



Early Childhood Program
Welcome to Waldorf Education

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Dear Parents,

Every year as the summer draws to a close, an air of excitement surrounds the school. The doors of that wonderful kingdom will soon open. Children, parents, and teachers have waited with great anticipation for the first day of school.

Then the day arrives at last. Parents depart with one last good-bye kiss, entrusting their little ones to the teachers' care. The child's day is very full – greeting new and old friends, engaging in imaginative play, having outdoor adventures, participating in artistic or cooking activities, and enjoying singing and stories. They are also learning to trust other adults to help take care of their needs. From the first day to the last the children are learning to be in shared space with other friends. A tremendous social opportunity awaits them every day. Sometimes the social learning is smooth and easy and other times it can present the child with challenges and learning opportunities. Through all the joys and challenges that await your child, teachers and parents work closely together on behalf of the children and the class community.

Often we hear parents arrive to collect their children with eager questions about the day's activities and most often the questions are answered by dreamy gazes. "Nothing" seems to be the usual answer to the question "What did you do in school today?" Because they live in the present moment, children are often unable to recount a way of sharing their school day– perhaps throughout the day and evening you'll hear a fragment of a song or a line of a verse, the name of a new friend, or about how a boo-boo occurred. To help fill in the gaps, 2 - 3 times each month your child's teacher will email a class update about many of the happenings that have taken place in the class or will be in the near future. There will also be class meetings/parent evenings throughout the year and two scheduled parent teacher conferences.

Building a healthy bridge between the school and home is very important in supporting our children. It is with this purpose in mind that the Early Childhood Handbook was created and all of the scheduled communication opportunities planned. Reading the email communication, attending class meetings/parent evenings, and scheduling time to meet during parent teacher conferences are a few of the cornerstones in building parent and teacher relationships and supporting the class community.

Parents are also invited to share their questions and concerns in conversations throughout the year with their child's teacher, at class meetings/parent evenings, and during scheduled conferences. It is our hope that we can all grow and learn together in a true spirit of community.

Sincerely, The RWS Early Childhood Education Team

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Rhythm at Home and School

Children are carried along by the rhythms of the world in which they live, from the cadence of breathing in their bodies to the daily patterns of sleeping and waking. The yearly cycle of the seasons and the rhythmic procession of stars across the heavens are part of life's experience for adults and children. Children flourish when their daily activities are arranged rhythmically to reflect the natural order of life. A dependable sequence for the day and a consistent pattern to the week offers children a sense of security and well-being; so, too, children unfold best physically and emotionally when there is a healthy rhythm, "a time for all things."

Thus the Early Childhood activities flow with a sense of "breathing in" and "breathing out," from the quiet moments of story and rest to the active moments of vigorous work and play. Each day has its own special activity. Each Early Childhood teacher creates a morning rhythm, which will be shared with parents at the beginning of the school year. Just as children are carried along by the regular rhythms of the school day, so too, and more importantly, they are nourished by the regular rhythms at home. As difficult as it is, in these times, to establish set mealtimes and bedtimes, we strongly encourage you to do so. Parents will often reflect on how meal and bedtime go, so goes the next morning. Please feel free to contact your teacher if you would like some ideas for making this transition a successful one for parent and child.

We encourage parents to think in terms of making small, but meaningful changes to their child's meal and bedtime rhythms until they've reached a consistent routine that supports and nurtures their child. Through observation of your child, you'll be able to determine when a healthy rhythm has been established. Again, these are areas where teachers welcome your comments and questions. When a child has experienced a consistent rhythm at home and school it builds a solid foundation of security and allows a child to be carried along and cared for without creating undue stress. With this solid foundation children will then be most able to joyfully adapt to occasional and spontaneous changes that come up in school and family life.

