being Advent wreaths with four candles, one for each kingdom of nature (minerals, plants, animals, and human beings) as well as each week of Advent.

Even in the darkest of winter we still can find light to lead us on our way, and the Winter Spiral shows us this. This spiral of greens leads to a lit candle which each student walks to in the dark with an unlit candle. The student lights their candle from the center light and walks out of the spiral placing their candle along the way. Usually in early December, families and other community members are invited to walk the spiral.

St. Nicholas Day

The feast of St. Nicholas takes place near the beginning of December. At school, the children put out their shoes for St. Nicholas overnight and return to find them filled with fruits and nuts. St. Nicholas may visit the classrooms in person to bring a golden walnut and a message for each of the children.

Hanukkah

This Jewish festival of lights is celebrated near the time of the winter solstice. Hanukkah represents a rededication to the ideals of religious freedom, commemorating the victory of the Macabees over the Syrians

in Jerusalem in 165 BC. The eight days of Hanukkah represent the eight days during which a holy lamp remained lit, although it held only enough oil for one day. This festival in the season of light celebrates the victory of inner light over outer darkness. In school, many classes celebrate by lighting the Menorah, making latkes, playing with dreidls, dancing the Horah, and singing Hanukkah songs.

JANUARY

Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday

To recognize the significance of one person's actions, and to acknowledge the life of Dr. King, all the Grades students participate in an in-school assembly. Some classes share verses or songs, the whole school sings together, and a story is told by one of the teachers.

FEBRUARY

Valentine's Day

This day is celebrated as a token of love and fondness for one another. In the Grades, students are encouraged to share homemade valentines with their classmates. Children in the Early Childhood program may work on seasonal handwork project and enjoy a special snack prepared by the parents.

APRIL

Easter/Spring

At Easter time we welcome the renewal of spring when the physical world awakens, bringing new life to the Earth. Symbols of life renewing include the egg and the awakening of a caterpillar into a butterfly. These images are reflected in various activities, songs, and stories brought into the classroom.

Passover

Passover is the Jewish celebration of miracle and liberation, the story of leaving Egypt as slaves and entering the Promised Land as free people. The Seder is the traditional meal eaten on the first and second nights of

Passover. The Seder plate includes six special foods that symbolize Israel's efforts toward liberation. At school, the grades may celebrate with a traditional Seder meal; younger children might hear the story of Passover and Israel's flight from Egypt, and become acquainted with the foods on the Seder plate.

The Children's Festival

The Children's Festival is an event for all Grades children to perform, class by class, for our community. This tradition allows for our curriculum to shine and our students to show off what they've learned throughout the year.

MAY

May Day

In ancient tradition, May Day celebrates the beginning of summer. The maypole itself represents fertility and the tree of life. For the children as well as adults, May Day is a reminder that warmer days are ahead. During the Waldorf School's May Fair, children can enjoy the traditional maypole dance accompanied by singing and live music.

JUNE

Graduation

At the close of the school year, we send off our eighth graders in a graduation ceremony. During this program, individual students give speeches, sing, play music, and show other skills and talents they have. They are also presented with a certificate of completion, marking the end of their Waldorf School of Pittsburgh career.

OTHER SEASONAL FESTIVALS

We invite and encourage parents to share their traditional festivals and customs with their child's class teacher. The world holds many celebrations marking turning points in the year, recognizing the miracles of life and re-birth and the struggle to overcome darkness that are common to all people. Through stories, songs, and myths, we can share

the beauty and richness of our diversity while also confirming that which we all have in common as striving human beings.

Class Plays - Grades Children

Class plays are an integral part of the Waldorf curriculum. They are unique for each class and based on the curriculum the children have been learning during the year. The plays enhance the child's learning experience, and are exciting, community-building events.

The Role of Religion in the Waldorf School

by Karen Rivers, Waldorf Teacher

The word "religion" is derived from the Latin "religio," which means to reunite. It is an expression of the universal human quest for meaning, for our source and our destiny. Throughout human history, people from all cultures have asked, "Who am I?" -- "What am I doing here?" -- "What does it mean to be human?"

Throughout the world we share questions about creation, good and evil, and what exists beyond the starry cosmos and unknown dark matter. These soul questions live deeply within all humanity. Through different periods of history, great men and women have shed light on these universal questions.

They have offered their wisdom to help each individual answer them, to reunite with the cosmic origin and oneness of all existence.

In our school, we seek to imbue all our lessons with questions of universal implication. We seek to explore mythology, literature, history, science, and art in a way that evokes discussions or pondering about these universal questions. We wish our students to live in an atmosphere that is permeated with (not devoid of) the quest for self-knowledge, and for the exploration of life's deepest mysteries.

How is this done? Do we teach religion? The Waldorf curriculum is designed to create the appropriate relationship between a child and these immense questions. Through art, a child builds a relationship with beauty, and in studying science, one seeks an understanding of truth. Out of beauty and truth develops a sense of morality and reverence for life that leads to profound questions of existence.

Through the study of history, our students journey through ancient civilizations, studying the Old Testament, Norse Mythology, Ancient India, Persia, Sumaria, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. They enter the Middle Ages and the Renaissance with burning questions of morality that grow out of their earlier exploration. By the time a student reaches the eighth grade, s/he has lived with many noble images, many fallen heroes, and

many searching questions about the nature of humankind and our universe. These questions of great magnitude fill the child with a desire to explore the outer and inner realms of his/her life.

In Waldorf schools throughout the world, we aim to celebrate the cycles of life, to address the essence of these questions as they speak to us through nature and the rhythm of the year, and the festivals that have evolved through time. We all long to feel the joy and meaning of life through the recognition and celebration of cornerstone events. The seasons mark the turning points of the year, and each season has festivals around the world that express the inner wisdom of the season's nature. Because we live in a primarily Judeo-Christian culture, we emphasize those festivals at our school. Waldorf schools in Israel feature Jewish festivals; Waldorf schools in Japan feature Buddhist festivals; in India, Hindu festivals are celebrated.

We receive many questions as to whether or not we are a Christian school. We are a school seeking to reunite children with the universal knowledge of self through the study of art and science. We celebrate Christian festivals as well as others.

We seek to educate our students in love and immerse them in the world of great literature, art, and science. We strive to awaken within them the longing to "know thyself." We wish to send them forth into the world in freedom to explore and discover their own beliefs and destinies in the service of humankind. On this journey, each one finds meaning, joy, and reverence for life, creating a new union with her/his spiritual essence.

Multicultural Statement

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh is an independent school, committed to fully developing the human potential of each and every child enrolled here, thus reflecting the mission of Waldorf education: To receive the child with reverence, to educate the child with love, to send the child forth with freedom.

Waldorf pedagogy is founded on principles that underscore our common humanity and the equality of all people. We welcome children of all races, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and religions. We believe that the educational experience of all children is enriched when they play and learn in the company of peers from diverse economic and cultural backgrounds.

It is therefore the policy of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh to promote diversity within the student body, the faculty, and the curriculum so that it mirrors the richness of the community in which we live. To fulfill these goals, we commit ourselves to the following actions:

- We will strive to promote the school and Waldorf pedagogy to people from diverse economic and cultural backgrounds.
- We invite and encourage the parents of our students to share their backgrounds with their children's teachers. Through stories, songs, myths, and customs, we can share the richness of our diversity and enhance the community.
- The faculty will engage in a continuing review of the school curriculum to ensure that the richness and variety of our diverse heritage is communicated to the children in a manner that is both consistent with the principles of Waldorf pedagogy and the vision expressed by the founder of Waldorf education, Rudolf Steiner.

We seek to unite people of all races and nations, and bridge the division and differences between various groups of people.

-Rudolf Steiner, The Universal Human, Lecture
1, Munich, December 4, 1909

The Structure of WSP

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh is a developing school and is working toward becoming a full member of the Association of the Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). We are also full members of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN).

The structure of a Waldorf school will be new to many parents. The school does not have a director or principal in the traditional sense; instead, various groups carry different responsibilities, all of which are interdependent and function as a whole.

Faculty

The faculty is dedicated to bringing the children a living experience of Waldorf education. Faculty members meet weekly for common study, artistic, and administrative work. These meetings allow faculty members to deepen their understanding of general educational practices and develop a broader perspective on the needs of individual children.

Parents who wish to discuss child-related problems or concerns should contact their child's class teacher. Questions about the curriculum can also be asked of the child's teacher.

Leadership Committee

The Leadership Committee (Leadership) is responsible for the day to day management and leadership of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. Leadership consists of the Head of School, the Grades Faculty Chair, and the Early Childhood Faculty Chair. The Leadership Committee is responsible for holding all aspects of the school day and works in conjunction with the Faculty in the review and, if needed, termination of all teaching positions. Although the Leadership Committee may support the hiring process for faculty, hiring of full faculty is the responsibility of the Faculty. The Leadership Committee meets on a regularly scheduled basis at least once every week. The President of the Board joins monthly. Any committee or individual who wishes to speak with the Leadership Committee must set an appointment with the Head of School or Faculty Chair.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees bears legal and financial responsibility for the school. Committees of the Board are as follows: executive; building, grounds, and safety; development; enrollment; and finance. Additional committees may be added. The Board cooperates with and includes members of the faculty, administrative staff, and Parent Association. Meetings are held monthly at the school. Board meetings are all open to persons interested in attending. The Board reserves the right to discuss personnel matters in closed executive sessions. Copies of the minutes are available upon request.

Parents interested in serving on the Board or on any of the above-mentioned committees are encouraged to contact one of the members of the Board. Please contact the President of the Board if you have any questions or for further information. Contact information for Board members can be found in the WSP directory.

Administration

The administration is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day management of the school. Each position has its own responsibilities and the group as a whole serves the needs of the children, Board, Faculty, and Parent Association.

Head of School: The Head of School is responsible for overseeing the different functions and positions within the Administrative Staff. Any issues regarding policy or procedures of the school should be directed to the Head of School. Questions concerning administration, community events, public relations issues, and recommendations from the Parent Association may be directed to the Head of School.

Enrollment Coordinator: The Enrollment Coordinator creates, coordinates, and implements our admissions and re-enrollment programs. This position coordinates the enrollment committee, where the schedule for the tours, open houses, outreach events, and speakers is set. The Enrollment Coordinator works closely with Faculty, the Administrative Staff, and the Parent

Association to ensure the smooth transition of families into our school. In addition, the Enrollment Coordinator manages all the marketing, advertising, and outreach efforts for the school. All promotional material must be reviewed and approved by the Administration/Enrollment Coordinator prior to being released.

Front Office Manager: From 7:30am through 3:30pm Monday through Friday, the Front Office Manager is available in the Front Office to answer general questions, take messages, direct questions, and care for the children. The Front Office Manager also handles all school communications, interactions with other school districts, and coordinates busing.

Business Manager: The Business Manager is responsible for the financial affairs of the school. The Business Manager answers all questions regarding tuition, payments, payment plans, fees, donations, Extended Care Program tuition, and the financial aid program. The Business Manager creates and interprets all financial reports and supports the board during the Annual Fund Drive.

Director of Development: The Director of Development is responsible for the fundraising efforts of the school. This person works closely with the Board, the Head of School, and the Business Manager to raise sufficient funds to cover operational and program expansion expenses not covered by tuition revenues. The Director of Development chairs the Development Committee. When this position is vacant, the Administrative Staff and Board work collaboratively to facilitate the fundraising efforts of the school.

