



PARENT

HANDBOOK

2024-2025

EARLY CHILDHOOD

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WELCOME TO WSOC

Welcome to the Waldorf School Orange County. The role of parents in the life of our school is a vital one. The participation of all parents is important, not simply because we are a non-profit endeavor, but because we are building a community and demonstrating this community-building spirit to our children.

The most successful educational experience for the child comes when home life and school life work in a harmonious fashion to provide a solid base from which the child can venture into the world. Many recent studies indicate that the key to improving student achievement is the involvement of parents or the student's family members in the educational process. With the goal of understanding the child's experience, either at school (for the parents) or at home (for the teacher), regular communication is essential. It is the parents who are responsible for bringing their children to school well-rested, well-nourished and ready to learn.

By contributing to the healthy functioning of our school, whether through volunteer time, specific skills, or imagination, our parent body can support our school with its cooperative effort. The value of our community-at-large is the sum total of all its parts. So, we welcome you and encourage you to become a valuable, integral part of our school and truly experience Waldorf Education at its finest.

Our Mission Statement

WSOC offers a curriculum which meets the students' age-related capacities and fosters in each student a genuine interest in the world, an intellectual curiosity, a connection to the human spirit, and a sense of purpose in life.

Our Vision Statement

WSOC has a vision of the world where the sanctity of childhood is protected; the unique gifts of every student are respected; and graduates courageously embrace the future as engaged global citizens.

WALDORF EDUCATION

History of Waldorf Education

From its beginnings over 100 years ago, Waldorf Education has become one of the fastest growing independent school systems in the world. The foundations of this educational impetus were laid by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian scientist, philosopher, and educator widely known in Europe and increasingly studied in America.

In 1919, at the request of a leading German industrialist, Steiner opened the first Waldorf school in Stuttgart for the children of workers at the Waldorf-Astoria Company. International recognition for the school came quickly, and similar schools started up in other European countries. Within a decade the first American Waldorf school was launched in New York City. Today, there are more than 1,200 Waldorf/Steiner schools in 64 countries, and more than 1,900 Waldorf kindergartens in 70 countries, plus Waldorf associations and teacher-training centers for Waldorf educators and Waldorf teachers around the world.

Each school is in every sense independent, with ties neither to church nor state. The schools are linked with one another only through commonly shared educational ideas and approaches. In this country, all Waldorf Schools belong to the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). WSOC has achieved Full Membership Status with AWSNA.

History of Our School

Our school began with a small group of parents who shared a strong concern for educating their children in the most positive way. These committed individuals had been involved together in a study group. As the idea of a Waldorf school began to germinate, a Board of Trustees was formed in the fall of 1987, and the first kindergarten class formed in January 1988. A room was rented in a church in Costa Mesa, where five children joined our founding teacher, Phyllis Gilmer. That room was shared with a twelve-step group, which meant that Phyllis and her parents had to daily construct and deconstruct the kindergarten room. As anyone who has ever been in one of our rooms knows, this is no small task. This kind of service is indicative of the level of involvement we have fostered ever since.

Rudolf Steiner

Rudolf Steiner developed Waldorf Education. He was born in Austria in 1861. He was a prominent figure in the cultural life of central Europe. In 1902, he played a key role in the Theosophical Society, whose basic beliefs were that human beings have an eternal spiritual essence and that the aim of our evolution is the discovery of this divine nature. Steiner moved on from the Theosophical Society in 1909, lecturing and writing on a variety of topics, including philosophy, religion, history and art. He soon attracted a large, international and sophisticated following.

Rudolf Steiner firmly believed that the material view of the world that underlies modern life is both incorrect and disastrous. It is incorrect in that it is blind to the reality of the spiritual world, which creates, nurtures, surrounds and penetrates the visible world, and disastrous in that it causes much of the disorder and suffering of the modern age.

Humanity must awaken, he said, to its own spiritual origin, nature and destiny, and must recreate all of modern life and society with this spiritual nature in mind. Only then will the fulfillment of the individual and the peace and harmony of society be possible.

