



# Family Handbook Policies & Procedures

2023–2024

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# Welcome

Welcome to the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh!

Please read this handbook carefully and refer to it throughout the school year as necessary. All families are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures laid out in this handbook. If you need clarification on any policy, please contact the Front Office.

For more information about the festivals and educational program of the school, please consult the “Community Life at WSP” document available on the school’s [website](#).

# The Structure of WSP

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh is a full member of the Association of the Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN), and the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS). We are accredited through AWSNA and PAIS.

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. The Faculty is responsible for the hiring of full faculty, in addition to the review of, and if needed, termination of all teaching positions..

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 Circle

The Leadership Circle (Leadership) consists of the Head of School, the Grades Faculty Chair, and the Early Childhood Faculty Chair. The Leadership Circle is responsible for day-to-day management and leadership, holding all aspects of the school day.

The Leadership Circle meets on a regularly scheduled basis at least once every week. Any committee or individual who wishes to speak with the Leadership Circle 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 include, but are not limited to: Executive; Building, Grounds, and Safety; Development; Enrollment; Finance; and EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion). The Board works in conjunction with and includes members of the Faculty, Administration, and Parent Association.

Board meetings are held bi-monthly at the school and are 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.

Community members 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.

## 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** (Kirsten Christopherson-Clark)
  - responsible for overseeing the different functions and positions within the Administration
  - issues regarding school policy or procedures of the school should be directed to the Head of School
  - fields questions concerning Administration, community events, public relations issues as well as recommendations for the Parent Association
  
- **Director of Admissions and Marketing** (Devon Wood)
  - creates, coordinates, and implements the school's admissions and re-enrollment programs
  - chairs the Enrollment Committee, which sets the schedule for the tours, open houses, outreach events, and speakers
  - works closely with Faculty, Administration, and the Parent Association to ensure the smooth transition of families into our school
  - manages all 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 and Family Communications Manager** (Jen Widich)
  - serves as a resource for general questions from 7:30am through 3:30pm Monday through Friday
  - answers the front and back doors and greets visitors
  - cares for sick children
  - manages students records and required forms
  - handles day-to-day office support and communications, including announcements and newsletters
  - coordinates busing and daily transportation
  
- **Interim Director of Business Operations** (David Konefal-Shaer)
  - responsible for the financial affairs of the school
  - answers all questions regarding tuition, payments, payment plans, fees, donations, Extended Care Program tuition, and the financial aid program
  - creates and interprets all financial reports
  - supports the board during the Annual Fund Drive
  
- **Grant Writer and Development Support** (Anne Fowler)
  - responsible for the fundraising efforts of the school

- works closely with the Board, the Head of School, and the Director of Business Operations to raise sufficient funds to cover operational and program expansion expenses not covered by tuition revenues
  - When this position is vacant, the Administrative Staff and Board work collaboratively to facilitate the fundraising efforts of the school.
- **Facilities Manager** (Mark Staley)
    - responsible for maintaining the facilities and the grounds
    - receives and handles all requests for classroom care and support and questions regarding the care of the school building and grounds
    - chairs the Building, Grounds, and Safety Committee
  - **Custodian/Facilities Manager Assistant** (Fleming Davis)
    - TK
  - **Marketing and Communications Support** (Jennifer Moore)
    - TK



# 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 email, phone conversations, 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.

## How to Contact

### Telephone & Email

- The main school number is 412-441-5792. Our automated phone system allows us to receive calls during school and after hours.
- Unless your question is time-sensitive, we ask that you please refrain from calling the Front Office between 7:30 and 8:30am or 2:15–3:15pm, as these are the busiest hours of the day.

### Messages for Faculty and Administration

- All Faculty and Administration members check their email accounts regularly.
- If there is a time-sensitive message you need to get to your child or child's teacher, please call the Front Office. Please do so only in the case of truly urgent messages.
- Faculty hours of availability for phone calls will be posted or distributed at the beginning of the school year.
- Administration extensions are found in the School Directory and through the automated phone system on our main line.
- Faculty will respond to all messages within 24 hours. Administration will respond within 48 hours.

## Communications from the School

### Importance of Reading Communication

While there are times during the year when you may receive many emails from the school in a short amount of time, we ask that you make every effort to read all communications from the school promptly and carefully, and keep them for your reference later. They may contain such important items as 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.

While we are always happy to assist with any question or concern, we ask that before you contact your child's teacher or the Front Office with a logistical question about a school activity (i.e. date or time), please check through your emails and on the website, as your question may already have been answered via one of the methods below.

## **Announcements and Newsletters**

Announcements emails will be sent each week on Friday afternoons. These emails may also be sent on Wednesday afternoons as needed. Announcements emails contain important information about class activities, school events, and fundraisers.

A monthly newsletter will be sent by email on the last Friday of each month. The newsletter keeps parents and wider community members (alumni, grandparents and special friends) up-to-date on community festivals, activities, and fundraisers.

If you wish to contribute an item (Committee reports, calls for volunteers, etc.) to one of these communications, email the Front Office at least 72 hours in advance.

## **Calendar**

A monthly calendar of upcoming events, workshops, meetings, and festivals can be found on the [school's website](#).