Facilities Manager: The Facilities Manager is responsible for maintaining the facilities and the grounds. All requests for classroom care and support are directed to the Facilities Manager. All suggestions regarding the care of the school and grounds should be directed to the Facilities Manager. The person in this position is chair of the Facilities Committee. Anyone wishing to participate in discussions regarding the

facility and grounds may join the Building, Grounds, and Safety Committee.

Director for State Compliance: The Director of State Compliance is responsible for school licensing to meet state requirements, as well as other questions of legal compliance, and overseeing health and safety issues.

Communication

Communication is a cornerstone of Waldorf education. We strive to maintain both formal and informal channels of communication at all levels. In addition to printed documents and school-wide meetings, informal social interaction is a wonderful strengthening force in our community. Relationships often thrive between parents who work together as volunteers, whose children play together, and who come to know the Faculty and Staff through regular activity at the school.

This section discusses the lines of communication between home and school, and between school and the wider community. For more information about how to stay involved and informed about the school, your child, and Waldorf education, please see the section on How Parents Can Best Support Teachers. This section tells you more about how to address your concerns with classroom teachers and faculty members.

How to Contact

Telephone: Our automated phone system allows us to receive calls during school and after hours. The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh Directory includes the phone extensions and email addresses of the Administration, Class, and Lead Teachers. Please note that the main school number is: 412-441-5792.

Mailboxes: Faculty and Staff maintain mailboxes located on the second floor in the workroom where the copier and the fax machine are located. You are welcome to leave messages, reading materials, or other information in the appropriate mailbox. Please note your name when leaving information in any of these boxes.

Messages for Faculty: All Faculty members will check their email accounts regularly, at least three times per week, Monday through Friday (until 3pm on Friday). If there is an important message you need to get to your child's teacher, please call the Front Office. Faculty hours of availability for phone calls will be posted or distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Faculty will respond to all messages within 24 hours.
Administration will respond within 48 hours.

Messages with the Children: Planning is an important part of learning, and parents should make sure that their children bring everything they need for the school day, and know the plan for returning home or staying with a friend. Please do not call the school to make arrangements that should have been planned in advance. Please note that children may not initiate transportation changes. All changes in transportation arrangements should be given to the Front Office per the "Transportation Changes" policy below.

Written Communications

1. *Parent Newsletter:* Once per month (on the Friday of the last full week of the month), a newsletter will be sent by email containing important information about class activities, school events, and fundraisers. Announcements will be sent by email every Friday that the newsletter is not sent. If a paper copy is preferred, parents may pick one up through the Front Office. Please make every effort to read these materials promptly—they may contain field trip permission slips, special instructions for classroom projects, announcements about parent evenings, and other items you and your child won't want to miss. The newsletter keeps parents up-to-date on community festivals, activities, and fundraisers. If parents wish to contribute an item to the newsletter (Committee reports, calls for volunteers, etc.), submissions may be emailed to frontoffice@waldorfpittsburgh.org at least 72 hours before publication.

2. *Calendar of Events:* A monthly calendar of upcoming events, workshops, meetings, and festivals can be found on the school's website at www.waldorfpittsburgh.org. If you wish to contribute an approved item to the calendar, please email the Front Office at frontoffice@waldorfpittsburgh.org.

3. *Other Written Communications:* On some occasions, a printed announcement on paper may be sent home by the school to parents in their children's backpacks. These announcements are limited to: fliers

for events, outreach information, medical illness notices, order forms, school closure forms, transportation change forms, and field trip permission forms. Parents are encouraged to check their children's backpacks or cubbies every day to obtain this information, or speak with older children to ensure that these come home.

4. *School Closure or Delay Communications*: In the event of a school closure or delay due to weather, parents will be contacted via the Campus Wire service by text message or email. Parents sign up for this service when enrolling or re-enrolling their children in TADS.

5. *Classroom Teacher Communications*: Communications will come from the classroom teachers every month or at some other frequency determined by the class teacher. Class teachers will inform parents at the beginning of each school year how they will be getting class information and updates. In addition, paper communications from the teacher may be sent home on a daily basis. Parents are encouraged to check their children's backpacks or cubbies on a daily basis for any classroom papers or forms that are sent home.

School Directory

Every fall and spring, a printed school directory listing the names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers for every family in the school is distributed. The directory also includes the names of the Board Members and the email addresses and extensions of the Faculty and Administration. Please note that this is sensitive information and is to be used only for purposes directly related to school activities or class gatherings. It may not be used for sales or solicitations of any kind.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Parent-teacher communication is of paramount importance in Waldorf schools. If you are concerned about your child or a classroom situation, it is crucial that you share these concerns with your child's teacher. The most effective way to deal with a situation is to discuss it directly with the teacher involved as soon as possible. Teachers want to stay connected to students and parents; they appreciate your involvement, and strive to address your concerns.

We recognize that communication challenges arise in human relationships, and we've developed a standard protocol for assisting parents who are dissatisfied with any aspect of the parent-teacher communication process or have questions about pedagogical/classroom decisions. If, after speaking with your child's teacher, your concern is still unresolved, please contact the Faculty Chair. If the teacher in question is the Faculty Chair, or if the relevant Faculty Chair is unavailable, please contact the Head of School.

The Faculty Chair or Head of School will then determine the best course of action. This may include but is not limited to a simple discussion, classroom visit, evaluation, the formation of a care group, a request for mentoring, or any other appropriate intervention. If no resolution is found, the issue will be brought to the Leadership Committee, where further mediation and resolution processes will be determined. We are available to listen to your concerns.

Student-Teacher Communication

Older students in the school will be responsible for communicating with their teachers regarding questions of homework or other assignments. This can be done face-to-face, via email, or by phone, depending on the system the teacher sets up. Students are responsible for requesting extensions for deadlines before work is due.

General Information and Program Procedures

Required Forms

The State of Pennsylvania requires that we keep certain forms on file for each child in the school. Many of these forms are generated in TADS when you enroll and re-enroll your child. Those that are not are mailed home prior to the start of school. In addition, forms are available on the school's website at www.waldorfpittsburgh.org/forms. No student can attend school until the following items are on file:

- Enrollment/Service Contract (generated in TADS)
- Up-to-date tuition and fees payments
- Releases (generated in TADS)
- School Communications (generated in TADS)
- Textbook Loan Form
- Emergency Information (generated in TADS)
- Medical and Immunization Records
- Prior school records (if applicable)

All forms are due prior to the first day of school. Additional forms, such as permission slips for field trips, will be sent home throughout the year.

Tuition Payments

Please direct questions about tuition (both for the regular school programs, Extended Care, Morning Garden, and Little Friends) and other financial matters to the Business Manager. The school's tuition policies can be found on the student enrollment contracts. Tuition rates for the year are listed on the website.

Service Contract

Most private schools depend to a very great extent on volunteerism. The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh utilizes a process that has been pioneered in other Waldorf Schools. A certain number of volunteer hours are required from each family each school year. The specific number of hours depends on the class of the family's oldest enrolled child. A service task list has been developed and is available in the Front Office. Volunteer tasks are also listed on the school's website. Tasks other than those on this list are acceptable, as long as they are in service to the school. Service hours may be logged online through your Parent Portal. New parents will receive a link to set up their Parent Portal prior to the start of school. The Business Manager will review this log quarterly. Hours of service not fulfilled by May 30 will be billed to the family at the rate of \$20 per hour.

Financial Aid

The school provides limited financial assistance to families in need of tuition aid. Applications are available online through TADS. Completed applications should be returned to the Front Office by February 1st. All applications are confidential and reviewed by the Financial Aid Committee.

Extended Care Program

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh offers care for all students after their school day has finished in the Extended Care Program. This program strives to follow up the child's school day by incorporating the Waldorf philosophy in the after school care of the students. The handbook for the Extended Care Program is available from the Extended Care Program Teacher.

School Store

The Eighth Grade hosts a Forest Garden Store sale throughout the year, selling Waldorf-inspired items such as beeswax, crayons, dolls, dress up clothing, and books. Please look in the newsletter for information regarding these sales. All proceeds benefit the Eighth Grade class trip.

Parking

We do not have a designated parking area for parents. Children (Kindergarten through Grades) can be dropped off at the front entrance of the school between 8 and 8:15am as long as there is a teacher outside to greet him/her. If you need to make a visit into the school, please look for spaces that may be available in the back parking area (taking care not to park someone in if you are going to be longer than 10 minutes.) Please do not park in the spaces along the fence by the Grades play yard. Those spaces are for class teachers and administrative personnel who are here all day. In the mornings, you may park on the street for up to one hour without a permit. In the afternoons, please refrain from parking on Coral Street, as this is where buses will line up to pick up the children. At 3pm we close off the driveway behind the school for 10 minutes before and 10 minutes after pick up. The cul de sac in front of our building is off-limits for parking as it is a pathway to the front play yard for our Early Childhood students.

Daily Procedures

Morning Arrival

- **Nursery:** Bring your child directly to the classroom between 8-8:15am. A teacher will be in the room to greet your child. Nursery children are not eligible for bus service.
- **Kindergarten:** Please bring your child directly to the kindergarten classroom. A teacher will be in the room to greet your child from 8-8:15am. If your child rides the bus, he/she will be greeted at the bus drop-off by the administrative person on bus duty.
- **Grades:** Students in the Grades should arrive at school no earlier than 8am. Teachers and staff are not available to supervise students before then. At 8am, parents should drop off Grades students in the circular driveway located in front of the school or in the back where they will be admitted into the building by the Front Office Manager. Students will report directly to class by 8:15am.
- If a child arrives after 8:25am, they should use the back door to gain entrance to the school. Please also use the back door if you need to drop off any items your child may have forgotten (i.e. instruments, lunch) and check in with the Front Office. We ask that you make every effort to create a routine in your home to ensure items are not forgotten on a regular basis.
- **Nursery/Kindergarten Late Arrivals:** If you arrive at school after 8:25am, use the back door to gain entrance to the school. You will then need to escort your child to the classroom. In Kindergarten, some special activities happen first thing in the morning and interruptions during this activity time can disturb the mood set by the teacher. If you arrive during this time and find a “do not disturb” notice on the door, please sit with your child on the bench in the hallway until the teacher opens the door to remove the sign. The teacher will then welcome your child into the classroom.

- **Grades Late Arrivals:** If you arrive at school after 8:15am, the student is required to report to the Front Office in order for them to receive a tardy slip. The student will then be sent to class. A staff member will request information regarding the reason for the tardiness, which will be recorded on the tardy slip. It is the parent's responsibility to get the child to school on time. Please be aware that a child arriving late disrupts their day as well as the other students in their class as it affects the opening rhythm of the day which begins with the Greeting and Morning Verse. Students arriving late miss this morning ritual and its importance to the mood of the day. If a child has been tardy at least three times but less than ten, the Office Manager will contact the parents and remind them of the correct starting time. If the child is tardy more than ten times, the teacher will notify the parents of the seriousness of the situation. Should the tardiness continue, the teacher will notify the Faculty Chair who, in turn, will send a letter to the parents in order to set up a conference. Bus tardiness will be taken up with the bus company.

Afternoon Dismissal

- **Nursery and Kindergarten:** Dismissal time is noon every day for half-day Kindergarten and Nursery. Full-day Kindergarten and Nursery is dismissed at 3pm.
- **Grades:** Dismissal time is 3pm. Children will wait in the courtyard for their parents. Parents must wait by the tree at the entrance to the courtyard to meet their children at the end of the day. If parents want their children to play in the play yard after school, they must walk their children from the courtyard across the drive to the play yard. Parents are responsible for supervising the after school play of their children. Two teachers will escort bus riders to Coral Street where they will board their buses. Parents picking up their children at 3pm from the courtyard should not park on Coral Street because the buses pick up the children there.