Emil Molt, who owned the Waldorf-Astoria factory, commissioned Rudolf Steiner to develop a school for the children of his factory workers. Steiner saw an opportunity to design a system of education that would meet the spiritual needs of humanity. This was a time in Europe when tensions were mounting, as the industrial revolution was leading man into a more mechanized role. He believed there was a need for a school that would educate individuals who were able to create a peaceful and just society. His hope was to build a model for education in a new epoch of history.

In Autumn 1919, the first “Waldorf” school opened in Stuttgart with eight teachers and 175 pupils, mostly the children of Waldorf-Astoria factory employees. The curriculum included activities for the hands, the heart and the mind. It contained strong moral and spiritual elements. The school’s explicit purpose was to create free, creative, independent, moral and happy human beings.

Aspects of Waldorf Education

- Emphasize the harmony of nature
- Respect the individuality of the student
- Foster self-determination in the student
- Develop the student's creative and critical abilities
- Stress cooperation rather than competition
- Stress the active involvement (as contrasted with passive learning) of students in a wide range of educational situations

Waldorf education emphasizes the need for children to fulfill their childhood during each developmental phase without being hurried ahead into abstract materialistic thinking. This is supported by many of today's foremost educators who are now seeing developmental problems as the result of early academics and influence of the media. Age-appropriate curriculum is an educational concept gaining wide acceptance.

Waldorf education aims to support a harmonious development of three faculties—willing, feeling and thinking—taking full account of the physical and emotional growth phases of the child. There is a particular emphasis on the development of the will (determined purpose or self-discipline) during the first seven years of home and kindergarten education. The children learn most by what is worthy of imitation through activities.

During the second seven years, the feeling life of the child is nurtured through the guiding authority of the teacher, integrating artistic, imaginative elements into the learning process. During the third seven years, the faculty of thinking is more directly emphasized by challenging the adolescents to individual judgment, a quest for truth and to more conscious participation in their education.

It is recognized that Steiner developed a new view of life and our place in it. He recognized the individual as body, soul, and spirit. Each component is considered in determining the needs of the child, and the curriculum is adjusted accordingly. A Waldorf school begins and ends with the children enrolled at any given time. Our teachers do not seek to impress a rigid set of structures on the children, but to recognize what their children are ready for and most eager for. In a like manner, the students respond to what is placed before them hungrily, with a natural love of learning.

Each subject is introduced to the child when he or she is most ready for it, and in a manner to which the child is naturally receptive at that stage. Year by year, the content of the curriculum expands with the ever-growing powers of the child, nourishing the inner life successively through stories from folk tales, legends, myths and history and nourishing the outer life with the development of individual and social skills.

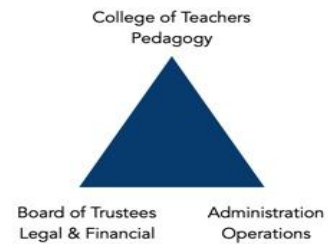
Waldorf schools seek to engender in each student a desire:

- to become an enthusiastic contributor to society
- to face the challenges of life with creativity, optimism and flexibility
- to be able to express his or her maximum intellectual, artistic and practical potential with strength and sensitivity
- to be able to cope with the complexities of social and family life
- to act out of freedom in the spiritual path chosen



WALDORF SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

As is customary in Waldorf schools, Waldorf School Orange County is governed by a three-fold structure comprised of the Board of Trustees, which is responsible for legal and financial matters, the College of Teachers, which is responsible for pedagogical matters, and the administration, which is responsible for the day-to-day running of the school.



The College of Teachers

The College of Teachers is the guardian of the curriculum, the identity and the mission of the school. This is the body which makes final decisions about which teachers join or leave the school and which programs are offered (within budgetary limits). The College meets weekly and works collaboratively and through consensus. Its primary mission is to nurture and support the ideals of Waldorf Education within the school.

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is made up of parents, alumni, faculty, and friends of the school who have been invited to join as members, and one Parent Representative from the Parent Association.

The Board supports the work of the Administration and the College of Teachers by discussing and making recommendations on budgets and finance, legal matters, fundraising and development, and long-range planning. Regular members serve for a term of three years. The Board has several standing committees, including a Finance Committee and a Strategic Planning Committee, and may establish temporary committees and Task Forces to accomplish special tasks. Members of the community are welcome to refer matters of concern to the Board through written communication with the chairperson. Contact information is available on our website. Board minutes are maintained and are available to the community.