## **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
- order forms
- school closure forms
- transportation change forms
- 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.

## **School Closure or Delay Communications**

In the event of a school closure or delay due to weather or emergencies, parents will be contacted via text message and/or email message through the Educate service.

A test message will be sent out at the beginning of each school year to test our system. If you do not receive this message, it is imperative that you contact the Front Office as soon as possible to ensure that your information is in the system.

## **Teacher Emails**

Whole class communications will come from the classroom teachers at least on a monthly basis 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. .

## **School Directory**

Every fall and spring, a school directory listing the names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers for every family in the school is distributed via email. 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 as soon as possible. Teachers want to stay connected to students and parents; they appreciate your involvement, and strive to address your concerns.

As the year progresses, please reach out to individual subject teachers if you have questions about your child or the classwork. If a concern or a broader question lingers after you speak directly with the subject teacher, please contact our Faculty Chair to help find the best direction forward.

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.

## **Student-Teacher Communication**

Older students in the school will be responsible for communicating with their teachers regarding questions about 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 & 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 the back-to-school packet. 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)
- Health and Safety Acknowledgement Form

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.

When a student in Early Childhood or Grades determines a name and/or pronoun change is needed and has talked with their family about this change, the family or the student will let the teacher know. The teacher will confirm with the parents/guardians at home and then support the student in sharing this news with the class. The teacher will communicate this change to Subject Teachers, Faculty, and Administration. The parents are responsible for changing the name and pronoun in TADS, which will be communicated to the parents by the Front Office Manager.

If there are concerns or conflicts around this, Faculty will work with the student to feel safe and respected at school.

## 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 independent 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, depending on the class of the family's oldest enrolled child.

### **Class Requirements:**

- Little Friends and Morning Garden.....0 hours
- Nursery.....12 hours
- Kindergarten.....20 hours
- Grades 1–8.....40 hours

Many volunteer opportunities are shared via the methods of communication mentioned above. Please contact the Front Office with any questions about how to fulfill your volunteer hours.

Service hours may be logged online through this [Google Document](#). 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. An email will be sent midway through the year with details about the process and deadlines. 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 through the Extended Care Program, which incorporates the Waldorf philosophy. This program runs from 3:00–5:00pm. Late charges for students picked up after 5:00pm will be charged \$1.00/minute.

The handbook for the Extended Care Program is available on the school's website.

## **Parking**

You may park on the street for up to one hour without a permit. In the afternoons from 2:00–4:00pm, do not park on Coral Street, as it is a bus lane at this time and you may be ticketed.

# Daily Procedures and Policies

## Morning Arrival

Students may arrive to their outside location or enter their classrooms between 8:00 and 8:15am. You may not drop your child off any earlier than this, as faculty and staff are not available to supervise children earlier than 8:00.

The school day begins promptly at 8:15am, when teachers take attendance. Students arriving at 8:16am or later are considered tardy.

## Late Arrivals/Tardiness

It is the family's responsibility to make sure students arrive at school on time. Late arrivals impact not only the tardy child but also the teacher and entire classroom by interrupting the mood and disrupting the rhythm at a critical part of the day. To help cultivate the best environment for all children and staff as the day begins, we ask that you make every effort to avoid chronic tardiness.

When dropping off a tardy student, follow the procedures below:

- For Early Childhood:
  - Escort your child to their EC play yard. If the class is inside, the Front Office Manager will sign them in and escort them to their classroom.
  - *Children in Early Childhood programs may not arrive after 10:00 am unless their tardiness is due to a medical appointment and their teacher has been notified in advance.*
- For Grades:
  - Report directly to front of the building and ring the buzzer.
  - The Front Office Manager will sign your child in using the Tardy Arrival Sign-In Sheet
  - After signing in, students will receive a "tardy" slip and go to their classrooms. They will slide this slip under the door to alert their teacher, who will invite them into the classroom at an appropriate moment.

These procedures should also be followed for children arriving late to school due to doctor's appointments or other excused tardies.

Students arriving on a late bus should report to the Front Office to receive "Late Due to Bus" slips from the Front Office Manager and ensure that the tardy is recorded as an excused one.

Attendance and tardiness will be reviewed regularly for all students at parent-teacher conferences and as needed throughout the year based on individual circumstances.

## Early Pickups

While we understand that early pickups are often necessary for appointments or travel, we ask that if you need to pick up your child early from school, you observe the following guidelines:

- Email the Front Office and your child's teacher 24 hours in advance with the date and time of the early pickup
- Include whether your child will be returning to school later in the day. Children in Early Childhood should not return to school later than 12:30 PM or if the class is resting.
- Indicate who will be picking your child up
- All children released for early dismissal must be picked up from the Front Office and signed out by an authorized adult. Ms. Jen will take care of meeting you at the front of the school and signing out your child

## Afternoon Dismissal

### Early Childhood

- Half-day Early Childhood students are dismissed at noon from their outside location.
- Full-day Early Childhood students are dismissed at 3:00pm from their outside location.
- Early Childhood students must be picked up directly from their outside location by an authorized adult.
- All EC bus riders are escorted to the Coral Street by a Faculty or Administration member, where Grades students will be. They will board their buses supervised by faculty/administration.