At school, rhythm is established through daily and seasonal activities such as play, self-care, eating, working, festivals, circles, and crafts. The program strives to balance formed (teacher-led) and unformed (child-led) activities, which create an ebb and flow in the daily rhythm and gives the children opportunities to be both outwardly focused and inwardly focused. Our Early Childhood programs nurture the beautiful, imaginative world of young children, building a strong base for future learning and development. Their natural childhood activities build core skills such as sequencing, sensory integration, eye-hand coordination, social skills and more that will serve them well in years to come.

Play in the classroom ranges from building to house play to space travel to creating puppetry; any place that a child's imagination can take them safely. The mornings offer a constant stream of social experiences that are observed and guided by teachers. In addition to child-directed play and outdoor exploration there are opportunities for teacher-led activities such as baking and cooking, art and handwork, story and puppetry, movement in circle and games, practical activities, and gardening. All of this is offered in a rhythmical way to the children providing the safety and security that is needed so that they benefit from all that is offered.

Sleep

Children need tremendous amounts of sleep to provide the healthiest start in life, as they are undergoing huge physical and neurological development. Children are learning a broad range of cognitive, social, emotional and linguistic skills at this time and proper sleep allows the learning to get integrated into the child. Also, young children are exposed to so many stimuli that sleep allows them to adjust to and integrate the multitude of information, images, sounds, smells, and experiences they have had.

Sleep is also a great healing salve for young children because it closes out all the stimulation and allows the body, mind, and spirit to rest, heal, regenerate, and integrate. It is a huge undertaking to create a rhythm in family life to allow for consistent 11–12 hours of sleep (naps plus overnight sleep). It is very important for young children to go to bed at the same time every night and we recommend that this be between 7:00–8:00 p.m. It is a huge gift you give to your child. As well, it is a huge gift you give to the adults in the home!

Health

The Early Childhood teachers have a special interest in your child's health and are happy to discuss it with you at any time. A well-rested child who is dressed warmly and fed a wholesome diet is best prepared to withstand an active and engaged school day and it also strengthens their immune system for all they encounter. It is normal, however, for children to experience illnesses as they grow.

As parents, you know better than the teacher how your child appears and acts when he or she is ill. The lively Early Childhood classroom is not a soothing environment for a child who is not well. All working parents know the feeling of needing to go to work even when a little one is not feeling well. Your teachers are very sympathetic to this situation, but we urge parents to arrange backup child care. After an illness, children often appear healthy in the morning, but are still not up to the vigorous activity of school. Please allow your child at least one full day of rest after an illness.

When to stay home:

- Has had a fever in the last 24 hours
 - Is in the early stage of a cold (runny nose, sneezing, coughing)
 - Has heavy nasal discharge or green or yellow discharge
 - Has a constant cough
 - Is acting unusually irritable or fatigued
 - Has had vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
 - Has a stomach ache or headache
 - Has pink eye or discharge from the eye
 - Has symptoms of a communicable disease (may include sore throat, headache, pain, rash or fever)
- *COVID19 related symptoms or exposure to others who tested positive (updates to this guideline will be provided near the start of the new school year)

If your child is ill or will be absent from school for any reason, please call the front office 804-377-8024. If your child must take medication at school, also contact the front office. Children are not to have medicine packed with their lunch; vitamins, supplements, and natural remedies are treated as medicine. *See the Parent Handbook for additional information.*

Media and the Young Child

The frequent use of television and other media in a child's life is often seen at school. The strong influence it has on young children is visible in many ways. The child may speak in the tone of a certain character, or seem "stuck" in creative play, unable to play anything but a superhero, or favorite character. This underutilizes the rich, imaginative quality that imbues play during the young childhood year. More subtle changes may be noted in a child who cannot sit still during a story, making it a distressing experience instead of a time of wonderment and delight.

There are many well documented effects of the TV and other media on children, for example: on attention span, task completion and activity level. Perhaps the greatest loss is the dimming effect it has on the child's wonderful imagination. It is the imagination which provides the foundation for learning and growth. In light of this, we ask that no television and other screens are watched in the morning before school and other times during the school week.