- **Releasing of children:** Children will only be released to a parent or a person that the school is notified by the parent in writing or by a phone call as authorized to pick the child up. If this person is unfamiliar to our school, proper identification will be requested.
- **Late pickups:** If you know you are going to be more than a few minutes late picking up your child, please notify the Front Office. Teachers and staff often have meetings and other obligations after the school day ends and are not available to supervise children whose parents are late picking them up. Children will not be placed in Extended Care, but will instead be sent to wait in the Front Office. If a child waits for pickup past 3:10pm more than three times, your TADS account will be charged for the day at the same rate as an occasional Extended Care user.

Permission to Walk Home

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh appreciates that many in our community are within walking distance (less than a mile) of the school. Students in First–Eighth Grades are permitted to walk to and from school without an adult, and while they supervise younger siblings. Students within this category must have a signed permission slip from a parent (one copy to be kept on file in the Front Office all year, one copy to be kept with the class teacher), and students must sign their own permission slip stating they take responsibility for their actions between school and their final destination. Parents are to communicate with the Front Office which days (if this is an occasional permission) students are to walk home without adult supervision. Regardless of whether this is a standing expectation or a one-time experience, the Front Office must be aware of all transportation changes for all students.

After School Playground Usage

In consideration of the child’s emotional and physical well-being and the importance of going home when the school day and/or particular program is finished, the school’s faculty requests that, upon dismissal,

children picked up by a parent or guardian leave the school premises in a timely fashion.

Any child not enrolled in an after-school program or under the school's supervision that is staying past the 3pm dismissal must be under the complete supervision of a parent or guardian. Students who have been dismissed from school are permitted to play with other supervised children in the Grades play yard until 3:15pm or until the Extended Care program arrives on the Grades play yard that afternoon. Because of the requirements of the Department of Human Services, the Extended Care program must maintain the appropriate staffing ratios at all times and is responsible for the well-being of the children enrolled in the program, and therefore, cannot accommodate the supervision of students not enrolled in the program.

Attendance at After School Clubs and Events

Students must be up-to-date on their homework and school work in order to participate in after school clubs. If a student currently not enrolled at the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh wishes to attend an after school club, he/ she will need to go through an application process and a meeting with the After School Clubs director to assess if this is a good fit for all.

Bus Riding

The City of Pittsburgh provides bus service to and from school for all residents of the city in both public and private schools. If you do not dwell within the city limits, please contact your local school district's transportation office to determine if you are eligible for bussing to a private school and to arrange for bus transportation of your child. Your bus service will follow the schedule of your school district's schools. Therefore, early dismissal transportation home is often limited and two-hour delay schedules are subject to the decision of the school district within which you live. If you have problems with your bus service, i.e. pickup times, length of bus ride, stop locations, it is your responsibility to contact the bus company and/or transportation department of your school district. Bus drivers and companies are given a school year calendar and a list of our rules and policies at the beginning of the year,

but your best means of communication with your bus driver and company is through meeting the bus driver and keeping him/her aware of your needs and concerns. We expect all children to obey the rules of the proper behavior and safety on the bus. Sick children should not ride the bus (see Illnesses and Injuries). If there are any problems in this area, the teachers may consult with the bus driver and/or the parents to attend to the matter.

Due to changes in many school districts' transportation policies, no student will be allowed to ride home on another student's bus without permission from their district. It is the parents' responsibility to contact their school district if they wish to have another child ride home with their child on the bus. Parents must have the school district fax a signed permission, with this district's letterhead or fax cover sheet, to the school for our files, so that we have on record that they are accepting responsibility for that child. In addition, once permission is granted, it is both families' responsibility to notify the school the day of the change in transportation and your responsibility to alert the bus company/driver that permission was granted by the district for the change. Copies of your child's school district's transportation policy are available from the Front Office.

Behavioral Bus Policy

Students are representatives of our school during the bus ride to and from in the morning and afternoon. Due to this we expect the behavior on the bus to reflect positively. Students are expected to remain seated when on the bus, with quiet activities or conversations. If a student's behavior is unacceptable to the bus driver, the student may be officially written up, with a copy of the write up going to the student's file after the teacher sees it. If a student receives three write ups within one academic year he/she will be suspended from the bus for one week.

For all children riding buses:

- Wear your seatbelt (if available) and stay in your seat.
- Don't yell or throw things on or out of the bus.
- Keep hands and feet to yourself.
- Avoid sharing lunchbox items.

- Speak politely to your fellow riders and be considerate to your driver.
- Leave toys at home (no MP3 or cellphone usage, iPods, and handheld electronic game devices).
- Weapons, knives, and matches are not allowed on the bus.

Please review these basic rules with your children that ride the bus.

Transportation Changes

If the Front Office is not promptly informed of a transportation change, confusion and potentially unsafe situations can arise. While we understand that emergencies may occur, we ask that you make every effort to communicate changes via the policies below:

- For a morning transportation change, please call your child's bus company directly.
- For an afternoon transportation change, please notify the Front Office. Even if you have already communicated the change to your child's teacher, you must also tell the Front Office.
- Changes in transportation arrangements must be given to the Front Office by 9am on the day of the change. Please do not send changes more than 24 hours in advance.
- Please send an e-mail to frontoffice@waldorfpittsburgh.org with "Transportation Change," your child's name, and the date in the subject line.
- If you must call with a last-minute transportation change, do so no later than 2pm.
- Please note that children may not initiate transportation changes.

It is your personal responsibility to also call your child's bus company and notify them of any changes, including absence. If a student does not ride the bus for more than three days in a row, the bus company is

permitted to drop the stop from the route, so it is advisable to communicate to the company when your student will be absent for more than three days (due to illness, vacation, etc.)

Pets

With the exception of service dogs, dogs are not permitted on campus. For safety and possible allergic reactions, if you walk your dog while dropping off/picking up your child, please keep your dog on a leash outside the fence with an adult. If you bring other household pets with you when you drop off or pick up your child, we ask that these animals be left in your car.

Snow Closings and Delays

During extreme weather conditions the school might be closed or delayed. Tune into local TV, radio stations and websites--WPXI, KDKA, or WTAE--for announcements. Information about changes to the school's schedule is also available through the school's website (www.waldorfpittsburgh.org). An automatic notification will also be sent to parents' cell phones or emails as a text message and/or e-mail through the Campus Wire automatic notification system. Parents in all programs must sign up for this service in TADS when enrolling or re-enrolling their children.

School Delays

- School delays apply to the entire school, with the exception of the Little Friends program. However, in the event of severe weather, the Little Friends program may also be delayed. All closing and delay announcements will clarify if the Little Friends program is delayed.
- In the event of a two-hour delay, the Nursery and Kindergarten will begin at 10:15am with the rest of the school.
- On delay days, school begins at 10:15am. Please remember that your child's bus follows the schedule of the school district in which you reside. Please be aware that we are not prepared to receive your child at school before 10am (two hours from the

8am time we receive them on a regular school day) if the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh has called a two-hour delay.

- Please give your child a snack or late breakfast before they come to school. Grade students do not need to bring a morning snack on delay days. Our lunch and afternoon schedule will remain the same.
- Children who normally ride the bus will have bus service home in the afternoon.

Special Events

Children are required to attend all events directly resulting from class work: plays, assemblies, musical performances, etc. Dates for all events will be given with as much advance notice as possible. Generally, these events take place during the school day.

Birthday Celebrations and Parties

Birthdays at the Waldorf School are important for the birthday child and the entire class. Teachers arrange a special classroom celebration that will be discussed with each parent before the big day. If you're planning a party at home, please be sensitive to its effect on the life of the classroom. Parties to which all but a few are invited are difficult for the excluded children. If you can't invite the whole class, we ask that you invite less than half the class— just the boys, just the girls, or a small group of your child's closest friends. We also ask that you avoid scheduling parties on school nights and that you send invitations through the mail to avoid hurt feelings and confusion with school-sponsored events.

Recording Events

Picture taking and videotaping are allowed at school events with permission from the teacher. Often a designated person is chosen to tape the event to limit distraction. Copies are made to distribute to families. No flashes during performances. Cell phones should be turned to silent during performances.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of the curriculum and an appropriate time for parents to volunteer as chaperones and drivers. Whether for children in Kindergarten or students in Eighth Grade, field trips are an extension of the school experience, and therefore fall under the same behavioral guidelines as are held within the school. Students are expected to treat peers and adults in a kind and respectful manner and take responsibility for their belongings and behavior. Chaperones are expected to have clearances on file with the school. This paperwork must be completed before chaperoning any field trip.

Illicit/illegal substances of any kind are not allowed on school grounds or on any school sanctioned trip. Intimate or sexual interactions are not permitted. Infractions to either of these rules are reason to be immediately sent home from the trip, as well as further consequences once back at school. There are several overnight field trips that reflect the developmental stage of children in our school. These include the farm trip in Third Grade, the Pentathlon in Fifth Grade (hosted by the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor), the Medieval Games in Sixth Grade (hosted by the Cincinnati Waldorf School), and the Renaissance Faire in Seventh Grade (hosted by the Spring Garden Waldorf School). Eighth Grade classes will also take an overnight trip toward the end of the year with the focus on spending time in nature, community service, and bringing a close to their Waldorf experience. These trips may include a fundraising element and/or require financial support from class families.

Health and Nutrition

Because Waldorf education is concerned with the whole child and finds a relationship between health and learning, you will find your child's teacher receptive to any comments you wish to share about your child's general health, past and present illnesses, sleeping and eating habits, stresses, and rhythms of home life. Teachers appreciate written notes when parents need to share specific information.

Illnesses and Injuries (Three-Fold Policy)

Keeping Sick Children Home (Responsibility of Parents to a Sick Child)

In a school where colds and other minor ailments are commonplace, it is essential to try to prevent spreading contagious diseases to other children and their families. Children who are not feeling well are usually unable to enjoy being at school. We therefore ask you to keep sick children at home where they can be given the extra care and attention they need. Please do not put your child on the bus if he/she is sick. If a child has been running a fever, they should not return to school until they have been fever-free for 24 hours. If you find that your child has contracted a highly contagious disease such as lice, conjunctivitis, strep throat, ringworm, pinworm, etc., the child must stay home until he/she is cleared by the physician and is symptom-free. Please contact the Office Manager or class teacher immediately so the community may be informed.

Signs and symptoms for keeping your child at home:

- Cough
- Feeling cold/shivering
- Fever (pale or flushed face, glazed eyes, warm forehead, and temperature above 99.6°F)
- Sore throat
- Unusual lethargy, grouchiness, or weepiness
- Unusual unwillingness to get up in the morning
- Diarrhea or vomiting, including the night before
- Inflamed/pink eyes (may be conjunctivitis)

Requirements for parents to follow to avoid exposing other children in the classroom to possibly contagious illness are as follows:

- Children with a temperature above 99.6°F must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Injuries that happen at home or over the weekend should be taken care of prior to returning to school.
- If a child vomits or has diarrhea during the night or in the morning before school, that child should be kept at home for 24 hours from the last episode.
- If a child has a productive cough that cannot be controlled with medication, then that child should stay home.
- If a child has been diagnosed with a communicable illness such as chickenpox, impetigo, scabies, lice and/or ringworm, or conjunctivitis, that child should be kept home until he/she is cleared by a doctor.
- If a child has eyes that are red, swollen, itchy, producing purulent drainage, or have a crusty appearance upon awakening, that child should be kept at home until cleared by a doctor and is symptom-free.