### Grades Students

- Grades students will be dismissed either to a bus line or to their outside location for pickup.
- Grades students are dismissed at 3:00pm from their outside location.
- All students in their outside location must check out with their child's teacher (for Grades 1–8).
- Grades students may check themselves out and walk home with the appropriate permissions on file. Please contact the Front Office to learn more about this option.

## Pickup Authorization

Children will only be released to a parent or an adult authorized by a parent. Authorization can be achieved in one of two ways:

- If an individual will be picking up a child frequently, please add them to the Emergency Contacts list in TADS (these individuals will always be allowed to pick up a child, even without prior notice)
- If an individual will be picking up your child on an irregular or one time basis, you must email the Front Office and your child's teacher, including the following information:
  - Full name of the person picking up
  - Relationship to you/your child
  - Date of pickup(s)

- Contact number for the person picking up

If anyone picking up a child is unfamiliar to our school, proper identification will be requested. If an individual comes to the school to pick up a child but they have not been authorized ahead of time through one of the methods above, the child will not be released until a parent or guardian has been contacted to confirm the pickup.

## **Late Pickups**

All children will be brought to the Front Office from their outside location at 3:10pm. Please notify the Front Office if you are running late to pick up your child.

If you are not able to pick up your child by 3:30pm, they will be placed in the Front Office waiting area until you are able to pick them up.

All children who are picked up late must be signed out of the Front Office. We are not able to release students to meet a parent waiting in a car outside the school.

## **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 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 the Extended Care program or under the school's supervision that is staying past dismissal must be under the complete supervision of a parent or guardian. A specific adult must be indicated to supervise a child (i.e. a child may not stay in the play yard under the assumption that someone will be there to watch them if other, nonindicated adults are present). These students are permitted to play with other supervised children in the Grades play yard until 3:10pm or until the Extended Care program arrives on the Grades play yard each 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.

## **Bus Riding**

### **Securing Busing**

The City of Pittsburgh provides bus service to and from school for all residents of the city in both public and private schools. If your address is not within the city limits, please contact the Front Office to determine if your local school district's transportation office will provide busing to WSP.

## **Weather Disruptions**



In the event of weather-related delays, all bus service follows the schedule of each school district. This might not be in alignment with WSP's schedule and it is the family's responsibility to transport their child(ren).

## **Communication**

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 them aware of your needs and concerns. Should you have any questions or concerns about bus riding, please contact the Front Office.

## **Behavioral Bus Policy**

Students are representatives of our school during the bus ride to and from in the morning and afternoon. We expect all children to obey the rules of the proper behavior and safety on the bus. If a student's behavior is unacceptable to the bus driver, the student may be officially written up, with a copy of the report going to the student's file after the Head of School and teacher sees it. If a student receives a write up they may be suspended from the bus for one week. *Additional incidents may result in permanent suspension from the bus.*

- 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 Lists and Changes**

It is WSP's policy to know where each and every child needs to go at the end of the day. This is accomplished by a daily distribution of a bus list. Before the start of each school year and on an ongoing basis as needed, you must contact the Front Office to confirm your child's default transportation schedule (i.e. which days per week they will ride the bus, go to clubs, etc.). This schedule will always be followed unless you communicate a transportation change.

No student will be allowed to ride home on another student's bus without written permission from their district. It is the parents' responsibility to contact their district if they wish to have another child ride home with their child on the bus.

Students in Grades 4–8 are expected to know their transportation schedule each day (apart from unforeseen changes in case of emergency). Students in Early Childhood and Grades 1–3 will be directed by their teacher. 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. This is particularly important if your child will not be riding the bus in the morning.
- Bus companies have the right to drop a stop from a route if a child does not ride more than 3 mornings in a row unexplained. It is advisable to communicate to the company when your student will be absent for more than three days (due to illness, vacation, etc.)
- For an afternoon transportation change, email 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 9:00am on the day of the change. Please do not send changes more than 24 hours in advance.
- Send an e-mail to [frontoffice@waldorfpittsburgh.org](mailto: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.
- Children may not initiate transportation changes.
- If a transportation change involves two children or families, parents from each family must communicate to confirm a change.

## **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, they will need to go through an application process and a meeting with the Director of Enrichment Programs.

## **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 off campus.

## **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.

An automatic notification will also be sent to parents' cell phones or emails as a text message and/or e-mail through the Educate automatic notification system. A test message will be sent prior to the start of the school year. It is imperative you let the front office know if you do not receive this message so you can be added to the list.

- In the event of a two-hour delay, all morning timing mentioned above will be pushed back by two hours. This means all affected programs will begin at 10:15am and we will not be prepared to receive your child at school before 10:00am.
- 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.
- All dismissal times will proceed at their regular times. Children who normally ride the bus will have bus service home in the afternoon at the regular time.

## **Special Events**

Children are required to attend all events directly related to 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 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 or email 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 record the event to limit distraction. 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. Field trips are an extension of the school experience, and therefore fall under the same behavioral guidelines as are held within the school.

Chaperones are expected to have clearances on file with the school. This paperwork must be completed before chaperoning any field trip.