We encourage you to explore alternatives to TV and other screen time. Examples may be found in any domestic work. Big favorites are cooking, washing dishes, yard work and gardening, carpentry, art, and playing outside. The Early Childhood teachers would be happy to share ideas or suggest other alternatives. What is true of television also holds for videos, computer games, and other media as well. Too many music and story recordings, if they are a substitute for the live human voice, can also have similar impacts. For more information about the effect of media on the developing child, see the book lists at the end of this handbook. *See the Parent Handbook for additional information.*

Key Components of Our Early Childhood Program

Awakening a sense of wonder: A richness of direct experience, beautiful surroundings, oral story-telling, puppetry, and the natural world inspire interest – these are the first pre-requisites for effective education.

Strengthening the will: Educating and regulating our will in life is not easy to do. Learning to regulate our will develops our capacity to respond to situations in life with proactive and creative confidence and in a way that draws people toward us rather than drives them away. Regulating our will or will forces is the degree in which we are inwardly and outwardly responding and reacting to what is occurring and it is how we bring ourselves forward in learning, play, work, and social interactions. For children, learning to align emotions, needs and wants, and physical control is at the heart of inwardly regulating and outwardly channeling our will, which will become persistence, drive, and follow-through in adult life.

Building healthy bodies: Running, jumping, swinging, digging - children benefit from plenty of outdoor time with fresh air. Indoor activities bring more movement, large and small. Wholesome foods are prepared and eaten together.

Developing social skills: Teachers provide and guide safe opportunities for children to gain social understanding, learn cooperation and develop friendships.

Encouraging the imagination: Knights, princesses, farmers, divers, animals, fire-fighters - our children can be anything! We encourage imaginative play. The faculty of imagination - the ability to form mental images for oneself from words or thoughts - is the basis not just of creativity but of abstract thought.

Rites of passage: Tasks and activities are designed to be age-appropriate, and children who attend for more than one year experience being the "younger" and then the "older" in the mixed-age early childhood classes. As children mature and develop increased coordination and longer attention spans, they may have more challenging sewing and handwork projects, and lead tasks with younger and newer classmates. They are also called to be caring older "brothers and sisters" to the younger students with special jobs such as pouring the water at snack time.

Protecting from premature academic pressure: Children are provided with a homelike early childhood environment as a safe bridge from home to school. The Waldorf system differs from other conventional and independent systems of education not so much in terms of content, but very much in terms of the timing and sequence for the introduction of subject matter. We intentionally wait upon formal introduction of writing, reading, and written arithmetic until the early elementary grades. Instead we encounter math in everyday situations such as how many napkins are needed to set the table. Telling a story each day promotes memory and interest in reading. All of our many fine motor activities help in the process of learning to write. In all of these ways and more, we promote academic readiness. (For more info, see reading list at the end.)

Academic Readiness: A great deal of time is provided to strengthen fine and gross motor development and for establishing educational habits such as listening, waiting patiently, using polite manners, gaining independence, focusing attention, learning social skills, etc., which promote readiness for later academic learning.

Learning Environment: From birth to age six or seven, children experience the world and learn primarily through imitation, physical engagement and the effects of sensorial stimuli. Thus, the Waldorf Early Childhood teachers engage in meaningful work and interaction with the children; the environment is conducive to learning through exploration and play. Healthy sensory motor integration through movement, play, and work is a building block for later academic work. The environment and activities of the day are brought in such a way that children perceive and experience that:

- They are safe, loved, accepted and cared for.
- We are all friends & family here. All things and people are to be cared for and respected.
- The world is a good and beautiful place.
- This is a magical place.
- We all have an “important” part in making things happen in the classroom.
- We experiment, fail, succeed, and try again tomorrow.
- Every day is a new day.
- What makes us afraid or what is difficult for us is not to stop us. We are able to overcome/work around challenges, difficulties and fears.
- When things break (not if they break, but when they break) they can also be fixed. They may not, however, be as perfect as they once were, but they can still be beautiful and useful.