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh follows the Allegheny County Health Department guidelines for keeping children home from school after contraction of a communicable disease. Please note that if children are still displaying symptoms of a communicable disease, even after treatment and clearance by a doctor, the school will ask to have the child remain out of the classroom. Additionally, if treatment begins mid-day and a 24-hour exclusion from school is required post treatment, the child is not eligible to return to school the following day mid-day.

- *Pink Eye*: Child is excluded from school 24 hours after the initiation of treatment.
- *Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever*: Child is excluded from school for 24 hours after the initiation of treatment. Note from doctor required for return.

- *Lice*: Child is excluded from school until treated. Child must have a note from the doctor or a professional lice removal service that the child is lice and nit free.
- *Chicken Pox*: Child is excluded from school until all blisters are dried and crusted, usually five days from the last crop of blisters to erupt. A physician's clearance is required to return to school
- *Impetigo, scabies, and ringworm*: Child is excluded from school until judged non-infectious by a physician.

Responsibility of Teacher to Sick or Injured Child

If a Grades teacher, Special Subject teacher, or Early Childhood teacher observes that a child is sick and needs to go home, the lead teacher, an assistant, or an older child will accompany the sick child to the office. A written note will accompany the child explaining the symptoms of the child's illness and asking the Office Manager to call the parents or other designated emergency contact person to pick up their child who is sick and needs to go home. The teachers will not administer medications or oral homeopathy from their classroom unless it is a minor injury.

If a child is injured due to a fall that results in a scratch, cut, or bruise and there is not excessive bleeding or bruising, the lead teacher may administer some minor first aid in the room. Before offering homeopathic remedies, the teacher must be sure that there is consent for administration from the parent. Each class will have a small first aid kit in the classroom which will include the following:

- Band Aids
- Teas
- Calendula gel
- Arnica gel

Responsibility of Office Manager to Sick or Injured Child

Once the child is taken to the office, the Office Manager will see to the immediate care of the child. Medical forms may be retrieved and special attention should be made of allergies, and what medications or homeopathic remedies can be given to the child based on consent forms completed by parents. When a sick or injured child enters the office, the Office Manager must provide a quiet and calm environment. Once the child is stable and settled, the child will lie on the cot and the Office Manager will call the parents or designated emergency contact person to come and pick up their child. The Office Manager will not leave the office if there is a sick child waiting for pick up. Sick children will not be sent home on the bus.

Upon discharge to home, the Office Manager will change the bedding on the bed and restock supplies as needed. The school community will also be informed (through the newsletter, a note home, or an email message) if a child has been sent home with a highly contagious disease such as lice, conjunctivitis, strep throat, ringworm, pinworm, etc.

Care of the space and proper supplies:

- There will be an extra set of bedding and half dozen pillow cases available daily.
- There will be a wool blanket available for chilled or shivering children.
- Routinely, all bedding on the bed will be washed every two weeks, unless it is necessary to do so before the end of two weeks.
- Fresh filtered water available daily with clean cups.

Some examples of first aid supplies that we may use are:

- Tissues
- Band aids

- Access to ice or packages of frozen vegetables for bumps
- Tea pot w/herbal teas and clean cups
- Topical antibiotic cream
- Homeopathic gels: Arnica (for bruises)
- Calendula (for cuts/scrapes), SSSting (for bee stings/bug bites), Calamine lotion for poison ivy

Homeopathic remedies:

- Arnica (head injuries/shock)
- Ignatia (fear/stage fright)
- Belladonna (sudden onset of fever w/flushed face or earache)
- Aconite (earache-less extreme than Belladonna)
- Chamomile (earache/gentle, quiet weeping)

Medications

If medications must be taken during school hours, please send a note to your child's teacher describing the medication and its possible side effects. Medications brought to the school will be kept in the office and dispensed by the office staff. Although we keep a supply of often-used medicines and homeopathic remedies at school, we cannot dispense these to any child without a release from parents. Prescription medicine requires a Prescription Medicine Permission Form, which includes a section that must be completed by a physician.

Emergencies

In case of emergency, parents will be called. Based on the urgency of the situation, 911 will be called or an Administrative Staff member or teacher will take the injured child to the hospital.

Absences

Parents are required to call the office when their child will be absent from school. Advance notice and class teacher approval is necessary for extended non-medical absences. After a child has been absent, a note from the parent explaining the reason for the absence is required. If a student is absent for 3 consecutive days, a note from a parent is required to explain the absence. If the absence was due to a disease or other medical condition, a note from a doctor is required. If a student has 15 or more unexcused absences, the parents may be contacted by the Faculty Chair to set up a conference with the Leadership Team.

In case of injury parents are expected to communicate clearly the expectation for modified activities to the Front Office, Games and Class Teachers so that students' healing can be supported. A doctor's note is appreciated.

Outdoor Play Policy

The Waldorf Curriculum has a strong outdoor component. A portion of each day is spent participating in outdoor activity and play. To make this experience the richest possible, it is important that the children are prepared and are properly dressed for the weather. Appropriate clothing is listed in the "Seasonal Clothing for School" section of the Parent Handbook. If for some reason your child cannot participate in the daily outdoor activity, please evaluate whether or not your child is healthy enough to come to school that day. She/he may need a day of rest. If you decide your child is well enough to come to school, she/he should be well enough to participate in all of the daily activities. It will be at the teacher's discretion whether or not the children will go out in the event of extreme weather including high or low temperatures, high winds, etc.

Nutrition

Nursery and Kindergarten

We serve Nursery and Kindergarten students healthy snacks such as home-baked bread, muffins, porridge, fruit, and herbal tea. If a child has special food requirements that prohibit him/her from eating nuts,

honey, dairy products, wheat, fruit, or other foods please notify the child's teacher in writing. Note that some areas of our school are nut-free, so please check with the Front Office for details.

Grade School

In keeping with the school's desire to model healthy eating habits for the children, please provide your Grades children with a healthy snack and lunch. Please avoid sweet foods and drinks. Soda and energy drinks are prohibited.

Birthday Celebrations

In the Grades, each child may bring a special snack to share with classmates such as cake, fruit salad, muffins, or healthy drink. The teacher will discuss this with parents prior to the child's class birthday celebration. Birthday celebrations in the Early Childhood Program vary, and will be discussed early in the year. See also Birthday Celebrations in the General Information section.

Nut Policy

At the beginning of each school year, the Early Childhood and Grades Faculty Chairs will inform the community of any restrictions on the consumption of nuts on each floor of the school based on the enrollment of any children with severe nut allergies that year.

Toilet-Training Policy

Children entering the Nursery and Kindergarten programs need to be toilet-trained prior to their first day of school. The child should be able to recognize when they need to use the toilet, overcome distractions and stay focused on going to the bathroom, be able to communicate this need, and be able to use the toilet with minimal assistance.

Diapers or pull-ups are not to be worn at school during the school day, except possibly at afternoon nap time. While accidents do occur, they should be infrequent.

If a child has not successfully completed toilet training at the time of application, a series of follow-up conversations from the child's teacher will occur over the summer to determine the child's readiness for the Nursery or Kindergarten programs. If a child is having frequent accidents during the first few weeks of school, the teacher will set a meeting with the parents to create an action plan.

Reverence, Respect, and Responsibility: Expected Student Behaviors and Attitudes

Receive the children in reverence, educate them with love, let them go forth in freedom.

- Rudolf Steiner

In a Waldorf School, alongside the original “three Rs” is another set—reverence, respect, and responsibility. All are intimately connected. Teachers strive to cultivate a sense of wonder, gratitude, and reverence. Respect is fostered throughout the Grades years, and we expect children to grow into a sense of responsibility for themselves, their school, and their community. We need less “crisis intervention” when the children and teacher have a mutual respect for others and their environment. This is the ideal underlying our daily life and work together as parents, teachers, and students.

In Waldorf Schools, discipline finds its place first and foremost with the teachers, who have as a foundation the meditative practice of focusing each day on the children under their care and guidance. This fosters a respect for each child’s essential dignity and individuality, which transforms and elevates the relationship between teacher and child. It helps the teacher to remain centered and calm in the face of difficulties, and builds a bond of trust on the child’s part. The teacher’s true authority grows out of this trust, which is based on mutual sympathy between student and teacher.

Each teacher takes practical steps to assure the smooth flow of learning within the lesson, the school day, and the year, allowing for periods of expansion and contraction, for balance between concentrated quiet work and movement activities, for a blending of the artistic and the intellectual. Teachers plan transitions within the class or between activities and give directions in a clear, step-by-step manner. Teachers also make students aware of the expected behaviors for a class or a particular lesson. For example, a painting class might be conducted in silence, while quiet talking would be acceptable or even desirable during a more social activity.

Even allowing for differences between classes, there is a basic school-wide agreement on what constitutes acceptable behavior. Inherent in this agreement is the recognition of the power of form, rhythm, and habit in the students' lives. By ensuring that students are familiar with and understand all rules, teachers create a sense of security and clarity within which the individual student's freedom is nurtured. When form is strong in the school, adults can focus their strength, energy, and time on the students' authentic needs. By clarifying rules, boundaries, and form, adults create a breathing space in which mutual respect and understanding can flourish.

In this light, we expect students to cultivate an attitude of respect toward their teachers, their fellow students, their school, and themselves. Toward this goal, we have established the following guidelines for student behavior:

Rules and Guidelines

1. Students will treat all adults and children respectfully.
2. Students will follow all classroom rules and limits, whether established by the classroom teacher, a subject teacher, an assistant, or a substitute teacher.
3. Students will commit no physical harm to others.
4. Students will not destroy or damage school property or personal property.
5. Students will not use foul language and terms such as shut-up, stupid, and other demeaning expressions.
6. Students will respect personal privacy. For example, only one child may enter a bathroom stall at a time.
7. Students will keep hallways, bathrooms, and classrooms neat and clean. Hang hats, boots, bags, and other personal items on hooks or stow them neatly on the hallway shelves.
8. Students will not run in the hallways or classrooms.

9. Students will not hang on, crawl on, or otherwise occupy banisters or areas around stairwells. Objects may not be thrown down into the stairwell.
10. Students will avoid wastefulness and messiness with food. They will approach food with respect and gratitude.
11. Students will leave all toys and electronics at home. Early Childhood children may leave small toys in cubbies. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the teacher.
12. Students will not bring gum or candy to school.
13. Students will not have alcohol, cigarettes, or illegal substances.
14. Students will not participate in intimate behavior with each other.

Disciplinary Policies & Procedures

When a rule is broken, the consequence will depend on the situation. Any Faculty or Staff member may handle a minor disciplinary issue in a manner appropriate to the offense. Consequences may include a verbal warning, a written apology, a work assignment, detention, or recommended suspension. With any serious infraction, there will be a meeting between the student and teacher(s) involved within 48 hours of the occurrence. If the situation cannot be resolved internally between the teacher(s) and student, or if the consequence is a detention or suspension, the parents will be notified that day. If a student is suspended for any reason, there must be a conversation between parent(s) and teacher(s) before the student can return to school. A Faculty or Staff member who has a conflict of interest will be excused from any disciplinary process. All disciplinary processes are conducted so that the privacy and rights of the individuals involved are protected.