Administration

Professional administrative staff brings support and oversight to a wide range of administrative and business matters. The Administration carries out the necessary day-to-day business activities of coordinating and operating an organization. The Administration is led by a School Administrator with oversight of five Directors - Admissions, Finance, Marketing, Development and High School Coordinator. These five positions carry out the decisions and standing policies of the Board and College of Teachers and strive to serve the needs of the faculty, parents, and students.

The Parent Community

The community of parents consists of all parents who have children attending the school. The parents support their children and the teachers by learning about Waldorf Education and by striving to bring their home life into harmony with the school life. Each family is expected to participate so that the responsibilities and accomplishments of the school are shared by all. As a community, we provide support to each other as parents who share the goals of Waldorf education.

The Parent Community provides vital support to the operation of the school by participating in various volunteer committees as well as by aiding events such as: Festivals, Fundraisers, Faculty and Staff Appreciation Day and Parent Education.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

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

Our early childhood program is designed to meet the needs of potty-trained children from the ages of 2 to 6 years. Our nursery, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten classes are held in fully licensed classrooms. Teachers work closely with families to ensure a smooth transition to school and to create an experience that supports each child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. Our strong weekly rhythms will give our children the security to explore freely and with confidence. Each day includes plenty of time for creative, free play both indoors and out as well as time for simple activities like cooking, painting, crafts, and clean-up. Daily teacher-led "circle time" helps children develop motor skills, integrate the senses, and work cooperatively. Puppet shows and stories inspire their awakening imaginations.

We warmly welcome you to our school and look forward to a wonderful year. We regard your child's presence in our program as a blessing, and in all our decisions as teachers, your child's needs are first in our thoughts. We hope the following information will help provide a harmonious transition between home and school in the weeks and year to come.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

We ask that you do your best to have your child to school on time as we have found that children who arrive late often have difficulty working into the group.

California state law requires that you sign-in your child when he or she arrives to school. Please sign your full name, legibly, and the time of your child's arrival. California state also requires that the adult leave a phone number where he/she can be reached, each day, in case of emergency. Please also note if another adult will be arriving for your child at pick up, that person must be on the student's pick-up list. If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please call the lower school office; they will let your child's teacher know.

Once you see your child safely into our care, we ask that you save any questions for us until pick-up time (unless, of course, it is something that needs our immediate attention). This will allow us to focus on the children as they arrive.

Nursery drop off and pick up will take place at 8:30am. Nursery students in Ms. Maria's class will be received at the Nursery gate and those in Ms. Erin's class will be received at the north side campus gate (between the front office and COA). Late students will be admitted at the gates until 9:00 am. Please park in an available spot in the school parking lot and accompany your child to the Nursery gate. Those who arrive after 9:00 am should proceed to the school office to check in. Pick-up of Nursery students is also at the designated gates.

Pre-Kindergarten drop off and pick up will take place in the south end of the Main School parking lot as you enter at the Early Childhood gate.

Please pull into the lot where the gate to the EC breezeway will open - the Pre-Kindergarten Teachers or Assistants will be there ready to help your child from the car onto campus and into the classroom. In order to alleviate traffic backup, please park in an available parking spot and walk your child to the gate if cars back up behind you onto Canyon Drive.

The arrival time for Pre-Kindergarten is between 8:30 and 8:40am. For safety considerations, please keep your child with you in your car until a Teacher or Assistant can greet you. Please be mindful that the Teachers are responsible for a calm and crisp drop-off process so discussions with the Teachers are best held after school when there is time to address any questions or issues.

Pre-Kindergarten students arriving after 8:40am should report to the school office. Please do your best to arrive on time to minimize disruptions to the beginning of the school day.

At pick up, the Pre-Kindergarten Teachers will walk the students out to the designated Early Childhood gate and will wait for you to pull up and collect your child.

Kindergarten drop off and pick up will take place in the High School parking lot. Please pull into the lot at the southern end of our property, where the large gates to the yard will open. Please use both lanes. Either the Kindergarten Teachers or the Assistants will be there, ready to help your child from the car and into the classroom.