Teachers come to know their students in a deep and meaningful way through teacher observations, journaling, activities presented in a teacher guided way, faculty discussions, and referencing established student progress guides. The observations highlight the child’s growth, strengths, and an area or two for teachers and parents to bring their attention. The observations and assessments are not a test for advancement to the next level, but rather provides indicators of a child’s readiness. Assessment

activities and outcomes are reviewed through the year, with emphasis during the 2nd semester parent-teacher conferences, faculty discussions, and in the end of year reports. See appendices 1, 2, 3 for readiness outlines.

Early Childhood Classes

RWS offers 3-, and 5-day mixed-age classes. In each class there is a lead teacher and an assistant teacher.

Classes meet from 8:15 am until 1:00 pm. Children may arrive as early as 7:55 am. *See the Aftercare Program section for more information, if care is needed beyond 1:00 pm.*

The 3- day classes also offer a noon pickup for children whose readiness and stamina are still maturing for a longer day. Teachers and parents will discuss the best option for your child. Children enrolled for 3-days a week attend school on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays or on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

Parent-Child Class (Sprouts)

In this class, (affectionately known as Sprouts class) adults come together to work and play and to share life's delights and dilemmas in caring for children. It is an opportunity to get to know the school, to meet each other and to experience the Waldorf approach to the early years of childhood.

At first, children may play with others or prefer to sit in their parent's lap watching others play. Soon they are busy exploring the room, trying out toys and experiencing new social encounters while parents and teachers have time to work and learn together.

The parent-child class (Sprouts) meets for multiple-week sessions several times a year. *Please contact the Enrollment Coordinator for more information.*

After School Program - Aftercare

Aftercare is available for children who require care after 1:00 pm until 6:00 pm.

The Aftercare Program offers a time for rest, snack, play and socialization. The morning is so full for the children that the afternoon program allows them a time to slow down and take in the experiences of the morning. Parents have the flexibility to contract on an annual or monthly basis for a flexible number of days enrolled. Also there are a few "drop-in" spaces available by requesting care by 5:00 pm the day before care is needed.

More detailed information about the program including contracting for this program is available in your Back to School Guide, or by contacting the front office.

Morning Arrival

Parents may drop students off between 7:55 and 8:15 am. When dropping off, all vehicles should enter the school's main entrance where Brookland Parkway and Robin Hood Road intersect.

Parents should park along the side of the building in the fire lane and drop their child(ren) at the side door by the Early Childhood classrooms where a teacher will receive your child. Families who need more time to drop off may park in the designated Early Childhood parking spaces located just past the drop off lane.

If you are dropping off both an Early Childhood and a Grades student, please note that Grades students drop off at the back of the school.

After 8:15, all doors will be locked (for safety and security) and all students and visitors must be buzzed in through the front main entrance

Dismissal and Pick-up

Parents should pick up their children between 12:50-1:10, unless children are staying for Aftercare. Children who have not been picked up by 1:10 will be placed in Aftercare. When you arrive, please proceed to the school's main entrance and ring the doorbell. A staff member will provide help picking up your child.

When picking up, parents should park in the fire lane where a teacher will bring your child to your car.

Snack and Lunch

In keeping with a wholesome environment for the children, we make sure that the snacks we provide are of the highest quality. When possible, organic foods are used. If your child has allergies or special dietary considerations, you will be asked to complete paperwork detailing those needs. As the weekly snacks are providing nutrition for the whole class, we may not be able to accommodate every allergy on all days; however, teachers try to adapt the weekly menu so that each child can partake of at least part of the daily snack.