Serious or chronic breaches of acceptable conduct that could result in suspension, probation, or dismissal will be referred to the Early Childhood Lead Teacher and the Early Childhood Faculty Chair for Early

Childhood students; the class teacher and the Grade School Faculty Chair for Grade School students. These individuals will make decisions regarding suspension, disciplinary probation, or possible dismissal. Egregious or chronic violations of school conduct standards may result in immediate dismissal.

Suspension

Suspension from school can serve a variety of purposes and is often more than merely punitive. Suspension is a response to a serious breach of trust between the student and the school, or between students and classmates. It can be beneficial to allow time away from school or the class for breathing, reflection, and consideration of healthy steps forward. It can allow time for conversations between teachers and parents. Any suspension is followed by a conference with the student, his/her parents/guardians, class teacher, and any other relevant party the Faculty deems important to attend the meeting prior to the child returning to school. A behavioral contract that includes a probationary period may be required in order for the student to return to school following the suspension. A behavioral contract will outline actions necessary for the child to remain enrolled in the school as well as determine the duration of the probationary period. Students who are suspended and cannot be supported successfully so as to re-enter the classroom and school community may be dismissed. Suspensions will be reported to the Faculty and Staff. Suspension will be recorded in the student's permanent file.

Disciplinary Probation

Disciplinary probation may follow a suspension. Disciplinary probation is preceded by a meeting between the student, the parents/guardians, the class teacher, the Grades or Early Childhood Chair, and any other relevant party that the faculty deems important to attend the meeting. A behavioral contract that has been approved by the Leadership Committee after reviewing the document will be presented to the family. If the parents/guardians and students agree to the behavioral contract, all parties will sign the agreement. Disciplinary probation status will be reported to the Faculty/Staff.

Disciplinary Dismissal

Disciplinary dismissal is the termination of the student's relationship to the school for disciplinary reasons. Disciplinary dismissal may be recorded in the student's permanent record and on the student's transcript. Disciplinary dismissal will be recommended by the class teacher in consultation with the Special Subject teachers and given to the Leadership Committee for review. A member of Leadership will convey the school's decision verbally and in writing to the family. Disciplinary dismissals will be reported to the Faculty, Staff, and Board.

Administrative Case

This occurs when a parent does not support Waldorf education at home, does not support their child's teacher, or is not supportive of the administration in its efforts to mediate in these situations. This can be demonstrated by, but is not limited to, failure to respond to attempts to address certain issues or situations, inappropriate forms of communication with any representative of the school, and/or undermining the relationship of the teachers with the child. In these cases the issue would be taken by the teacher to the Leadership Committee for discussion and decision according to the following procedure:

- Faculty member brings carefully documented history of lack or parental support to Leadership.
- The Leadership Committee acts as a mediator at a meeting with the parents/guardians and the class teacher.
- The Leadership Committee designs a plan of action for the parents/ guardians to follow so that the student can remain enrolled in the school. The plan could include action items for the parents/guardians including but not limited to requested meetings with other professionals, scheduled conversations, etc. The parents/guardians must agree to the plan by signing both the plan and a copy of the plan and returning it to the school by a certain deadline.

- If the parents/guardians agree to the plan, then the Leadership Committee works to hold them accountable for their promises of action.
- If the plan of action is not signed and returned to the school or signed but not carried out by the parents/guardians, then the situation is brought to full Faculty. Full Faculty utilizes their decision making process to reach a consensus decision regarding whether the student can remain at the school and under what conditions, or whether the student is expelled from the school.
- It is the responsibility of the Leadership Committee to carry out a decision to expel the student.

Non-Disciplinary Probation & Dismissal Policy

On rare occasions it becomes clear that the school is not meeting a student's needs or that a student's needs are having an adverse effect on the class as a whole. In such cases, the faculty will take the following steps:

- A child study or a meeting of all the student's teachers and the Grades or Early Childhood Chair will usually occur.
- A meeting with the parents/guardians will take place, in which recommendations and a timeline of probation will be outlined. This meeting will be documented. A copy of the notes will be given to the parents/ guardians and another placed in the student's file.
- Throughout the probationary period, the class teacher, in consultation with the rest of the Grades or Early Childhood Faculty, will document the student's work and behavior on a regular basis.
- At the end of the probationary period, the class teacher and the Grades or Early Childhood Chair will review the student's records and determine future steps. These may include ending a

probationary period, further probationary recommendations, or dismissal from the school.

Educational and Behavioral Support

On a case-by-case basis, the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh (WSP) may determine that additional educational or behavioral supports are needed for a child beyond what the WSP can offer. WSP does not have special education services. The Intermediate Unit offers some services and is funded by the state public educational system but additional tutoring or supports are the financial responsibility of the family. Please contact your class teacher if you wish to have your child assessed by the Intermediate Unit.

Conflict of Interest

A Faculty or Staff member will be excused from participating in any disciplinary process if he/she has a conflict of interest in the particular case.

Privacy

All disciplinary processes are conducted so that the privacy and the rights of the individuals involved are protected.

Bullying Policy

I. GOALS

1. To promote a spirit of social inclusion among the students at Waldorf School of Pittsburgh where each person is accepted and respected and where negative, harmful behaviors are quickly addressed.
2. To help students who exhibit bullying (and teasing) behaviors to become aware of and to transform their attitude and actions for the better. To help children who are the targets of such behavior to deal with them appropriately.
3. To outline methods for the prevention of bullying behaviors and for dealing with them when they occur.

4. To provide clear procedures for the communication of such behaviors among teachers and with the parents of the children involved.

II. DEFINITIONS

This Bullying Policy is meant to address patterns of bullying behavior exhibited by any student at Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. When a child exhibits such behavior we do not automatically assume that she/he is a “bad” child, nor do we ever address her/him as such. Rather, our goal as stated above is to help such children become aware of and transform their behavior for the better.

- *Bullying Behavior*: Repeated aggressive behavior which creates distress in, and/or causes harm to, another and includes any or all of the following: physical violence or threat of physical violence, verbal abuse, aggressive exclusion of another from a group activity, intimidation, interference with the property of others, spreading malicious rumors, and/or incitement of others to carry out any of the aforementioned points.
- *Target*: One who perceives him/herself as the focus of any of the behavior listed above, and is negatively affected by that behavior, with signs of emotional or physical distress, intimidation, loss of self-esteem, and feelings of powerlessness to change the situation.
- *Bully-Target Relationship*: A relationship between two people in which there is an imbalance of power and which is detrimental not only to the people directly involved, but also to the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh Community as a whole.
- *Witness*: A child or adult who has observed bullying behavior and who may be called on to help describe what happened.
- *Patterns*: When aggressive behavior recurs three or more times, it will be considered a pattern.
- *Rough and Tumble Play*: Developmentally appropriate play that may involve gross motor movement (leaping, rolling, throwing,

tagging, hiding) and body contact, and when allowed will involve observation by a teacher and intervention if necessary.

III. PREVENTION

A. Prevention in the Classroom

1. Teach children about bullying behavior in general and the pain that is caused, and teach what to do when such behavior occurs. (“I statements” can be taught and situations roleplayed: “I don’t like what you’re doing, please stop,” “That just crossed the line, please stop,” “Stop hitting me!” etc.)
2. Help children to perceive that people have different abilities; each person is unique and special.
3. Encourage children to brainstorm ways they can avoid hurting and be active in supporting each other; praise their efforts.
4. Review Waldorf School of Pittsburgh’s Code of Conduct periodically and suggest any needed additions to it which may include creating an age-appropriate class code of conduct each year.

B. The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh Code of Conduct

We are all part of one human family. We will treat each other as we wish to be treated—with kindness, honesty, and respect. We will listen when others ask us to stop a behavior which is perceived as disrespectful or unkind, and we will strive to find a courageous voice in ourselves to perceive and speak the truth when we witness such behavior in others. We will honor and uphold the dignity of each member of our human family with right work and right action.

- I will strive to be polite, honest, respectful and kind to others.
- I will strive to be tolerant of the differences of others.
- I will strive to use friendly and positive words with others, rather than rude, hurtful, or insulting words.

- I will strive to welcome my schoolmates to join with me in activities and games, and I will strive to play fairly and harmoniously at all times.

C. Prevention on the Playground

- There are four outdoor play areas at the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh:
 - * The Early Childhood Play yard
 - * The Grades Play yard
 - * In front of the Little Friends House
 - * In front of the school

Prevention of unacceptable playground behavior should include:

- Teaching that acceptable play is play that should be safe for all. When rough and tumble play is allowed (see definitions), the supervising teacher will observe and intervene as necessary.
- Active observation and patrolling of the playground areas by teachers during recess.

D. Prevention in the Hallways and Bathrooms

- During class, one child at a time (from each class) will be allowed to go to the bathroom.

E. Prevention at Home

- Parents are encouraged to discuss appropriate social behavior with their children at home.
- Teachers may encourage communication between the parents of children who need guidance with their relationship at school, encouraging play dates, guided play, and conversations about bullying and teasing behaviors.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER’S INITIAL RESPONSE TO BULLYING BEHAVIORS

A. Preschool and Grades One–Two

1. Acknowledge the distressed child using statements such as:

“Lucy, your knee is hurt.”

“Bobby, by the look on your face, I see that you’re upset.”

2. Gather information or clues for possible reasons and scenarios

Hold back your assumptions.

Use statements like:

“You may tell me what happened to your knee.”

b. If the distressed child cannot speak at the moment, elicit information from observers:

“Who can tell me what may have happened to her knee?”

3. Acknowledge the perpetrator

a. Avoid accusatory statements.

“Mary, you look angry. Tell me about Lucy’s knee.”

b. If another child is accused as the perpetrator, be sure to acknowledge him/her also by observance, and allow him/her to speak.

c. Keep the two children close by, so the injured is cared for, and injurer is heard, both in the presence of the other.

4. State boundaries and code of conduct

“Ah, when Lucy said you couldn’t play, you got angry and pushed her down. Mary, you may not hurt other children. Our hands are for work and play, and not for pushing. Tell Lucy you will not push her again. Now, Lucy, Mary would like to play with you. Let’s find a place for her.”

5. Adult participates in play with the children as long as needed and stays alert for a pattern.

B. Grades Three–Eight

1. Acknowledge the distressed child

Use statements such as:

“John, it looks like you’re hurt, upset, etc. Tell me what happened.”

2. Gather information

Ask witnesses what they observed:

“Lizzy and Tim, did you see what happened to John? Please tell me but let’s speak one at a time. Lizzy, go first.”

3. Acknowledge the perpetrator

Avoid accusations:

“Sam, it sounds like you were involved in this. Tell me what happened.”

4. State boundaries and code of conduct. Some examples:

“Sam, you know that pushing someone down in anger can really hurt. This isn’t harmonious play. Are you

ready to apologize to Evan now? OK, I think he heard you. What do you say, Evan?

And Sam, what are you going to do the next time you get so angry? Right, sit out for a while so you can cool down. Did any of your classmates suggest that to Sam when he got mad?"

"Jenny, it sounds like you've been teasing Tina about her hair. You can see she's hurt. What do you think Tina needs right now? We're trying to treat one another with respect, right? Tina, can you accept Jenny's apology? No? You girls need to sit down and figure out how to make things better."

5. Adult supervises the children involved as long as needed and stays alert for a pattern.

V. FURTHER INTERVENTIONS

For use if the initial responses outlined above have been unsuccessful and a pattern has been established.