Overnight field trips that reflect the developmental stages of students in our school are left up to the teacher's discretion to plan. In the past years, these trips have included:

- farm trip in Third Grade
- Pentathlon in Fifth Grade (hosted by the Rudolf Steiner School of Ann Arbor)
- Medieval Games in Sixth Grade (hosted by the Cincinnati Waldorf School)

- Renaissance Faire in Seventh Grade (hosted by the Spring Garden Waldorf School)
- overnight trip in Eighth Grade, 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.

All school behavioral policies apply to students on field trips. In particular, 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.

## **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.

### **Nutrition in 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 them from eating nuts, honey, dairy products, wheat, fruit, or other foods please notify the child's teacher. Each year the teachers will make a decision regarding whether an allergy is severe enough to restrict certain foods for the classroom.

### **Nutrition in 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. Please note, some classrooms are nut-free for the safety of children with allergies to nut products. The teacher will communicate about this before the start of school.

### **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.

### **Toilet-Training Policy**

Children entering the Kindergarten program (3-6 years of age) must be toilet trained prior to their first day of school. The Nursery program (2.7-4 years of age) can accommodate a few children who are still in diapers; applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the teacher. In this instance, the child will need to be willing to go to the bathroom and be working toward being toilet trained.

In the Kindergarten the child should be able to recognize when they need to use the toilet, be able to communicate this need, overcome distractions and stay focused on going to the bathroom, and be able to use the toilet with minimal assistance.

A Kindergarten child should not be wearing a diaper. Diapering is not a part of the Kindergarten day. Pull-ups are not to be worn at school during the school day, but may be worn during afternoon nap time. While accidents do occur during the school day, 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 Kindergarten program. 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.

## **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.

If 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. They may need a day of rest. If you decide your child is well enough to come to school, they 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.

## **Illnesses and Injuries (Three-Fold Policy)**

### ***1. Keeping Sick Children Home (Responsibility of Parents to a Sick Child)***

Given that colds and other minor ailments are commonplace amongst children, it is essential for all families to try and prevent spreading contagious diseases. Children who are not feeling well are usually unable to enjoy being at school. We require you 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. Signs and symptoms for keeping your child at home include:

- Cough
- Feeling cold/shivering
- Fever (particularly a temperature above 100°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)

Families must adhere to the following policies and procedures for sick or injured children without a communicable illness:

- Children with a temperature above 100°F must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.
- Children who have episodes of vomiting or diarrhea must be kept home for 24 hours after the last episode.
- Children with coughs that cannot be improved with medication or are not allergy related should be kept home.

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh follows the Allegheny County Health Department guidelines for keeping children home from school after contraction of a communicable disease as noted below.

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.
- Bed Bugs: A notification will be sent for all students in the classroom and a trained pest management contractor will inspect rooms for evidence of bed bug infestation. The classroom may have to be evacuated for up to 24 hours depending on the severity of the case. If your child contracts any of the above illnesses, you must contact their teacher and the front office immediately so that other families can be informed.

## ***2. Responsibility of Teacher to Sick or Injured Child***

If a 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. The Office Manager will call the child's 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
- Calendula gel
- Arnica gel

### ***3. Responsibility of Front Office Manager to Sick or Injured Child***

The Front Office Manager will see to the immediate and continuous care of all sick or injured children brought into the office. Sick or injured children are the top priority of the front office.

A rest area is provided in the office for use by sick or injured children. The bedding is changed at regular intervals whether the bed has been used or not, is always changed after use by a sick or injured child.

The Front Office Manager may administer homeopathic or over-the-counter oral medications as approved by parents/guardians through TADS. If approvals are not indicated, the Front Office Manager may call parents for approval to give medication. All medications are recorded in a logbook in the office for reference as needed. Some examples of first aid supplies that we may use are:

- Band aids
- Neosporin
- Ice or heat packs
- Herbal teas
- Arnica gel for bruises
- Sting Soothe (for bug bites/stings)

We have an Infectious Disease Team to monitor the health and safety of our community.

### **Prescription Medications**

If your child regularly takes prescription medications during the school day, please contact the Front Office. You must submit a Prescription Medicine Permission Form, which includes a section that must be completed by a physician.

All prescription medications are kept in a locked cabinet in the office and dispensed by office staff. The only exceptions to this rule are inhalers and EpiPens, which may be kept with your student in the classroom.

If your child needs to take medication on a short-term basis (i.e. for coughs, antibiotics), please contact the Front Office to make arrangements.

### **Emergencies**

In case of emergency, parents or guardians will be called. If they cannot be reached, all emergency contacts for the child will be called until someone can be contacted.

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

## Absences

Families are expected to notify the class teacher and the Front Office Manager of all absences, tardiness, and appointments. If a student is absent from school or will be late, a parent or guardian is expected to email ([frontoffice@waldorfpittsburgh.org](mailto:frontoffice@waldorfpittsburgh.org)) or call (412-441-5792) the Front Office Manager before 9 a.m. The school has voicemail, and messages can be left during non-operating hours. Unless a definite length of absence has been determined by a physician and communicated to the school, parents are asked to communicate every morning during the course of the illness. If no communication has been received, the school will attempt to reach a parent at home or at work to determine the student's whereabouts. Even if the cause for an absence is an excusable reason, failure to contact the school by 9 am on the morning of the absence will result in it being marked as unexcused.