Children bring their own lunch from home. We ask that you pack a nourishing lunch; please do not include: soda, juice or sports drinks, candy, desserts (cakes, cookies, etc.), Jello, or gum. Pack meat and dairy products in a sealed, insulated pack with a cold pack inside. We also ask that you be mindful to not create extra garbage with prepackaged foods and use reusable containers as much as possible. This is an important part of our children's education. *See the Back to School Guide for specific information about lunch boxes and other items needed.*

Birthday Celebrations

The teachers regard your child's presence in the class as a blessing and are grateful for the opportunity to express their appreciation on his or her birthday. Each teacher has a slightly different way of honoring your child at this time. The birthday celebration may include a special story, song, snack and gifts. Ritual and rhythm are important in Waldorf Education and the birthday celebration is no exception. Embedded in our class celebration is our gift of attentiveness to the birthday child, recognition of the child's growth and development, and expression of gratitude for our relationships.

Seasonal Changes and Special Occasions

Throughout history, in all civilizations, there are celebrations reflecting nature's rhythms. We celebrate these to sustain and renew ourselves. Throughout the school year, we celebrate festivals to connect us with the cycles of nature, establish a yearly rhythm for the children, and strengthen our community.

Festivals help us to nourish our souls through the sharing of stories, food, songs and activities. To the young child, each day has something of a festival quality. For the children, the elements of the festival - light, food, song and story - permeate the weekly school rhythm; but the cadence of the year receives its form through festivals. We mark the rhythms of the year through the changing seasons and the coming and going of festivals.

Teachers, parents and children work together to express the unique character and variety of holidays and festivals appropriate to the child's age and curriculum. Some of these holidays and festivals celebrated at school have Judea-Christian roots while others are more universal. In addition to the community-wide festivals, Early Childhood teachers may also add celebrations that honor the culture or religious traditions of our community in any given year.

Each room has a nature table which changes with the seasons, bringing into the room a way for children to note these changes. Autumn brings fruits, nuts, berries, grains, and boughs of changing leaves. The Winter garden is more simple and bare. Spring bursts forth with bulbs and baskets of growing wheat grass, eggs, and bunnies. Children love this table. You might let your child have a small table or window sill at home to create his or her own nature table with objects retrieved on walks or outings.

The word "God" may be used in a universal way in stories, songs or verses. Often our mealtime blessings will include thanking our mother earth. In no way are teachers advocating or instructing on any kind of religious doctrine to the children.

Home Visits

Home visits are scheduled for new students to our school or if the student is new to the teacher. The home visit provides a special opportunity for each child to bond with his or her teacher as well as to fortify the connection between the teacher and parents. It gives the children an opportunity to share their home life and special toys and pets with their teacher.

Calls will be made in August to set up a time for our visits. As much as possible, we would like to schedule all home visits before the first day of school to provide your child with an opportunity to get familiar with his or her teacher, but we realize that this is not always possible for all families or teachers. If not, visits will be scheduled shortly after the start of school. Visits are approximately 20-30 minutes in length and are informal.

Early Childhood Visitation Day

The Early Childhood Visitation Day (scheduled a day or two before school begins) provides an opportunity for your child to visit the classroom after all preparations have been made. This usually helps to “break the ice”. Small groups of children will visit at one time while their parents wait outside. Visits are for 20 minutes. On this day, children will bring their extra clothes, indoor shoes, and rain gear. They will see where their coat hooks and cubbies are and will get a feel for the layout of the classroom. Your child’s teacher will bring a sign-up sheet when he or she comes for a home visit. *(Refer to the school calendar for the date at RichmondWaldorf.com.)*

School Clothes

The best clothes are those that are “play worthy”, can get dirty, and do not draw attention from others. Simple, well fitted clothes are best. Keep in mind that all the children are outside *every day* so we want them to be prepared for a range of temperatures and weather conditions. Dressing your child in layers allows them to be prepared for the change in temperatures from the early morning to afternoon.

We appreciate your support with these guidelines and welcome your questions.