A. Conferences with the teacher and all children involved:

1. Informal Conference

An Informal Conference can happen immediately on the playground or in the classroom following or very soon after the event. The point is to have the children acknowledge and find ways to improve their behavior in light of our Code of Conduct.

2. Formal Conference

A Formal Conference is a prearranged and preplanned meeting at which both the bullying and targeted child are called on to speak, along with witnesses to the ongoing pattern of behavior. The teacher guides the bullying child to state ways she/he can change his/her behavior and helps all the children involved in developing their social skills. A prior meeting of the teacher with

each of the children involved may be necessary to help them prepare for the conference. Eighth Grade mediators may be called on here. Such a conference would be held in a case of ongoing, harmful behavior.

B. Parent-teacher meetings include the following:

1. Decide on appropriate consequences at home for misbehavior at school.
2. Brainstorm ways to counsel the children in question and to help them transform their behavior.
3. Set a date for another meeting to review progress.

C. Special Subject and recess duty teachers will be informed of the situation by the class teacher and advised to be alert.

D. Supplementary interventions to help the children in question may involve the following:

1. A child study in the Faculty meeting.
2. Creation of an individualized behavior plan
3. Consultation with outside experts
4. Dietary and other changes at home.

Cooperation between teachers and parents is necessary for these interventions to be successful.

E. Suspension

If the child's bullying behavior has not changed in the course of the interventions mentioned above, suspension may follow and will involve a written behavioral contract as condition of return, signed by the parents and class teacher as well as by the student (if the child is nine or older).

Suspension may also follow if the parents are unwilling to support the interventions recommended by the Faculty, in which case an agreement to do so would have to be made before the child could return to school.

F. Dismissal

If a child is still not able to alter his or her behavior, or if parents are unwilling to cooperate, dismissal may follow.

VI. PROCEDURES

A. For those cases when bullying behavior is observed by someone other than a teacher.

1. What happens when a child reports an incident to a teacher?

a. Teacher brings the children involved together to evaluate the situation, or, if a child is too distressed for this, will speak with each child separately.

b. Teacher implements appropriate intervention.

c. Teacher contacts parent of any child who is obviously distressed the same day and describes what happened, what the consequences are/will be and stays alert for a pattern.

d. Teacher contacts parent of the bullying child the same day to describe the incident and the intervention taken.

e. Special Subject and recess duty teachers will be informed of the situation by the class teacher and advised to be alert.

2. What happens when a parent reports an incident to the class teacher?

- a. Class teacher then checks with the teacher on duty or with children who may have witnessed the event as soon as possible.
- b. Class teacher then reports back to parent as soon as possible what the teacher on duty and/or other witnesses observed, the action that is to be taken while maintaining confidentiality, and possible future strategies to work toward transformation if a pattern is evident.
- c. If no teacher observed the incident and there is no other witness, the parents would be so informed and the class teacher stays alert for a pattern.
- d. Special Subject and recess duty teachers will be informed of the situation by the class teacher and advised to be alert.

B. For preschool and class teachers in reporting to a parent:

1. When a child is emotionally distressed or physically injured, the teacher steps in with the appropriate intervention, endeavors to contact his or her parents the same day and describes what happened and the intervention taken, and then looks for a pattern.
2. In such a case, the teacher also contacts the parents of the bullying child as soon as possible to inform them of the incident, the intervention taken, and looks for a pattern.
3. If a pattern of harmful bullying behavior appears, the teacher contacts parents of children involved to inform them of interventions recommended/taken at school and to arrange for a meeting. See the section on Parent-Teacher Meetings above.

C. For Record Keeping

Minutes of parent-teacher meetings should be kept, dated, and distributed to the attendees. Relevant letters, behavioral contracts, etc. should be kept by the teacher and in the student's file in the office.

Early Childhood Rough and Tumble Play Policy

While there can be situations that involve bullying in the Early Childhood programs, many of the behaviors that are defined as bullying with the older child are common developmental stages that the young child new to group settings may experience while learning to socialize, express themselves verbally, and control their impulses.

Some examples of these behaviors are: grabbing, hitting, pushing, biting, scratching, and screaming.

The Early Childhood teachers work closely with the children, and parents if necessary, to guide them through these challenges and model appropriate behavior.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying by a Waldorf School of Pittsburgh student toward another Waldorf School of Pittsburgh student or community member is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and the Waldorf School's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. The Waldorf School prohibits acts of cyber bullying by students through the use of any Waldorf School-owned, -operated, and -supervised technologies. The Waldorf School also prohibits acts of cyber bullying by students when on the Waldorf School premises, on field trips, or during after school clubs.

Definition: The use of electronic information and communication devices, including but not limited to—email, instant messaging, text messaging, mobile phones, blogs, chat rooms, social media, and/or websites that:

1. Deliberately threatens, harasses, and/or intimidates an individual or group of individuals;

2. Places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or damage to his/her property; or
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh.

Procedures

Any Waldorf School student or parent of a Waldorf School student who believes he/she or his/her child has or is being subjected to cyber bullying, or any person who has reason to believe a student is being cyber bullied, shall immediately make a report to the class teacher. The class teacher will immediately inform Leadership Committee who will support an investigation of the matter. In the event the investigation indicates cyber bullying was committed by a Waldorf student on school grounds and/or using school technologies, the student will be subject to appropriate discipline.

If the investigation indicates cyber bullying was committed by a Waldorf School student using non-Waldorf School technologies away from Waldorf School grounds or not on a field trip, Leadership Committee and the class teacher may reach out to the parent(s) of the student(s) who sent the messages; in extreme cases the investigation results may be sent to local law enforcement. This authority shall be exercised only when it is reasonably necessary for the student's physical or emotional safety, security, and well-being, or for the safety, security, and well-being of other students, staff, or Waldorf School property.

When finding appropriate consequences to acts of cyber bullying, Leadership Committee will work closely with the class teacher and parents of the students to strive to heal wounds, provide safe spaces, and offer support for working through the conflict. In extreme cases, acts of cyber bullying on Waldorf School property or with Waldorf School technology may result in suspension or expulsion. Acts of retaliation against any person who reports cyber bullying in good faith are not acceptable and can result in suspension or expulsion.

Upper Elementary After School Work Period

At the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh, students are expected to complete in-class and homework assignments in a timely fashion. We understand when life circumstances do not allow this and expect students to communicate these exceptions via phone call the night before. In situations where class or homework is not completed, a student may be instructed to attend an After School Work Period on Tuesdays from 3–4:15pm.

Students will be instructed by a teacher to stay for the Work Period in the following cases:

- Late homework
- Work missed due to tardiness
- Missed instrument practice
- Unfinished Main Lesson work
- As the need arises for work to be completed

In the case that a student needs to stay for the Work Period, their parent will be notified by 4pm the day before (Monday) with a phone call. The teacher who has instructed the student to stay will make this phone call. This teacher will also notify the Office Manager that the student is at school for the Work Period. If a Special Subject teacher has required a student to stay, they will notify the class teacher and communicate the expectations for the assignment the student is working on.

While attending the In School Work Period students are expected to work quietly and diligently on the appropriate assignments. Families are responsible for providing transportation home at 4:15pm.

Upper Grades Detention: Thursdays 3-4 pm

Students are expected to be aware of and follow our school's rules. When students fail to meet the expectations of respectful behavior, they will be assigned an after school detention. These will take place from 3 to 4pm on Thursdays. Parents are responsible for transportation home at 4 pm. Each Upper Grades teacher will have a clipboard in their classroom to record infractions. All teachers who work with Upper Grades students will have the ability to record infractions.

Parents and the Front Office will be notified of detentions being served by 4 pm on the day before (Wednesday).

Three violations of the following infractions will earn a detention:

- Tardiness to class
- Tardiness to school
- Dress code violations
- Use of electronic devices
- Chewing gum
- Breaking other school rules

One violation of the following infractions will earn a detention or result in suspension:

- Leaving school property
- Disrespectful language or behavior
- If a student earns three Thursday detentions, he/she will have an in-school detention and possibly a parent-teacher-student conference

Dress Code

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh's dress code focuses on choices of dress that help to maintain the work of the classroom and community. Clothing should be practical and appropriate for comfortable movement throughout the activities of the school day. We aim to create a working and learning environment that is as free as possible from fads and commercial influences. The dress code is intended to foster respect and care of self and our school environment. Please help us maintain this atmosphere by choosing school-wear in accordance with our dress code.

The dress code is in effect on school days and during school-sponsored events.

Students should consider the following as they dress for school:

- Dress in a manner, including jewelry and accessories, that allows full participation in all classroom and outdoor activities, including recess.
- Wear sturdy outdoor shoes that are appropriate for all activities. Clogs, flip flops, swim shoes, high heels, and unsteady sandals are not appropriate for safe play. No "light up" or "sound" shoes.
- Wear indoor shoes while in the classroom. Indoor shoes should have a thin sole and be capable of staying on the foot during all activities. Upper Grade students are not expected to have indoor shoes at school.
- Wear appropriate clothing to stay warm and dry in all weather: rain gear, boots, hats, gloves, and snow pants.
- Choose clothing, notebooks, lunch boxes, backpacks, and other items without action figures, cartoon characters, media-oriented slogans, inappropriate pictures or writing, or media-related themes. If items with corporate brand names printed on them are chosen, the logo or writing should be small enough to be covered by a student's hands.

- Choose clothing that is clean and in good condition.
- Ensure that undergarments and midriff are not visible.
- Dress to display reverence during special occasions.
- Refrain from wearing make-up or dye their hair in Early Childhood classes through Grade 5. Nail polish is not considered make-up.

Class teachers will monitor the dress standards within their classes in accordance with the guidelines above. If a student violates the dress code, a teacher may take the following actions: speak to the student individually, ask a student to change their clothing, speak with parents, meet with the student and parents, send a student home, or bring extreme situations to the Faculty Section or Leadership Committee. Any questions of dress or personal grooming that may arise and are not covered by this code will be determined in the spirit of the existing criteria. It is up to the discretion of faculty and staff whether students are in compliance with the dress code.

What Children Need to Bring to School (and Leave at Home)

Seasonal Clothing for School

School is a place of active work and play, where a part of each day is spent outdoors, rain or shine. We walk through the neighborhood, visit parks, playgrounds, and take special trips to nearby ponds and nature reserves. To ensure an enjoyable experience for your child, we ask that parents provide practical, sensible clothing. Make sure your child is protected from wind, dampness, mud, rain, ice and snow, and send along backups for items likely to get wet during play, so we can keep your child warm and comfortable. Use the checklist below to stock your child's cubby:

For Autumn	For Winter	For Spring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sturdy shoes and mud boots ○ Warm sweater ○ Mittens and scarf ○ Waterproof raincoat and hat ○ Leggings or long pants ○ Hat that covers ears 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Warm snow boots ○ Snow suits or comfortable, warm, water-resistant outerwear ○ Warm sweater ○ Extra pair of thick socks ○ Mittens and scarf ○ Leggings or long pants ○ Hat that covers ears and head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sturdy shoes and mud boots ○ Sweater ○ Waterproof raincoat and hat

Extras: Accidents happen. Make sure your child is prepared with an extra set of clearly-labeled clothing in his or her cubby. We suggest putting everything in a bag with your child’s name on the outside. Include socks, two pairs of underwear, a shirt, pants, sweater, and mittens. Children grow fast, so check the bag a few times a year to make sure the clothing still fits and is appropriate for the season. In fall, winter, and early spring, stock extra layers (especially socks and mittens in winter). If your child brings home a bag of wet clothes, send her/him back with a new set of spares the next day.