As our school calendar provides a generous vacation schedule, we discourage family trips that result in students missing school. If a student misses classes for a family trip or vacation when school is in session, it will be recorded as an unexcused absence. Similarly, absences due to travel on days adjacent to school vacation days are considered unexcused.

Students and families should be in conversation with class and special subject teachers to address class time that will be missed in advance of planned absences, or following an absence due to illness. It is the responsibility of upper grades students to contact teachers about missed classes and determine a course of action to make up missed work.

- Excused
  - Tardiness due to school bus
  - All of the situations below, if communicated with the Front Office Manager and class teacher by 9 a.m.:
    - Illness and appointments (doctor's note is not needed)
    - Religious holidays
    - Funerals
    - Other extenuating circumstances
- Unexcused
  - Any absence or tardiness that has not been communicated to the Front Office Manager and class teacher by 9 a.m.
  - Family trips and vacations

### **Extended Absences (10 or more consecutive days)**

Waldorf curriculums are delivered live by the teachers (rather than a textbook), along with active participation by the students; therefore, there is not a way to fully make up a lost class. Teachers may work with their students before a trip or when they return to school to catch up as much as is possible (with parent support in the younger grades), but the original class experience cannot be replicated. When absences occur due to extended family trips during the school year, our teachers are not expected to recreate missed experiences for individual students.

Plans for extended travel should be communicated to the class teacher, special subject teachers, and front office in advance. Absences for extended illnesses of more than three days require a doctor's note



to return to school. Students in seventh and eighth grades will not receive credit or a grade for blocks they miss. Their transcripts will state that the student was absent from school for the block.

# Reverence, Respect, & Responsibility: Expected Student Behaviors & 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 ensure 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 schoolwide 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

Students will...

1. treat all adults and children respectfully.
2. follow all classroom rules and limits, whether established by the classroom teacher, a subject teacher, an assistant, or a substitute teacher.
3. commit no physical harm to others.
4. not destroy or damage school property or personal property.
5. not use foul language and terms such as shut-up, stupid, and other demeaning expressions.
6. respect personal privacy. For example, only one child may enter a bathroom stall at a time.
7. 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. not run in the hallways or classrooms.
9. not hang on, crawl on, or otherwise occupy banisters or areas around stairwells. Objects may not be thrown down into the stairwell.
10. avoid wastefulness and messiness with food. They will approach food with respect and gratitude.
11. 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. not bring gum or candy to school.
13. not have alcohol, cigarettes, or illegal substances.
14. not participate in intimate behavior with each other.

## Disciplinary Policies & Procedures

When a rule is broken, the consequence will depend on the situation and may include a verbal warning, a written apology, a work assignment, after school restorative work, or recommended suspension. Any Faculty or Staff member may handle a minor disciplinary issue in a manner appropriate to the offense.

In the case of 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, their 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 Circle 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 Circle 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:

1. Faculty member brings carefully documented history of lack or parental support to Leadership.
2. The Leadership Circle acts as a mediator at a meeting with the parents/guardians and the class teacher.
3. The Leadership Circle 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.
4. If the parents/guardians agree to the plan, then the Leadership Circle works to hold them accountable for their promises of action.
5. 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.
6. It is the responsibility of the Leadership Circle 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:

1. A child study or a meeting of all the student's teachers and the Grades or Early Childhood Chair will usually occur.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.

## **Harassment and Bullying Policy**

### **Purpose**

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh is committed to providing all students with a safe, positive, and respectful educational environment, in which harassment and bullying are named and addressed by utilizing restorative practices to repair harm. Harassment and bullying create an atmosphere of intimidation and fear, detracting from the environment necessary for student learning.

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh recognizes that conflict is a part of human nature. There is a clear distinction between typical peer conflict and harassment and bullying behavior and as teachers, we are aware of children's developmental stages. It is our responsibility to ensure that the negative, harmful behaviors associated with harassment/bullying are quickly addressed.

Teachers are [trained](#) to distinguish between developmentally typical behaviors and harassment/[bullying](#) behaviors. The school helps students who are involved in harassment/bullying interactions to transform their relationships using restorative practice.

Through a vision of shared responsibility, each parent, child, and employee has a role to play in making sure that our school environments and activities are respectful and welcoming.

The policy covers incidents that occur when students are in the school's care. When any behavior that happens outside of the school's care continues inside the school or affects the school's ability to provide a safe, positive, and respectful environment, the policy will be utilized.

### **Definitions**

**Harassment** is conduct which threatens, intimidates, or causes fear in another person. It is unwanted behavior that offends, demeans, or threatens another person. The behavior causes a hostile environment. It can include, but is not limited to:

- Derogatory comments

- Slurs
- Improper propositions
- Assault
- Physically impeding or blocking behavior
- Visual insults (such as gestures or drawings)

**Bullying** is a type of repeated harassment that consists of unwanted, aggressive behavior directed at another student or students that involves a power imbalance (such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity used to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people). The repeated behavior is severe, persistent, or pervasive, and has the intent or effect of:

- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s education
- Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property

**Bias** incidents occur when a person or group uses hurtful or inappropriate words or actions toward another individual or group that falls under the WSP Protected Class List. If the Harassment or Bullying includes bias, the incident may initiate the WSP Bias Incident Protocol.