- Clothes and shoes should have no logos, words, or emblems.
- Clothes and shoes should not have pictures, neon colors or flashing lights.
- Shoes should enclose or strap around the heel securely and enclose the toes.
- Shorts or tights/leggings should be worn under skirts and dresses.
- Pants should remain secure around the waist.
- Hair should be held back from the face.
- Save clothes that could be described as fancy, dress-up, or a costume for the weekends.
- Also, save jewelry, nail polish, and tattoos for the weekends.
- For cold weather dress so your children stay warm for 2 ½ hours outside. Include a coat with a hood or separate hat, several gloves/mittens, snowsuit/snow pants, scarf, winter boots, and layers such as thermal wear/tights/leggings.
- Facial Masks: plain or prints and appropriately sized for your child. Please do not include masks with characters. Have your child wear one to school and pack an additional mask in a zip lock bag.
- Bicycle helmet that fits securely

Personal Belongings

Oh, how young children love their things! However, toys, jewelry, “collections”, stuffed animals, key chains, watches, stickers, tattoos, purses, etc., etc., etc. are all too distracting and are discouraged in the school setting. Please leave these things at home and also “check pockets” if you know your child finds it irresistible to bring these things to school. It can often be the cause of much unhappiness when children have to part with their things when saying goodbye or later during the school day.

Discipline

Our school-wide goal is to maintain an atmosphere of respect, harmony, and community in the classroom, buildings and grounds to support a focused imaginative learning environment. Maintaining a strong and reliable rhythm to each day and an orderly and predictable classroom environment resolves many discipline issues through prevention. Depending on the age and development of the children, we also use several guidance methods that are intended to help children internalize rules, get along with each other and become more self-directed in their behavior.

These methods include:

- improving communication & social skills • promoting cooperation among children
- reinforcing positive behavior • giving limited choices
- building skills and confidence • setting and reinforcing limits
- being fair and consistent • redirecting children to other activities
- problem-solving • allowing for safe natural consequences

Communication is very important in resolving behavioral questions or problems as they arise. Your child’s teacher will notify you of any on-going or major discipline problems so that problems can be resolved together. If there are on-going social difficulties between children, parents are encouraged to speak with each other. It can be so beneficial for a young child to know that their own parents are communicating with the parents of a child with whom they are having difficulty. When parents come together to more fully understand what is happening and to help resolve difficulties, they send an indirect, but powerful message that we are a community, that all children are loved and cared for, and that there are no problems that cannot be resolved.

Please keep the lines of communication open. If something traumatic has happened in your child's life, tell your child's teacher about it and discuss how to best handle it. If something wonderful has happened in your child's life, tell us that too, so that we can help your child in sharing it. Also, please take the time to discuss with your child's teacher any particular needs or issues your child may have.

Teachers are helping children:

- participate in classroom activities
- feel comfortable and confident outside of the home
- be safe to themselves and others (includes verbal and non-verbal)
- be courteous and respectful to others and use kind words
- care for their own and the school's property
- make transitions smoothly including being quiet and calm in hallways
- help clean up messes to the best of their ability
- listen and respond to teachers and friends without interrupting or talking back
- wait patiently for teachers, friends and things to play with
- use pro-social behaviors (use their voices, share, control bodies when angry or hurt, help others, resolve difficulties, etc.).

Parent and Teacher Communication

Drop off and pick up times do not lend themselves as appropriate times for detailed discussions as we need to keep the carpool line moving. Teachers also prefer to have private conversations with parents out of earshot from their children. Please call or email your teacher when you have something to discuss - some teachers set regular times for phone calls or in-person meetings. Your child's teacher will communicate the best times and methods of communication.

For those families newly enrolled there are specific times that we will be discussing your child's progress as outlined in the enrollment contract. For all families, teachers will contact you within the first few weeks of school to check in with how transition back to school is going and discuss any particular observations or questions.