Indoor shoes need to be sturdy and comfortable. Shoes that tie are preferred; no open-backed shoes, please—they fly off, flop off, and can interfere with movement. Slippers are not permitted, as shoes must have soles.

Outdoor shoes should protect the foot. Rugged treads help kids keep a firm footing on hills and wet surfaces. Slip-on shoes don't stand up to children's play—please make sure yours lace up. In keeping with our attempt to focus on the natural world and the children themselves (rather than their possessions), please don't let kids wear shoes that flash and beep to school.

Clothing for Painting and Baking Activities

Smock: Nursery, Kindergarten, and Grades students should bring a clearly-labeled painting smock. This can be a parent's old shirt or a thrift-store item chosen just for this purpose.

Apron: Nursery and Kindergarten students need a clearly-labeled apron for painting and baking. Your child's classroom teacher can provide a sewing pattern, or you can use an oversized t-shirt or short button-down shirt.

Lost and Found

It fills up fast with mittens, hats, scarves, shoes, jackets, precious metals—you name it. If your child is missing an item, please check in the Lost and Found basket, located just inside the courtyard entrance door. We recommend that you label your child's coats, sweaters, lunchbox, and hats using waterproof markers or printed iron-on labels.

Toys from Home

We provide a variety of beautiful, natural materials for children to use at school, and the children come to understand that these belong to everyone. We've found that items from home can sometimes change the friendly dynamic of children's interactions, leading from jealousy to fights to broken treasures and hurt feelings. You can help us keep harmony in the classroom by making sure your child leaves toys, jewelry, money, gum, and treats at home.

For more information on the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh's policies and guidelines for dress and behavior, see the section on Reverence, Respect, and Responsibility.

Electronic Media Policy

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh's relationship with media supports our view of child development, which honors the preservation of childhood. For the young children and students of our school, open-ended play opportunities, rather than fixed external images, support the growing imagination. Without the strong influence of media, students learn to independently complete tasks such as writing and calculating before relying on electronic media or digital technology. This allows students to develop capacities to relate to others and technology in a mindful way while nurturing imagination, creativity, and focus, all elements that enhance the ability to learn.

A media-free childhood is a gift for the young child and maximizes their greatest potential. Research and educators outside the Waldorf movement have observed that television, computer usage, movies, phones, and other popular media can have strong unfavorable effects on children. Electronic media interferes with children's ability to learn, play, and socialize.

As a school, we view electronic media and digital technology as useful tools that older students and adults can use to support efficient and productive work. We believe that each of us is responsible for the students of the school and understand that what one child experiences will likely appear in the classroom. With this in mind, we strongly encourage families to work with and have open communication about the following recommended guidelines.

Early Childhood Programs (Morning Garden, Little Friends, Nursery, and Kindergarten):

For families in the early childhood, we request that parents eliminate media exposure from the daily experience of the young child, including on weekends. We acknowledge that this is an ideal to strive for and not an easy task in our day and time. As teachers of your children, we are committed to supporting parents with the transition to a media-free home environment.

Grades 1 - 5

For families in grades 1-5, we ask that parents limit media exposure as much as possible, with the minimal expectation of no screen time on school nights.

Grade 6 - 8

For families in grades 6-8, it is appropriate to gradually and intentionally introduce media. We strongly encourage screen time to be limited, if not restricted, during the week, with conscious guidelines for technology use at home. We ask that parents monitor social media use as its effects can profoundly impact life in the classroom. In the Upper Grades students learn to keyboard, use computers, and conduct research using internet databases and search engines. There are also experiences with robotics, computer science, and other technology-related subjects starting in 6th Grade.

In conclusion, we ask you to consider your child's interaction with electronic media and digital technology carefully before permitting it as it is easier to gradually introduce a tool or form of entertainment than it is to remove it. We acknowledge that the transition into a Waldorf School's media guidelines can be difficult for new students, especially if a student has had considerable media exposure before joining the school. We encourage you to work with your class teacher to help ease this transition.

The Role of the Parent

Parent Involvement: The Key to a Child's School Success

Dozens of recent studies indicate that the key to improving student achievement is the involvement of parents or other family members in a child's education. What exactly does this entail? There are four general ways parents can get involved:

- 1) Provide support at home
- 2) Communicate with the school
- 3) Volunteer at the school
- 4) Support the work of your child's teachers

Where we choose to put our energies depends on our background, experience, skills, interests, and available time. What is crucial is that we do participate. Your child's education cannot be left solely to others. Parents are the first teachers and most significant adults in a child's life. Our actions form the attitudes and outlook toward learning that our children will carry throughout their lives.

How Parents Can Best Support Teachers

1. Learn about and embrace the principles of Waldorf education. Throughout the year, the school will sponsor lectures and events covering various aspects of Waldorf education. We grow stronger as a community when the parent body is well represented at these events. The more we know about Waldorf pedagogy—individually and collectively—the better equipped we will be to support the education we've chosen for our children.
2. Attend all parent evenings regularly to discover how your child's day unfolds in the classroom. Parent evenings are important enough to be considered mandatory attendance events. Teachers arrange quarterly parent evenings throughout the year; they are announced several weeks in advance through the school newsletter. These evenings are relaxed and informal, involving the teacher and all of the parents in

discussions about the nature of Waldorf education and its ongoing evolution in the classroom. Teachers outline the curriculum, broadly sketch the process, and share a picture of the classroom dynamics. Parents are encouraged to bring their questions and insights. It is essential for teachers and parents to communicate as much as possible, and parent evenings are the basis for this communication. Please make every effort to be there; if you cannot, please inform your child's teacher beforehand.

3. Communicate with teachers regularly, both with your concerns and your positive comments about what your child is learning. Teachers want and need to hear from parents about how various aspects of the curriculum unfold within each child. If you have particular concerns, voice them early. If you notice specific changes—positive or negative—in your child at home, make these known to the teacher.

4. Create a home environment that supports the teachers' work. Encourage children to play imaginatively, and avoid relying on television to placate or mollify a child. We urge parents to limit television viewing to non-school nights, if at all. Far from being confined to R-rated films, violence, sex, and profanity have slipped into daytime television, impacting children's behavior and language in the classroom. Please refrain from exposing younger children to movies, and monitor the movies older children watch. Visual images on television and in films can interfere with the development of a child's imaginative capacities and contribute to disruptive behavior; eliminating television, on the other hand, produces no known adverse effects. If your child is especially fond of television, talk to your classroom teacher for practical suggestions on encouraging other forms of play.

5. Make sure children arrive on time and properly dressed for the weather. Unless the weather is dangerously cold or wet, the children will play outside every day, rain, snow, or shine. Make sure your child has appropriate backup clothing, raincoats, hats, and footwear at school. All children need an indoor pair of soft-soled shoes to wear when inside the classroom. (Please avoid open-backed shoes, which can limit mobility.)

6. Volunteer to assist with special activities such as class trips, plays, and fundraisers. In a developing school such as ours, there are almost unlimited opportunities for school-wide volunteerism. From writing grants to mulching the playground, parents can get involved at any level. Please see the Service Contract section for further information. You may also contact any members of the Service Contract committee or Parent Association. Almost every parent newsletter will include requests and ideas for volunteering. Most importantly, don't wait for someone to contact you! Ask the office staff, your classroom parent, and board members what you can do to help.

7. Help with classroom projects such as painting, decorating, fall and spring-cleaning, and moving. We save money on cleaning, painting, general repairs, and other classroom maintenance by tapping into the talents of our parent body. Parents do things right, contributing to the safety and beauty of our classrooms by painting walls, sanding and waxing floors, sewing crayon pouches, building bookshelves, cleaning windows—the list goes on. Contact your child's classroom teacher to find out how you can enhance the physical environment where our children spend the bulk of their days. (Work contributed in this way counts toward the 40-hour volunteer requirement).

8. Inform the teacher if anything special is going on with your child, if there are major changes in the home (death of a loved one or pet, new baby, etc.), or if she/he will be absent from school for more than one day.

9. Provide a regular time and space for homework and musical instrument practice.

10. Take an interest in all subjects, not just main lessons. Your interest in the subjects—handwork, eurythmy, foreign languages, musical instruments, painting, etc.—will communicate their importance to your child. Find out how the stories and activities of the day live in your child by being available for conversation at quiet moments. Children often will not or cannot provide information on demand. Simply asking, "How was your day?" almost always provokes a monosyllabic response. The quiet time just before sleep—after a nightly story, for instance—can be an especially fruitful opportunity for parents to hear real news of the

day; older children may open up while occupied with other tasks—helping to prepare dinner, for example. Share with your child’s classroom teacher information about stories, activities, or images that seem to strike a chord in your child. Understanding the subjects that take hold of a child’s imagination helps the teacher to better know—and teach—that individual.

Class Parent(s)

The main goal of the class parent is to support the class teacher and to be a liaison between the teacher and parents in the class. He/she helps to ensure smooth communication between school and home, helps plan class social events and celebrations, and assists the teacher with other tasks. The job of class parent can, and often is, shared by parents of two different families within the class.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. They provide an opportunity to meet with the class teacher and focus on your child’s progress. Optimally, both parents and/or guardians should attend together. Curriculum questions should be addressed during class parent evenings, so that the entire Parent-teacher conference can be devoted to the child’s progress in her/his schoolwork, in social relations, needs, and well-being. Two weeks prior to parent-teacher conferences, sign up sheets will be posted in the office. Special Subject teachers are available for any parent who requests a conference. Parent-teacher conferences are important enough to be considered mandatory, and it is hoped that all parents will understand and do their best to attend the scheduled conferences. If it is impossible to attend the scheduled time, parents should call their child’s teacher to arrange an alternative time to meet.

Custody and Parental Disputes

We appreciate that situations of custody and parental disputes are challenging and can be emotionally charged. As a school, our goal is to maintain a consistent learning environment that supports the best interests of the child and the class as a whole. To that end, we maintain records for each student including end-of-year student reports, incident

reports, seventh and eighth grade quarterly grades and end-of-year transcripts, attendance, and student support plans. Teachers may also provide mid-year student reports upon request. We do not provide additional documentation specifically to support individual custody situations or parental disputes. When behavioral issues arise in the classroom, teachers report these to parents and create student support plans if appropriate. Parents may also receive communications from teachers regarding general concerns, if specific questions arise about their day, or special highlights occur with all students, we strive for unbiased and honest communication.

No Weapons on Campus Policy

Statement of Purpose: For the protection and safety of all students, faculty, staff, and visitors of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh, and consistent with the Pennsylvania Criminal Code 18 Pa.C.S.A. § 912, we hereby adopt the following policy:

- 1. Policy:** It is the policy of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh that no employee, student, or visitor may carry any weapon on school grounds at any time in which students are present, including before or after school hours, except as provided below. Further, no employee, student, or visitor may carry any weapon when participating in a lawful supervised school activity or school-sanctioned event located off of school grounds.
- 2. Exceptions:** Only peace officers and security personnel with valid state permits who are performing their employment obligations on behalf of the school or in their official capacities are permitted to carry weapons on school grounds.
- 3. Violation:** A person violates this policy if they are not permitted by this policy to carry a weapon on school grounds, regardless of whether they have a permit or license to carry a weapon.
- 4. Visitors:** If any representative of the school becomes aware that a visitor to the school grounds is carrying a

weapon in violation of this policy, that visitor will be asked to leave the school grounds immediately. If the visitor refuses to leave the school grounds, then the police will be called.