The arrival time for Kindergarten is between 8:30 and 8:40am. For safety considerations, please keep your child with you in your car until a Teacher or Assistant can greet you. Please be mindful that the Teachers are responsible for a calm and crisp drop-off process, so discussions with the Teachers are best held after school when there is time to address any questions or issues.

Kindergarten students arriving after 8:40am should report to the school office. Please do your best to arrive on time to minimize disruptions to the beginning of the school day.

At pick up, the Kindergarten Teachers will walk the children out to the designated High School gate and will wait for you to pull up and collect your child.

Walks

Walks to Fairview Park (fortunately adjacent to our campus) are part of our weekly rhythm and are a very healthy experience for the children. A “Fairview Park Field Trip Release” was included for your review and signature in your registration packet. It states you are aware your child’s class will take regular walks to Fairview Park or the Talbert Nature Preserve. These excursions can occur during the course of the school day without notice to the parent/guardian. The release states you have advised the class teacher of any known allergic reaction to bee/insect stings, pollen or plants.

Parent Meetings

Each class teacher will hold parent meetings during the year. These provide an opportunity for you to learn more about Waldorf education, child development, and to meet the other parents in your child’s class. Individual Parent Conferences to discuss your child’s school experience and development are scheduled once a year. As well, if at any time you would like a conference with your child’s teacher, please feel free to request it.

SCHOOL POLICIES

General School Policy Statement

- To create an environment that nurtures the development and growth of the child to enable each to realize his/her full potential
- To respect and safeguard the professional status of teachers
- To strive for cooperation between teachers, other educators, parents and children
- To apply the latest findings from education, psychology and related fields as the College of Teachers shall consider relevant to the improvement of learning within the school
- To stimulate public interest in education in general, especially approaches to learning indicated by the published works of Rudolf Steiner
- To provide for the delivery and holding of lectures, games, concerts, dramatic or other entertainment, exhibitions, public or other meetings, classes and conferences directly or indirectly to advance the cause of education

Consistent with the preceding policies:

- The school shall be non-denominational
- The school shall be coeducational
- There shall be no principal or headmaster
- There shall be no school uniform
- There shall be individual assessment and noncompetitive examination
- There shall be no corporal punishment
- The school shall not discriminate against any student for any reason, and every effort shall be made to integrate a student within the school

Illness Policy

Control of communicable illness among the children is an important responsibility. Policies and guidelines related to outbreaks of communicable illness have been developed with the help of information from the health department and local pediatricians. To protect the entire group of children, as well as your own child, we ask that you keep sick children at home if they have experienced any of the following symptoms within the past 24 hours:

- A fever over 100°F (37.8°C) orally
- Signs of a newly developing cold or uncontrollable coughing
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or an upset stomach
- Unusual or unexpected loss of appetite, fatigue, irritability, or headache
- Any discharge or drainage from eyes, nose, ears, or open sores
- Undiagnosed rashes

Children who become ill with any of these symptoms will be returned home. We appreciate your cooperation with this policy. If you have any questions about whether or not your child is well enough to attend school, please call the office before bringing your child.

Allow your child at least one full day of rest after an illness. A child may not return to school until 24 hours after vomiting or fever. If your child is ill or will be absent for any reason, please call the school office.

Clothing

We try to provide a beautiful environment free of distraction, and so we ask that you send your child to school in clothing free of:

1. Slogans, cartoons, caricatures, camouflage
2. Cowboy boots, light-up shoes, shoes that make noise, sandals
3. Baseball caps of all types are best left at home
4. Unnatural hair styles and colored hair are not permitted

The early childhood classrooms are a place of active work and play. Additionally, our children spend an hour or more outdoors. Clothing should allow unrestricted movement and it will often become dirty in the course of the play day. Because of this, spare clothing is a must. The following is a list of the things we would like your child to have at school.

- Indoor shoes, which the children change into for inside play, need to be closed, light, soft sole shoes or moccasins. Children need to be able to skip without the shoes coming off.
- Spare clothing should include: two pairs of socks, two pairs of underwear, a shirt, a pair of pants, and a sweatshirt or sweater. All of these items should be labeled clearly and placed in a zip- lock bag with the child's name on it. Please remember to replace anything brought home.
- Please have the girls wear a pair of shorts under their dresses or skirts.
- Rubber boots, a raincoat and rain pants (optional) will be needed during the rainy season.
- We ask that no playthings be brought from home. Jewelry, make-up, nail polish and tattoos should also stay at home.