WSP Protected Class List:

- Academic standing, learning style, or neurodiversity;
- Ethnic background or country of origin;
- Faith tradition, philosophy, or religion;
- Family configuration;
- Gender/gender identity;
- Gender expression;
- Native language(s) spoken;
- Sex;
- Sexual orientation;
- Skin color;
- Social class;
- Physical appearance (inc. height/weight) or physical ability;
- Social class; and
- Age.

**Microaggressions** are small, subtle, sometimes-unintended acts of discrimination that relate to race, gender, religion or other aspects of a child’s identity. Microaggressions reinforce stereotypes in surreptitious ways.

**Cyber bullying** 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. It is the repeated 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 deliberately threatens, harasses, and/or

intimidates an individual or group of individuals, places an individual in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or damage to his/her property; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh. WSP prohibits acts of cyber bullying by students through the use of any Waldorf School-owned, -operated, and -supervised technologies and acts of cyber bullying by students when on the Waldorf School premises, on field trips, or during after school clubs.

An **Affected Individual** is 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.

The **Initiator** is the actor of any of the harassing/bullying behavior listed above.

A **Witness** is a child or adult who has observed harassing or bullying behavior and who may be called on to help describe what happened.

A **Supervising Adult** is the adult who is responsible for the child at the time of the incident, including:

- WSP employees, including class teachers, administrative staff, special subject teachers, substitute teachers, extended care teachers, or assistants
- Tutors
- Parents/guardians (please note that once students are dismissed to a parent/guardian or at community events, parents/guardians are considered the supervising adult even if other potential supervising adults are also present)

## **Prevention**

The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh views the prevention of harassment/bullying as a responsibility that is shared by all members of the community. Prevention as held by adults includes the following measures:

At school:

- [Model kindness and respect for others](#)
- Establish clear expectations and shared agreements in the classroom
- Stay vigilant in the classroom and on the play yard
- Maintain healthy relationships with students and listen to them
- [Teach students to understand and identify harassment/bullying behavior](#)
- Teach students that harassment/bullying behavior is unacceptable
- [Teach students how to report harassment/bullying behavior](#)

At home:

- Model kindness and respect for others
- [Discuss appropriate social behavior with children](#)
- Communicate with supervising adult about concerns
- Understand school policies and procedures



• [Understand signs of harassment/bullying behavior](#)

**Response to Harassing and Bullying Behaviors** as Defined Above

[What to Avoid](#)

[Common Mistakes](#)

If supervising adult directly witnesses harassing/bullying behavior:

1. Address the incident in the moment (ensure safety of all individuals)
  - a. Separate the students and first attend to the affected individual
  - b. If possible, a second adult removes the initiator
2. Supervising adult who witnesses incident has a conversation with the affected individual
  - a. Acknowledge the incident, and ensure a feeling of being safe, heard, and valued.
  - b. What will make school more safe and inclusive for this person?
  - c. What does the affected individual need from the initiator and/or faculty/staff?
3. Supervising adult who witnesses incident contacts and has a conversation with the initiator
  - a. Denounce/explain why what they did was not okay – recognize something happened and a mistake was made, discuss intent vs impact, and begin conversation about restitution.
4. Supervising adult needs to determine if this is also an incident of bias. If it is, follow the Bias Incident Protocol.
5. Complete [Incident Report \(pg42\)](#) 1 [Incident Report \(pg43\)](#) 2
6. Involve others (teachers and supervising adults).
  - a. While exploring, seek out multiple perspectives and input on the situation;
  - b. always ask the affected individual’s family what they need.
7. Supervising adult contacts the family of affected individual (may seek assistance from class teacher or colleague)
  - a. Make a phone call with an invite to a meeting for support
  - b. Complete [Meeting Record \(page 44\)](#)
  - c. Ask, “Would it be helpful for you to meet with the initiator’s family, without the children?”
  - d. If yes – ask the affected individual’s family to state what would allow healing so that it can be communicated to the initiator’s family when they meet.
8. Contact initiator’s family to inform them of incident
  - a. Make a phone call
  - b. Document [Meeting Record \(page 44\)](#)
  - c. Invite them to a meeting if requested by affected individual’s family
  - d. Offer help and support in talking with and teaching their child, moving forward
9. The teacher informs faculty, special subject teachers, and assistants to create awareness.
10. Create a plan of Support [Incident Response Plan \(page 45\)](#) 1 [Incident Response Plan \(page 46\)](#)  
[2or Support Plan](#)
  - a. [Determine if it’s Bullying](#)
  - b. Create a plan with the help of faculty and affected individual’s family

- c. Communicate the plan with all involved
- 11. Communicate outcome of the exploration and next steps to all individuals involved
- 12. Promote healing (change policies, consider posters, march, candle vigil, mural – promoting school values)
- 13. Debrief about lessons learned
  - a. Bring together families, supervising adults, and teachers involved for resolution
  - b. Document [Incident Resolution Evaluation \(page 47\)](#)

If a supervising adult receives a student report of harassing/bullying behavior:

1. The adult explores the report (talk to initiator and witnesses)
2. Follow the steps above

If a supervising adult receives a parent report of harassing/bullying behavior:

1. The adult explores the report.
2. If report is substantiated, follow the steps above

If a parent/guardian directly witnesses harassing/bullying behavior

1. Address the incident in the moment (ensure the safety of all individuals)
2. Report to the supervising adult and teacher (if different from supervising adult)
3. Follow the steps above

If a parent receives a report of harassing/bullying behavior:

1. Report to the supervising adult and teacher (if different from supervising adult)
2. Supervising adult explores the report
3. If report is substantiated, follow the steps above

If cyber bullying is occurring:

1. Students or parents should immediately make a report to the class teacher.
2. The class teacher will inform the Leadership Committee who will support an exploration of the matter.
3. In the event the exploration 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.
4. If the exploration 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 exploration 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 wellbeing of other students, staff, or Waldorf School property.
5. 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.

6. 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.

## **Tools to support the Response to an Incident**

Possible interventions for all children involved, whether the Initiator or the Affected Individual:

- Parent-teacher meetings focused on support and consequences, if necessary
- Child study
- Pedagogical stories
- Referral to Caring Committee (a faculty committee)
- [Support all involved](#) students, including witnesses to bullying behaviors
- [Help Build Resilience](#)

If restorative practices are not effective in changing the bullying behavior the following actions may occur. The below consequences/interventions initiate the disciplinary dismissal process (see Disciplinary Dismissal):

- Create an individualized behavior plan with clear quantifiable objectives and timeline
- Share plan with class teachers, subject teachers, substitute teachers (if applicable), extended care teachers, assistants, and faculty chair.
- Suspend the child exhibiting harassing/bullying behavior if the behavior has not changed since implementation of the individualized behavior plan.
- At the discretion of the teacher and after consultation with colleagues, students may be immediately suspended for exhibiting harassing/bullying behaviors.
- Suspension may also follow if the parents are unwilling to support the interventions recommended by the Faculty.
- In the case of any suspension, a written behavioral contract will be created as a condition of return, signed by the parents/guardians, class teacher, faculty chair, and the child. A probationary period may be required in order for the student to return to school following the suspension.
- Dismissal from school will happen if a child is still not able to alter his or her behavior, or if parents continue to disregard policies or are unwilling to follow processes.

## **Early Childhood Guidance Policy**

The young child is constantly learning about their world, and it is our job to help guide children through this process. Young children are just learning how to express themselves, whether with words or with actions. We strive to help children work through conflicts with one another through patience, understanding, and listening. Children work through their understanding of joy, sorrow, anger, and all other emotions in a myriad of ways. As in any care setting with young children, we occasionally see hitting, biting and crying. Our work as teachers is to help children nurture one another, and to learn alternate ways of expressing their feelings.

## **Aggressive Behavior Policy**

We recognize that young children are learning to communicate their feelings and needs. Sometimes young children act aggressively to express a variety of feelings towards peers and teachers. For example, young children might hit, push, pinch, bite and/or scratch. While some amounts of these behaviors are typical, if the above mentioned behaviors are recurring and affect the well-being of the class as a whole, the following steps will be followed:

1. Teacher will communicate with parent about the behavior(s).
2. Teacher and parent will meet to discuss the behavior(s) and work together to develop a plan of action to support the child.
3. If the behavior persists, the Early-Childhood Faculty Chair will observe the child and offer recommendations. Teacher will communicate recommendations to parent, and both will implement recommendations.
4. If the behavior persists, the Teacher, Early Childhood Faculty Chair and parent will meet to determine if the child should remain in the program.

We often follow the steps of this policy, but the school reserves the right to expedite this process. A teacher reserves the right to send a child home if a behavior puts the other students in an unsafe environment. A child may be sent home if they hit a teacher. A child who has shown extreme aggressive behavior may be asked to stay home until a meeting can take place between the teacher and parents in order to create a support plan and discuss next steps.

## **Incident Policy**

Should an incident occur between two children, resulting from one child hurting the other, or a child having an accident that requires medical attention, an incident report will be completed, and a copy of the report will be given to the parent of the injured. In cases of the former, both parents will be contacted concerning the incident.

The relationship between parent and teacher is critical to working through issues involving aggressive behavior. Both teacher and parent want the same thing (for the young child to thrive), so working together on these issues is of the utmost importance. If you have questions, thoughts or concerns about guidance and discipline for your child, please arrange a time to meet with the teacher.

## **Dismissal Policy**

### **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, attempts to engage or "lobby" other parents/guardians in a way that is countering the School's efforts to maintain candid and respectful communication, and/or undermining the relationship of the teachers with the child.

In these cases the issue would be taken by the teacher or administrator to the Leadership Circle for discussion and decision according to the following procedure:

- Faculty/administrative member brings carefully documented history of lack of parental support to the Leadership Circle.
- The Leadership Circle acts as a mediator at a meeting with the parents/guardians and the class teacher/administrator.
- The Leadership Circle 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 Circle 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 Circle to carry out a decision to expel the student.