5. Employees: If any employee carries a weapon in violation of this policy, then that employee shall be asked to leave the school grounds immediately and at the discretion of the administration, the police may be called. The employee will be subject to discipline, including immediate suspension and termination.

6. Students: If any student is found carrying a weapon, then the parent of that student shall be called immediately and, at the discretion of the administration, the police may be called. Any student carrying a weapon on school grounds will be subject to discipline, including immediate suspension and expulsion.

7. Definitions: For purposes of this policy, the following terms are defined as:

a. *“Weapon,”* as used herein, means any firearm, handgun, shotgun, rifle, BB gun, whether loaded or unloaded, any explosive devices, including but not limited to fireworks, and any other instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury. The term does not include knives or other cutting utensils that are used as directed and in conjunction with a lawful supervised school activity or school sanctioned event.

b. *“School grounds,”* as used herein, means those parts of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh that are owned or regularly used by the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh, both inside and outside (e.g. playground, auditoriums, etc.).

c. *“Visitor,”* as used herein, means any person on school grounds who is not an employee or student of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. This term includes, but is not limited to parents, relatives, contractors, and volunteers.

d. *“Employee,”* as used herein, means any faculty member, staff member, or any other person employed by the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh on a full-time or part-time basis.

Smoke-Free Campus Policy

To protect and enhance our indoor air quality and to contribute to the health and well-being of all students, parents, and employees, the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh campus is entirely smoke free. Additionally, the use of all tobacco and smoking products, including chewing tobacco and electronic cigarettes (E-cigarettes), is not allowed anywhere on the school campus.

Home Visits

Home visits are generally scheduled for Kindergarten students and children new to the school. The home visit provides a special opportunity for you and your child to bond with the class teacher. This visit enables the teacher to deepen his/her work with your child by experiencing your home environment. For younger children, this can be especially important in creating an atmosphere of comfort and trust in the classroom. Children often take great pride in showing the teacher around, and the teacher leaves with a sense of who this child is and of her/his interests and special place in the family. This is a time for your teacher to get to know your child. Please hold your questions for a later phone call or conference.

Nursery and Kindergarten teachers will schedule a home visit before school starts. Visits for older children can be arranged sometime during the first term, when parents, teachers, and children know each other better.

Parent Organizations and Opportunities

Parent Association

A Parent Association supports a Waldorf school's educational goals through parent involvement, helping to build and sustain the school community through effective communication. A Parent Association, while not a decision-making body, works in partnership with the Board, Faculty, and Administration to further the goals of education and communication within the adult community and to assist those bodies toward the continued success of the school.

Mission Statement of the Parent Association

The Parent Association is dedicated to the healthy growth and development of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh through building community, fostering education through the lifespan, and nurturing the spirit in the social life.

The Parent Association seeks to do the following:

1. Help guide fundraising efforts
2. Extend a welcome to new families, as well as direct any questions they may have through the proper channels of Administration and/or Faculty
3. Encourage parents' donation of time and provide direction to the areas of need within the school
4. Provide a forum for dialogue regarding parents' needs and concerns and to make recommendations to other school bodies

Ideally, the Parent Association meets monthly. Meetings, which are open to all parents, will be announced in the school newsletter.

Class Parent Representatives attend Parent Association meetings when they are called, reporting back to the parents of the class on issues, events, and the need for volunteers for specific events.

Elected Officials

Coordinators: Two volunteers to jointly oversee the overall organization of the PA and guide the PA's efforts in meeting its goals.

Secretary: One volunteer records the minutes for the meeting and sends PA announcements and updates to the Front Office.

Parent Association Representatives to the Board: Two members of the PA who attend all monthly PA and WSP Board meetings to act as liaisons between the two groups. The PA reps are voting members of the board.

Parent Study Groups

There are several groups in the Pittsburgh area that study the works of Rudolf Steiner. If you are interested in knowing more about such groups, please contact the Front Office.

Addendum A: Recommended Parent Reading List

For parents who are interested in gaining a more complete understanding of the view of the child inherent in Waldorf pedagogy, we suggest the following books, all of which are available either through the Forest Garden, the school library, or by special order through the Front Office.

Childhood, by Caroline von Heydebrand. This is the classic work on the Waldorf Kindergarten. Heydebrand worked with Rudolf Steiner at the first Waldorf School in Stuttgart, and her book contains a wealth of insight about working with preschoolers.

Creativity in Education by Rene Querido. Rudolf Steiner recognized that all children are born with the capacity for wonder, gratitude, and responsibility. The Waldorf teacher's task is to awaken these faculties, thereby helping young people to discover within themselves the strength, enthusiasm, and wisdom to become creative shapers of civilization, rather than passive onlookers. In these seven lectures given at the San Francisco Waldorf School, Rene Querido describes an educational approach that has as its goal the balanced development of the whole child—hand and heart as well as mind—an approach that is now being practiced in over 600 Waldorf Schools throughout the world.

The Education of the Child in the Light of Anthroposophy is another booklet that provides a good introduction to Waldorf pedagogy, as well as to anthroposophy in general. It is one of the few lectures Steiner gave in 1909 that he revised for publication as a written work, 10 years before the first Waldorf School was founded. A main theme here is the “birthing” of the “sheaths” of human individuality. Study of this essay will lead the reader to a rather profound grasp of the Waldorf impulse—as an “education towards freedom.” Although the content may make for difficult reading as a first glance into this field, it should be readily understandable if read as the second or third of these recommended books.

Education Towards Freedom by Franz Calgren. This sumptuous, oversized volume, filled with color and black-and-white images and beautifully designed by Anne Klingborg, is the perfect introduction to

Waldorf education. Following an opening section entitled “Rudolf Steiner and His Ideas on Education,” the evolution of the child from the preschool to high school years is described in detail, in terms both of psycho-spiritual development and curriculum. A final section on “The School in the Modern World” surveys the work of Waldorf schools throughout the world.

Encountering the Self: Transformation and Destiny in the Ninth Year by Hermann Koepke. Between the ages of nine and ten, as children’s incarnate more deeply, they often experience themselves for the first time as separate individuals, different from their parents and peers, and essentially alone. This inner experience is sometimes precipitated by a first encounter with death in the child’s environment, a first inkling that life is fragile. Koepke provides a lucid and highly readable explanation of the outer signs and symptoms of this essential turning point in the life of a child. He demonstrates the significance of this crucial moment by showing how the destiny and achievements of such personalities as Dante, Schliemann, Kokoschka, Steiner, and Bruno Walter rest upon a fateful encounter or event in their ninth year.

Festivals, Family, and Food by Diana Carey and Judy Large. This is a resource book for exploring festivals—those “feast days” scattered throughout the year which children love celebrating. It was written in response to children and busy parents asking, “What can we do at Easter and Christmas? What games can we play? What can we make? How can we prepare for the festivals as centers of stability in our family life?” This book is written with families, and especially with children, very much in mind— for children can remind us of the wonders that we might otherwise forget. The underlying theme is a simple but bold suggestion—that if celebrating festivals was formerly the focus of community life, then rediscovered in the modern context, such seasonal activities may enrich family life.

Festivals with Children by Brigitte Barz. Celebrating festivals is an important part of a child’s life. Brigitte Barz describes the nature and character of each Christian festival, its symbols and customs, and gives practical suggestions for celebrating these festivals in the family. This book is much more than a craft book describing what to do; it awakens

an understanding in parents of the festivals and stimulates creativity toward a meaningful family festival.

The Four Temperaments, an early Steiner lecture (1909), is an interesting introductory booklet. Here, the reader can get a feel for Rudolf Steiner's own style as a teacher of anthroposophy while gaining valuable insight into human character—Steiner's understanding of the four temperaments. Class teachers, as well as many of the special subject teachers, "teach to the temperaments" to a considerable degree. This lecture also presents the four-fold aspect of the human being in a brief, engrossing context, and is therefore an ideal glimpse into the whole of anthroposophical literature.

The Kingdom of Childhood by Rudolf Steiner. Steiner presents the idea of the three seven-year periods of child development and gives many classroom examples.

Phases of Childhood by B.C.J. Lievegoed. The author describes the development of the child in phases of around seven years, each phase having its own character. The changes in the body are well known: for instance, change of teeth, puberty, and completion of physical growth. The psychological development parallels with physical and is at least as important. Examining the relationship of children to the world around them, Lievegoed describes the experience of the preschooler, school child, and teenager in a clear and concise way. The latter part of the book is concerned with the practical application of these insights, allowing a method of education in harmony with the stages of development.

The Recovery of Man in Childhood by A.C. Harwood. In this absorbing study of Rudolf Steiner's educational work, Harwood argues that childhood is a time of losing, as well as gaining, capacities. Is there a connection between the loss of a childhood faculty and the acquisition of an adult one? Yes—in fact, a three-fold connection. Harwood gives an insightful survey of the three seven-year stages of child development depicted by Steiner, presented in connection with numerous examples and anecdotes on Waldorf education, such as foreign languages, eurythmy and music, and the temperaments. These lucid explanations qualify this book as the most intelligent and stimulating introductory

work on that unique approach to education known as “education as an art.”

Rhythms and Turning Points in the Life of the Child by Eugene Schwartz. This is a “must read” concerning changes in a child’s life around the ninth year.

Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Education by David Mitchell. This colorful pamphlet with photos, drawings, and simple text is an excellent introduction for interested parents.

Steiner Education: In Theory and Practice by Gilbert Childs. This thorough and detailed account of Rudolf Steiner’s view of the child’s development toward a whole personality shows how the teaching practice of the Waldorf schools is firmly grounded in a rationale which perceives the child’s past, present, and future. For the child to mature into a unique and responsible adult, “free” from distorting and harmful influences, certain fundamental human truths, both individual and social, must be respected. The curriculum of Waldorf schools is explained, together with approaches to subjects both familiar and unfamiliar.

Teaching as a Lively Art by Marjorie Spock. The author vividly introduces the reader to the important changes in child development and curriculum for each year of the Waldorf elementary school experience, from age six to age 13. She explains how in every subject the teacher strives “to shape each lesson on a rhythmic pattern in which listening or looking is balanced by the child’s own activity in doing.” This wide-ranging survey concludes with an account of some of the more intimate aspects of Waldorf teaching—the use of the four temperaments to harmoniously orchestrate a class, the necessary qualities of a teacher’s character, and the close relationship between teacher and child. This second edition includes a new introduction by Eugene Schwartz and an extensive bibliography.

The Way of the Child by A.C. Harwood provides an excellent and surprisingly deep and thorough introduction to this “new” approach to child psychology. Several of the themes discussed in the book were first brought by Steiner to the group of teachers he trained in his rigorous

1919 lectures entitled Study of Man. Here the same themes are made remarkably transparent by Harwood, arising from his obvious love for children, long years of experience, and facility of written expression. In his Preface he notes: "I have not endeavored to distinguish between what is immediately contained in Steiner's own works and anything that my own thought and experience have taught me, or that I may have added by way of illustration. Rather have I tried (as I think he would have wished) to present in my own way that limited part of his work which I feel I have best understood and made my own." If parents want to read only one book (for a start) to more fully appreciate and support their children's class teachers, this would be it.

Renewal: A Journal for Waldorf Education, published twice a year by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA).

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious.

It is the source of all true art and science.

He to whom the emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause and stand wrapped in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed.

- Albert Einstein