Parent/Teacher Conferences provide an opportunity for sharing impressions, concerns, and goals for the child by both parent and teacher and can deepen our understanding of the child as well as strengthen our work together. These are usually scheduled in October/November and March/April. The teachers are always grateful for communication from you about significant circumstances or changes in your child's life. You need not wait until conference time to discuss your child with his or her teacher. Please feel

free to arrange an appointment when you feel one is needed. As well, teachers provide written End of Year reports. For the child who finished their last year of kindergarten and will be first graders the following year, the reports are more detailed. For younger children the reports are typically brief and provide a highlight of the year.

In addition, your child's teacher will schedule class meetings during the school year (see Class Meetings section for more information.)

Class Meetings

Throughout the school year, your child's teacher will schedule class meetings. These meetings are your opportunity to hear about how things are going in the class and to learn more about child development and Waldorf education. There is also an important social aspect to these occasions in that they help create community around the children. Please make every effort to attend. With the exception of infants, the meetings are for adults only.

Back to School Supplies

Please see the "Back to School Guide" for detailed information on appropriate clothing, indoor shoes, rain gear, and lunch supplies that are needed for school.

Recommended Reading:

The Disappearance of Childhood By: Neil Postman
Lifeways By: Gudrun Davy and Bons Voors
The Hurried Child By: David Elkind More
Heaven on Earth By: Sharifa Oppenheimer
More Lifeways By: Patti Smith and Signe Eklund Schaefer Magical Child
By: Joseph Chilton Pearce
Evolution's End By: Joseph Chilton Pearce
Work and Play in Early Childhood By: Freya Jafke and Christian von Arnim Endangered Minds
By: Jane M. Healy
Children at Play By: Heidi Britz-Crecelius
Your Child's Growing Mind By: Jane M. Healy
Festivals, Family, and Food By: Diana Carey and Judy Large
Who's Bringing Them Up By: Martin Large
You Are Your Child's First Teacher By: Rahima Baldwin Dancy
Emotional Intelligence By: Daniel Goleman
Rhythms of Learning ~ Rudolf Steiner lectures Edited and introduced by Roberto Trostli (an RWS faculty member)
Your Self-Confident Baby By: Magda Gerber and Allison Johnson
Parenting for a Healthy Future By: Dotty Turner Coplen
Punished By Reward By: Alfie Kohn
Beyond the Rainbow Bridge By: Barbara J. Patterson, Pamela Bradley, and Jean Riodan
Covering Home By: Jack Petrash
Waldorf Education: A Family Guide Editors: Pamela J. Fenner and Karen L. Rivers Simplicity
Parenting By: Kim John Payne, Lisa M. Ross

Adapted from: Richmond Waldorf School * Seattle Waldorf School * Bright Water School *
Three Cedars School * Cobb Meadow School * Waldorf School of Bend, Oregon

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Appendix 1: [Kindergarten Readiness](#)

“Sun Year”

Typically, a child must be 5 years 3 months old by Sept of the year they begin kindergarten. Many children of the same chronological age may differ remarkably from one another in their rates of growth and development. A child needs to be ready physically, socially, and emotionally to exhibit behaviors that will support school success. Not all children are ready for the same experiences at the same time or for the increased expectations. As such, parents and teachers will want to consider signs of the child’s developmental readiness for our non-academic play-based program that has both structured teacher-led curriculum components as well as child-directed imaginative play.

A significant aspect of our program is laying a foundation for group and individual learning, and in supporting pre-academic skills and educational habits that help prepare our students for the Waldorf grades curriculum.