### **Inappropriate Placement**

If the parent and teachers mutually agree that placement is inappropriate, enrollment will be terminated. If parents and staff are unable to come to a mutually agreeable plan, the school reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for one or more of the following reasons:

1. If a child has needs our program is unable to meet.
2. If a parent fails to observe policies of the school.

### **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 their 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 Circle 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 Circle 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 wellbeing of other students, staff, or Waldorf School property.

When finding appropriate consequences to acts of cyber bullying, Leadership Circle 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: Tuesdays, 3:00–4:00pm**

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.

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 Restorative Work Period: Thursdays 3–4 pm**

Students are expected to be aware of and follow our school's rules. The purpose of offering time for restorative work is to assist in repairing a mistake or wrongdoing. A teacher will ask the student to stay after school on Thursday (during Full Faculty meeting) from 3 to 4 pm. Parents/guardians must be notified by 4 pm on the day before that their student needs to stay for a work period. Teachers who have students staying are responsible for them. They must plan reflective, meaningful work during the detention, find an appropriate space for them to work, check in, and create a plan moving forward prior to dismissing them.

Class teachers are to communicate to the Grades faculty when a student will be staying for a work period and may ask colleagues for meaningful tasks. Students who earn more than three restorative work periods must be brought to the Grades Faculty to determine next steps (in-school detention, parent conference).

Three violations of the following infractions will earn a restorative work period:

- Use of electronic devices, without permission
- Breaking other school rules
- Disregarding shared agreements
- Being asked repeatedly to stop a behavior or action

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

- Leaving school property
- Disrespectful language or behavior

## **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.
- Early Childhood through Grade 5 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 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)**

### **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**

These 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**



These 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.

### **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**

- Sturdy shoes and mud boots
- Warm sweater
- Mittens and scarf
- Waterproof raincoat and hat
- Leggings or long pants
- Hat that covers ears

#### **For Winter**

- 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

#### **For Spring**

- Sturdy shoes and mud boots
- Sweater
- Waterproof raincoat and hat

### **Lost and Found**

We recommend that you label your child's coats, sweaters, lunchbox, and hats using waterproof markers or printed iron-on labels. If your child is missing an item (mittens, hats, scarves, shoes, jackets, etc.), please check in the Lost and Found basket, located just inside the courtyard entrance door. All items not claimed from the Lost and Found by the end of the year will be donated to a local charity.

### **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.

## **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:

### **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.

### **Exceptions**

Only police 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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

## **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, and contractors.
- 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.

# The Role of the Parent

## Community Guidelines for Working Together

Overview: The Waldorf School of Pittsburgh (WSP) is committed to modeling positive adult communication for our students and creating and sustaining effective adult partnerships. All WSP communications should be based on mutual respect and foster dialogue in a climate in which different perspectives are heard and valued. When concerns arise, we ask that they be communicated in a productive and constructive manner. When addressing concerns, an important starting point is the recognition that the best interest of the student(s) is the priority.

### **Guidelines for Parents/Guardians (modified from NAIS Principles of Good Practice)**

- Recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by a shared commitment to collaboration, clearly defined responsibilities, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be reached.
- In selecting WSP, families seek an optimal match for the needs of the student, their own expectations, and the philosophy and programs of the school.
- Be familiar with and support the school's policies and procedures.
- Provide a home environment that supports the development of positive learning attitudes and habits.
- Be involved in the life of the school.
- Seek and value the school's perspective on your student(s).
- When concerns arise, seek information directly from the school, consulting with those best able to address the concerns.
- Follow through on suggested recommendations made by the school to support the educational process.

### **Guidelines for WSP Employees (modified from NAIS Principles of Good Practice)**

- Recognize that effective partnerships are characterized by a shared commitment to collaboration, clearly defined responsibilities, open lines of communication, mutual respect, and a common vision of the goals to be reached.
- Fully present the school's philosophy, program, and practices to families during the admission process and encourage dialogue that clarifies family expectations and aspirations for the student.
- Seek and value the families' perspective on the student.
- Be accessible to families and model candid and open dialogue.
- Keep families well informed through systematic reports, conferences, publications, and informal conversations.
- Define clearly how it involves families when considering major decisions that affect the school community.
- Offer and support a variety of family education opportunities.
- Suggest effective ways for families to support the educational process.

- Actively seek the knowledge needed to work effectively with a diverse family body.

## **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.

## **Home Visits**

Home visits are generally scheduled for children new to the school or children moving into a new Early Childhood class. 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.

PA Co-chairs (Elected Officials) jointly oversee the overall organization of the PA and guide the PA's efforts in meeting its goals.

Class Parent Association 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.

The PA Secretary records the minutes for the meeting and sends PA announcements and updates to the Front Office.

Parent Association Representative to the Board (1–2) attend all monthly PA and WSP Board meetings to act as liaisons between the Board and the PA. The PA board rep(s) are voting members of the board.



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# WSP Family Policies & Procedures Handbook Letter of Acceptance

## **Welcome**

Welcome to the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh!

## **Handbook**

The handbook is intended to be the outward sign of, and an instrument that lays the foundation for our community culture at the Waldorf School of Pittsburgh.

## **Acceptance**

Acceptance of the Family Handbook Policies & Procedures is a condition of enrollment. It is the community member's responsibility to read, question, and understand the handbook within the first 15 days of the school year.

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Signature

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Name (Print)

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Date



