2015-2016

Dear Parents,

 I am thrilled to begin my 10th year of Aftercare at our Richmond Waldorf School! I’m also so incredibly delighted to welcome our new Aftercare Assistant, Sara Andrassy. I’ve placed her biography at the end of this packet so you can get to know her a bit better! Sara felt called to our school after student-teaching in Italy led her to discover different pedagogical approaches. After teaching in the public school system (administering 7 different types of standardized tests to 1st graders) Sara realized she could no longer continue working in an environment where she so disagreed with the principles behind educating the kids, and followed her heart to start from scratch at RWS!

Your child's comfort, happiness and development are my top priorities, and I welcome all questions/feedback/concerns. My office hours are 12:00-12:30 M-F and you may reach me at (804) 549-9097. I am also available for parent teacher conferences and home visits upon request. Please thoroughly read the information enclosed in this packet:

* Important AC Information
* Supplies list for Early Childhood and Grades
* Early Childhood 30 Day Trial Period
* Student Expectations
* AC Contract (please return to “Aftercare” mailbox in parent mailbox area, bottom right corner)

The Aftercare program is provided to Early Childhood (1:00­-5:30) and Grades (3:00­-5:30) children who need additional care M-F on the days that school is in session. We provide a stable, loving, nurturing environment that is inspired and balanced by a combination of Waldorf pedagogy and the realities of the 21st century, with a focus on respecting and playing in nature whenever possible.

Imaginative, creative, child-directed free play and outdoor adventures/explorations await your child, who also has the chance to form friendships with children of all ages. AC feels like a family in the sense that the older children adore the younger, and very much enjoy the role of “big sister” or “big brother”, and vice versa. We strive to create that timeless feeling of play that comes from home life...getting out of school, throwing down your bookbag and playing until snack and then dinner time. Our gentle rhythm allows the children to absorb all they’ve learned from their day at Waldorf.

AC also assists parents with one pick-up time when both their EC and G children are enrolled. In addition, AC is invaluable if you are running late! Reserving space for your child is accomplished by submitting a signed Contract (one per child for each year) to the AC mailbox (located in the bottom right corner of the parent mailbox area), or emailing your needs to dropin@richmondwaldorf.com . An email to this address constitutes an electronic signature.

Warmly,

Amelia Olivia Hall

Lead Aftercare/Summergarden Teacher; Substitute Coordinator

**Important AC Information**

***The following bullet points new for the 2015-2016 school year***

* We will be offering two types of care: drop in and advanced. You may drop your child into Aftercare by emailing dropin@richmondwaldorf.com. Staff checks the email at 10:45, 12:45, 2:45 and 4:45. Please expect a reply from us ONLY if there is no space (*most often we are able to accommodate drop in requests*). Drop in care is billed at $5.00/half hour.
* Advanced care is available by either returning the contract to the AC mailbox in the parent mailbox area (bottom right corner) or by emailing a copy to dropin@richmondwaldorf.com by the 25th of the month preceding the month you’ll need care. Advance care is billed at $3.75/half hour.
* Parents will be billed for all drop in and advanced care the first week of the month following Aftercare. Snow days are not charged, and there are no refunds for contracted days. You may cancel your contract at any time for any reason.
* AC staff will not be reachable by phone or text during the hours of 12:30-5:30 (though we’ll have our cell phones for emergencies but they will be on silent so as not to disturb the kids). Please email any messages to dropin@richmondwaldorf.com.
* Please allow an extra 5-10 minutes when picking up your Early Childhood student, as AC Staff is not able to have them ready to go when you arrive. . From 2:40-3:00, AC Teachers are waking up sleepy children (this requires teachers to be very mindful and involved with the children) comforting them, transitioning to Acorn class, preparing for Lead to go outside to start Grades AC, etc. We’re simply unable to also help children get ready to go on top of the many other responsibilities.

In addition, with 3 different Early Childhood classes and their own policies regarding what to take home, the result can be much confusion over what lives at school and what goes home! This will also ensure that your little one goes home with everything they're supposed to, and that they won't have to carry everything down the stairs themselves.

* We will have a doorbell you may ring when you arrive to pick up your child after 3:15. Please go through the two sets of double doors into the church area, take your first right, then a left, and come up the back stairs to the Early Childhood hallway. ***Please make sure to only use the back stairs when picking up your child between the hours of 3:15-5:30. We ask that you always use the main entrance before 3:15 as the doorbell won't be operational until this time.*** Please scan the playground when you first arrive to make sure we aren’t playing outside.
* Parents are responsible for laundering their child’s nap items.
* As we strive to follow the same pick up procedures as EC and G, we ask that you pick your child up as soon as you arrive. It’s tempting to allow a few more minutes of play, but this can lead to disruptions in the natural rhythm of the class as well as the expectation that the child will always receive a few extra minutes. We also unfortunately are not allowed to have siblings of AC students play with the other children unless they are enrolled in the program.

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* Please be prepared to show ID when picking up your child, and inform any person on your authorized pick up list to be prepared as well.
* Enrollment in Aftercare requires that if your child has a space reserved you **MUST** contact AC if your child will not be in AC, (however if your child is absent from school you don't need to follow this procedure). Please notify RWS by emailing dropin@richmondwaldorf.com.

Please also email if your Early Childhood student is signed up until 3:00 but you will be late picking up as this affects our ratios when the Graders join AC. Reserving a spot until 3:00 for doesn't mean there is room past 3:00.