Foundation skills include:

<p>Daily the children are learning to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● complete tasks, ● helping to clean up, ● transitioning independently, ● using organizational skills, ● socially accomplishing a goal, ● developing habits of responsibility, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · lengthening attention span and developing memory, · as the older children in class, they are given more individualized and challenging tasks – follow multiple step directions and see a job through from start to finish without having to need an adult overseeing their work.
<p>Social and emotional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing levels of coping skills, ● using one’s voice in an appropriately assertive manner, ● problem solving, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● being a helpful and responsible classmate, ● trying new things, ● increasing self-regulation and resiliency, ● able to set boundaries and respect others’

<p>Pre-academic skills:</p> <p>Language arts –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● fundamental work in listening and speaking skills, proper pronunciation, ● rhymes that form the later basis of word families, comprehension, ● vocabulary enrichment 	<p>Mathematics – routinely introduces skills and use math in practical ways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● measuring when cooking, ● counting enough bowls and spoons, ● sharing, ● sorting, ● ordering from smallest to larger, ● using number verses, ● sequential & repetitive processes, ● through songs and games
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Readiness: Child in last year of preschool should have demonstrated growing abilities in the following areas with the teacher and parents confident that the children will be able to consistently demonstrate:

- Comfortably be away from parents for an entire day.
- Express ideas, feelings, and needs to adults other than immediate family.
- Participate in teacher-directed activities (circle, story, rest, crafts, work) without undo attention or redirection.
- Accept minor disappointments or limits without tears.
- Listen to, and follow, directions.
- Understand and respect rules and limits.
- Take turns, and/or wait for his/her turn, patiently.
- Work independently without constant adult supervision.
- Find ways to resolve conflicts and solve problems with peers independently.
- Make simple decisions given a few choices of play activities.
- Take care of personal belongings and toileting needs independently.
- Retell familiar stories, nursery rhymes, or songs.

Appendix 2 : [EC Assessment Areas for First Grade Readiness](#)

EC Assessment Areas for First Grade Readiness

Standard: EC teacher sees consistency by February-March of Sun year. Inconsistencies will be noted.

1) *First Grade Expectation: Participate in 30 minute moving circle without interrupting others*

EC assess for:						
-Stamina - ends the day with energy						
-Remaining in own space						
-Confidence						
-Not needing undue help to participate in 15-minute circle (low fussing!)						
-Shows memory for circle by anticipating movements and verses						
-Comes into form without help						
-Able to adjust spacing when circle is moving						

-Arrives on time in the morning with energy for the day						
-Balance & coordination when navigating classroom/toys & outside terrain						
-Moves easily & confidently: 6 planes, contraction/expansion, quiet/loud						
-Is not consistently silly or disruptive in 15-minute circle						
-Flows into and out of EC circle without infringing on other's space						
-Transitions into and out of EC circle with ease and independence						
-Imitation – easily, anticipation, word and movement						
-Can sit for story quietly and upright						

Appendix 3: [Rising First Grade Student Learning Expectations](#)

Typically, a child should be 6 by June 15 before entering First Grade. Early Childhood teachers provide special projects and activities to ensure each child's readiness for 1st grade.

1. Demonstrate engagement and some ability to fully imitate teachers' gestures without interrupting others
2. Demonstrate ability to participate in purposeful work while in a group with the teacher
3. Demonstrates interest and ability to follow along orally in song and verse
4. Gain ability to move their body in space with increasing control and social awareness
5. Follow verbal sequential directions
6. Demonstrate ability to accept redirection by adult
7. Demonstrate ability to play both independently and socially
8. Demonstrate developing relationship with time through awaking memory forces
9. Demonstrate developing core strength of torso and ability to sit and focus
10. Demonstrate impulse control and ability to wait for a turn
11. Demonstrate an increasing ability to sustain focus for a period of time
12. Demonstrate interest and proficiency with rising first grade activities as an indication towards independent work
13. Demonstrate an ability for self-care, for example, bathroom independence, dressing for outside play, taking care of personal belongings
14. Demonstrate an ability to care for their physical environment, for example, clearing their place from the table and putting away toys after playtime
15. Demonstrate the increasing capacity of resilience, the ability to recover healthfully from difficulty and challenges
16. Demonstrate ability to confidently and independently leave the parents or care giver and enter the classroom
17. Demonstrate ability to transition throughout the day without undue teacher guidance to keep pace with the group, stay on task, and know what needs to be done