Media

Childhood is a time for learning through activity, experiencing the wonders of nature, growing socially, playing creatively and imaginatively, singing, talking, running, laughing, and even crying. The activities of childhood should allow no time for television, computer or video games.

There are clearly many undesirable effects of media upon children, and they are often clearly seen: uneasiness, lack of attention span, inappropriate acting-out, and aggressive behavior.

Perhaps the greatest loss is the dimming effect it has upon the imagination. It is the imagination that provides the foundation for learning and growth. WE ASK THAT NO TELEVISION, MOVIES OR COMPUTER GAMES BE WATCHED OR USED.

We ask that parents and other adults refrain from cell phone/smartphone usage on campus in order to focus their attention on the children and interactions with each other and set a positive example for the children of the school. We have signage requesting this across the campus as a reminder.

Discipline

The early childhood teachers are committed to helping mold character by modeling acceptable behavior and teaching self-control. Our goal is that students develop a strong foundation for self-discipline which will manifest in later years. Teachers are in complete accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 22, and agree that any form of discipline or punishment that violates a child's personal rights will not be permitted regardless of authorized representative consent. When undesirable behavior must be interrupted, teachers guide their behavior from inappropriate to appropriate activity. Teachers also refrain from admonishment or shaming and instead use praise,

with restraint, and with an understanding that it can be coercive in excess. In addition to using redirection and praise, teachers are consistent and issue consequences that are immediate and clearly tied to the offense. When consequences are delivered, they are accompanied by a short, simple explanation of the wrongdoing and an alternative behavior that should have been performed instead (American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP] Committee on Psychological Aspects of Child and Family Health 1998).

The safety and well-being of the children is of the utmost importance. In the event that your child cannot self-regulate, we may call you and ask you to come and pick up your child. The teacher's ultimate goal is to be in partnership with the parents to ensure a safe environment where children can learn and thrive.

Civility Policy for Adult Communication

Waldorf School Orange County is committed to positive adult communication that models a civil society for our students. All WSOC community communications should be based on mutual respect and foster dialogue in a climate in which different perspectives are heard and valued. While it is natural for concerns to arise within any community, we ask that such concerns be communicated in a productive and constructive manner. In addressing concerns, an important starting point is the recognition that the best interest of the students is the first priority.

Waldorf School Orange County is committed to an atmosphere of respect and reverence. One of the twelve senses described by Rudolf Steiner is the sense of ego. This is not a sense of self, but a cultivation of sensitivity to others. All interactions, large and small, should build a healthy environment for student learning and serve as role models of appropriate, constructive and collegial adult behavior.

Basic Principles

- Demonstrate respect, in both what is said and how it is said.
- Focus on issues, not individuals.
- Keep an open mind. Be positive and flexible. Ask questions first.

Guidelines

- Raise concerns with the appropriate person. If your concern has to do with your student, begin by speaking with your class teacher.
- Use good judgment about the amount of contact that is appropriate. Be mindful of the amount of time discussions about an individual concern may take.
- Demonstrate public support for one another. Convey the message that parents, teachers and staff are on the same team.
- Schedule appointments if a discussion is needed instead of making unplanned “drop-ins” or raising concerns in public settings (such as on the sidewalk area during drop-off).
- Do not text or call the teacher on his/her personal cell phone during class hours. If it is an emergency, contact the front office and the teacher will be immediately notified.
- Keep in mind that voicemail and email are public documents, and that confidentiality cannot always be assumed. One rule of thumb to keep in mind is that you should not say or write anything in an email that you wouldn't want printed in the newspaper. Please also strive to keep email communication to simple logistical matters, rather than conversation.
- Understand that conversations may be documented, and a third person may be present.

- Verbal, physical or sexual harassment go against the core philosophies of our institution; they will not be condoned or tolerated.
- School email lists and Parent Square are used for school communications and should not be used for personal marketing purposes. Email “blasts” to large groups using these distribution lists are not appropriate. Parents should not assume involvement of the entire class in their personal communications.