* Please communicate any allergy concerns to the AC Teacher. We provide fresh vegetables and fruits as a snack for any child that doesn't have one.
* During the hot times of the year, AC often has water play outside (wading pools, water fights, running under a hose, etc.). Please see me if you have any concerns about this activity.
* AC fees for the program are separate from tuition. The school provides monthly invoices during the first week of each month to parents that are payable on the 15th of each month. No make-up days or refunds are given for any reason, unless school cancels. Once a period of time is contracted, parents are obligated to pay.
* *Children may not be enrolled in the Aftercare program in any given month if there is an outstanding invoice for Aftercare program fees which has remained unpaid for 21 + days.*
* The Program is licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services, which periodically inspects the premises, student and faculty records, playground safety, and program guidelines.
* The Aftercare room is located at the end of the Early Childhood hallway on the left, next to Acorn class and across from Oak class.

**Supplies List for Grades and Early Childhood**

* Daily snack (please follow your Class Teacher's food recommendations) if your child will be in AC at 3:45
* Sturdy waterbottle
* Your child needs to be dressed warmly in layers. We spend much time outside playing in all seasons and weather. Please also be sure your child has proper rain gear (rain jacket, boots and rain pants as age appropriate).

***Early Childhood Only*** *- Please leave these items in a bag with your child's name next to the rocking chair in the Aftercare room at drop off.*

* Blanket, stuffed animal and pillow for nap/rest time

**Early Childhood 30 Day Trial Period**

 A very important part of the Early Childhood day is their resting time, a period where the sleeping child is able to heal and “recharge their batteries”. During this time the child is able to absorb their morning of Early Childhood adventures while preparing for their afternoon either with family or their Aftercare friends. Sleep is crucial to the young child for so many reasons, one of the most important being that it's a necessity for healthy physical and mental development.

 In Aftercare we have a nap time right after lunch and bathroom break. The younger children (Stars, Moons and Comets) are able to sleep from 1:00-3:00 and may get up after 1:45 if they have not fallen asleep. The older children (Suns) rest for a shorter period of time, from 1:20-1:45. For some children it's too hard to continue in AC after such an eventful morning in Early Childhood. Disruptive behavior can occur as a result. A parent needs to be prepared to pick up their child from Aftercare should the child be unable to rest with their class and listen to the Teacher, which prevents the class as a whole from having a peaceful resting time.

 The first 30 days of a Early Childhood child's enrollment in Aftercare is a trial to see if the child and class will work well together in the upcoming school year. The Lead (Nap) AC Teacher and Early Childhood Class Teacher will all meet periodically to find what is healthiest and most beneficial for the individual child, and parents will be kept informed of their child's progress. The decision may be made after 30 days to have the child not continue in AC. Should that happen, the child may be enrolled again after Winter Break in January for another 30 day trial period.

**Student Expectations**

* Respect and listen to the Teachers and Substitutes
* Be kind to everyone
* Treat RWS/Aftercare's belongings with respect

**Richmond Waldorf School's Aftercare Program 2015-2016**

***Please circle: Comet Star Moon Sun (for Early Childhood only)***

Please fill out the chart below to reserve a contracted spot for your child in Aftercare. Please return one contract to the “Aftercare” mailbox downstairs and keep another for your records.

Child's name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day** | **Start** 1:00 M-F for EC3:00 M-F for G | **Pick Up Time**Ends at 5:30; $10 late pick up fee per 10 min past 5:30 | **Total AC Hours** |
| Monday |  |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |
| Wednesday |  |  |  |
| Thursday |  |  |  |
| Friday |  |  |  |

\*\*\*Should you need Aftercare and your needs don't conform to a weekly schedule, please just write the dates on the back of this contract or simply send an email to dropin@richmondwaldorf.com. For the lower Aftercare rate, please turn in your drop in requests or email them by the 25th of the month that precedes the month you will need Aftercare.

***If your child is contracted to be in Aftercare and will not be there, it is imperative to notify AC by contacting the emailing dropin@richmondwaldorf.com.  By signing below (or emailing your needs) you are agreeing to the information contained in this packet.***

Parent Signature\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_



Sara Andrassy

I graduated from VCU in 2014 with a Master in Teaching, a BA in Liberal Studies in Elementary Education, and a BA in Foreign Language (French). I student taught at an international school in Florence, Italy, which opened my eyes to perspectives and pedagogical approaches that are drastically different from what I have experienced in the Virginia Public School System. This experience changed me, and upon returning to the United States and graduating, my heart was not content with the idea of teaching at a public school. I spent the next year substituting for Henrico County Public School System, as well as taking a board substitute position that allowed me to finish off the last 3 months of the school year teaching a first grade class. I led many nature-centered and creative activities, daily mindfulness lessons, yoga games, and still managed to teach the SOLs and bring up half of my class to being “on reading level”. All the while, I knew I still could not accept a full-time position in public school if I were to continue to follow my heart. I knew teaching this way was not appropriate for the children or sustainable for myself since I was giving every ounce of myself to “make it work”. Nor was it a positive or peaceful environment by any means. All of my issues with public schooling ultimately led me to the discovery of the Richmond Waldorf School. My heart has been pulling me to this school ever since I first heard about the Waldorf philosophy; it just feels right. I was able to work SummerGarden this year and am looking forward to being Amelia’s assistant for Aftercare this school year!

 I am so excited to be involved in a school where the whole child is taught. My personal spiritual journey has led me to see the importance of having a balance between intellect and feeling. I feel very confident in my ability to develop the logical, intellectual side of a child, but would like to learn how to better foster the creative, feminine energies in a child. While working in Aftercare this school year, I would love the opportunity to do class observations, mentorships, substituting, assist with the Sprouts class, and everything else that will help me grow into a true Waldorf teacher! I am hoping to start working on my Waldorf accreditation in the near future, so that I can make my dreams a reality. It is hard to explain in a few paragraphs all the reasons why I want to get more involved at RWS, but I know that this is where I am going to grow the most and be happy!