Consequences

Egregious or repeated violations of the school’s civility policy may result in one of the following:

- Meeting with school leadership
- An individual’s limitation of access to the school campus, to faculty or staff members, to school events, or volunteer opportunities
- Dismissal

Care Group

The Care Group consists of faculty members who are dedicated to helping those children whose individual academic, social or emotional challenges need support beyond what can be given by the class and specialty teachers. The members may include class teachers, specialty teachers, kindergarten teachers and the educational support teacher. The Care Group generally meets weekly. Results and decisions from the Care Group are shared with the wider faculty.

The support from the Care Group may include: child observation and study, meetings with families, reference lists of local therapies and referrals from our community, research of different therapeutic modalities and recommendations for parents and teachers to assist in fostering a positive learning environment for each child.

Emergency Preparedness

In the event of a disaster, the school has all needed supplies for up to 72 hours. We have on-hand: first aid, food, water, blankets and supplies. Our safety plan calls for drills and campus safety inspections at regular intervals, as well as CPR, First Aid and Incident Command training conducted every summer for all staff members. In addition, every classroom also has an emergency backpack filled with needed supplies, including the child’s emergency information.

Each year the students are led through drills and briefed on how to respond and follow direction in the event of an emergency. The local fire marshal performs regular inspections for safety on and around our campus.

In the event of an emergency such as an earthquake, we will assess the situation at the school and will activate our emergency communication system (Titan HST) to provide you with detailed information and instructions. If we ask that you come pick up the children or if communication services are down and you come to pick up your children, we have the following procedure in place for releasing students:

As you approach the school, there will be staff positioned at the end of Canyon Road directing traffic and letting you know where to park. You will then be guided to a release gate. At that gate you will give the name(s) of the child(ren) you are picking up and, while you sign off on the release form, a staff member will get the child(ren) and bring them to you. We will not allow parents on campus

during this procedure as a measure to ensure all children are released appropriately. While there will be wait time involved with this procedure, it will nevertheless be the most efficient way to make sure that each and every child is accounted for and correctly released.

Please be aware that during this procedure we will NOT release your children to anyone whose name does not appear on your emergency list.

A copy of all emergency release forms is kept on file in our office, and a duplicate copy is kept in our disaster bin located on campus. It is imperative that you keep your emergency release form current. In the event of an emergency or disaster, your child will **only** be released to those individuals who have been identified in writing on that form. In the case of an emergency, please follow the instructions of the person in charge when picking up your child.

Child Protective Services (CPS) Protocol

In the event Child Protection Services (CPS) and/or the police come to the school to see a student, the following is the protocol in place:

A. If the student interviewed is a suspected victim of child abuse or neglect:

- The agency has the right to interview the suspected victim on School premises during the school day. (Pen. Code § 11174.3(a))
- The agency investigating the suspected child abuse is obligated to inform the student of his/her right to be interviewed in private or to select any school employee, or volunteer, to be present during the interview. (Pen Code § 11174.3(a))
- If selected, the School employee or volunteer has the right to decline to participate.
- If the School employee or volunteer agrees to participate, he or she must maintain confidentiality. The purpose of his/her presence is to lend support to the child, not to participate in the interview. The School is permitted to require that the interview take place at a time when it is not an expense to the School. (Pen. Code § 11174.3(a))
- Except when the student elects to have a School employee or volunteer present during the interview, School employees do not have the right to be present during the interview.
- The investigating agent may, in his/her discretion, permit a School employee to be present.
- If the police take the student victim into custody, the School should not inform the parents, and should provide the address and telephone number of the student's parents/guardians to the police officer. (Ed. Code § 48906)

B. If the student interviewed is NOT the suspected victim of child abuse or neglect:

- The School may release the student to be interviewed by law enforcement officials so long as the School acts within the proper standard of care. This would include ascertaining the identity and official capacity of the peace officer, the authority under which he/she acts, and the reason for his/her action.
- A minor's parents need not be notified before the police can question a minor who has been temporarily detained but not taken into custody for the purpose of identifying the minor as a suspect, obtaining his/her full name and date of birth. (34 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 93, 95 (1959))
- The School must inform the student's parents if the student has been removed from school by law enforcement. (Ed. Code § 48906)

Informing the Parents

A. In cases of suspected child abuse by the parent:

- The school will not discuss with or inform the parents of the suspected victim of the report of child abuse, or that the report is being investigated by law enforcement or another agency. The police or other investigating agency should determine whether and when a parent should be notified of the interview or claim.

B. In cases of suspected child abuse by an individual other than the parent:

- The school will coordinate with the investigating agency to determine whether they would like the School to either inform or not inform the parents.

Closed Campus Policy

In the Waldorf curriculum, the teaching is not limited to the classroom. The teachers need to feel free to take the students onto the playgrounds or walkways at any time. In light of this fact, and for the safety of our students, we would like the campus free of non-staff, non-students and non-volunteer parents during the school day. If you are on campus working as a volunteer, please sign in with the office before going onto the campus.

The Front Office

The front office is the hub of all school activity, around which teachers, volunteers, parents and prospective families converge. The office staff focuses on the business, communication and administrative needs of the school. To help the office staff function more efficiently in serving the community as a whole, we ask you to consider the following courtesies:

- Please respect the work environment and keep conversations low.
- As with any working environment, where office machinery is in use, please see that your children are supervised.
- The copy machines and general office facility are for school business only.
- Dogs are not permitted on campus.
- Smoking is not permitted on campus.
- Absences should be reported to the teacher by informing the school office. It is very helpful for the teacher to know the reason and probable length of the student's absence.
- The office cannot relay messages to children or make carpool or after-school arrangements (apart from their normal interaction with the Aftercare staff). Please do not call upon the office to relay messages except in cases of real emergency. This enables the office staff to stay on task without constant interruption to their workday.

Updated school rosters, committee listings and board member listings are available from the front office upon request. These are also included in your ParentSquare App.

Family Sabbatical and Leave of Absence Policy

If a parent will be taking a professional sabbatical which requires the child to be withdrawn:

The parent must write a letter to the school informing us of the length of the sabbatical and stating the family's intention for re-enrollment. The College would then decide what would

be needed for re-enrollment (i.e. full application, updated records) AND if a spot would be held for the child's return.

If the student will be leaving the class due to travel (leave of absence) for a month or longer with the intention to return to the school:

The parent must write a letter to the school informing the reasons and length of the leave of absence. The College would then decide what would be needed for re-enrollment (i.e. full application, updated records) AND if a spot would be held for the child's return. If there is a waiting list for the class to which the student would be returning, then the College may request that the family pay all or part of the tuition during that missed time to hold the spot.

Driving on Campus

When driving on or near campus, please be aware that children may be found unexpectedly in parking areas or drives. Please reduce your speed and exercise extreme care and caution while entering, exiting and driving in the parking lot. The curbs in front of the kindergarten and administrative offices are strictly no parking any time. These are fire lanes and must be kept clear for emergencies. Please do not park in front of the gates near the kindergarten curb as this blocks trash pick-up. At drop-off, please pull up to the red curb in front of the administrative offices and have your child(ren) enter through the main gate. If you choose to park, there are spaces in the main lot, marked spaces on Canyon and in the neighborhood. Please aid in ensuring safe and efficient parking and pickup by driving with a courteous and careful attitude. Remember, the children are watching you. Please model patient, courteous behavior with one another.

Photography and Videotaping at School Events

Class plays and all school assemblies are part of the curriculum. They are presented to the community as a gift from the children. Class plays and assemblies should be treated with the reverence in which they are given. All videotaping or photography needs to be approved by the teacher prior to the day of the performance.

Social Networking Photo and Personal Identification Posting Policies

There are times when parents wish to post photos of a child on a social networking site to share with others. Parents may choose to post photos of their own child at school or on field trips, but to respect the privacy and confidentiality of other enrolled children, parents are not at liberty to post photos of other children on social networking sites, even if those children are photographed during play with their own child. No one is allowed to post identities or personal information regarding staff, children, or parents featuring school activities on any social networking site.

Fundraising

The school conducts several fundraising events each year earmarked to support the general operating budget. There are many different ways for a family to support these events, and any effort made toward the success of those fundraisers is greatly appreciated and highly needed.

Annual Giving Campaign

The Annual Giving Fund is the cornerstone of the school's giving program. Each of our families is asked to make a heartfelt gift to the Annual Giving Fund each year, in addition to paying tuition. The

goal is to achieve **100% participation** by all our attending families AND for these gifts to collectively make a significant contribution to the Operating Budget. When the Annual Giving ask is made, we request each family to thoughtfully consider their ability to make a gift that is significant for their own family, and then to make the gift promptly. Gifts may be made in lump sums or monthly installments. A volunteer team of Annual Giving callers will try to reach any families who have not yet contributed, in an effort to reach 100% participation. Please recognize these volunteer callers are from our own parent community, they have already made a gift, and they are working on the school's behalf.

Capital Campaigns

Occasionally, the school embarks on a capital improvement project, such as a new building, or a large piece of equipment, that cannot be achieved within the scope of the general operating budget. The school will then launch a capital campaign to raise funds to fill the need

Class or Group Fundraisers and Philanthropy

Students in Grades 7 through 12 and school groups (sports team, spirit team, or a club) may conduct fundraisers to benefit their class or group. Typically, these funds are raised to fund the students' 8th or 12th grade class trips or sports/club related expenses. All classes or groups wanting to conduct a fundraiser must first submit a proposal to the Director of Development. It is our goal to honor each class' or group's idea for fundraising, while balancing the needs of the whole school and being sensitive about the number of times and manner in which we ask our parent community to support various endeavors.

With the approval of the teacher leading the class or group and the Development Director, classes or school groups may also raise funds for the benefit of outside philanthropic causes. (Example: collecting canned goods during the holiday season)

Individual Fundraising

We encourage every student or parent who is fundraising for causes near and dear to their heart. While we would greatly enjoy supporting and promoting each of your individual efforts, it simply is not possible. The school is already managing a large fundraising effort while balancing the fundraising needs of our classes and school groups. Please do not use the physical campus or the school-wide or "class of" email rosters for solicitation of your individual fundraising efforts. This is not to say that you cannot ask your WSOC friends to support your cause via other methods. It is our desire for you and your chosen charities to be successful. Thank you for your understanding.

Personal Gift Policy

We recognize that members of the WSOC community may wish to express their appreciation to teachers and other employees by giving gifts. A gift should be a voluntary expression of gratitude, and no member of the community should feel obliged to make an individual gift or to contribute to a group fund for purchasing gifts. A gift is a personal benefit we receive for which we did not pay. Gifts can include cash, merchandise, food, tickets, use of facilities, investments, discounts not offered to the public, or forgiveness of debt, from parents, students, vendors or others related to the school. Gifts intended for the personal benefit of a WSOC employee cannot be donated to the school in order to be passed on to the employee.

Employees must not solicit parents, students, vendors or others related to the school for anything that provides a personal benefit different from the public. Employees must not allow the amount (or

absence) of a gift from a community member to influence the employee's decisions on the job with respect to that community member or his/her family.

Donations of supplies, services, cash or other contributions intended for the classroom, or for the benefit of the operation of the school, and not for the personal benefit of an employee, are not gifts covered under this policy. Donations to the school are tax deductible. If you wish to make a donation to the school for a specific purpose, rather than to the general operating budget, please coordinate such a gift with the Director of Development or the Business Office. Employees who receive gifts in violation of this policy will be required to return the gifts or reimburse the donor for their value, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

TITLE 22

Children's Records

In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 22:

- A separate and current record for each child is maintained.
- All information and records obtained from or regarding children are confidential.
- All WSOC Early Childhood files are available to the Department of Social Services to inspect, audit and copy upon demand during normal business hours.

Immunization Requirements, Medical Assessment and T.B. Requirements

Included within the registration packet, each parent/guardian of children to be enrolled received a "Physician's Report" to be completed by the parent/guardian and the child's physician. The physician indicates the general health and well-being of the child, along with noting any health problems of which the teacher should be aware including, but not limited to, hearing, vision, developmental, language/speech, the presence of asthma, and allergies to food, insect stings, or medicine. Prescribed or other medicines/treatments taken on a regular basis are also noted. It is required for us to be aware of each child's immunization history, either by way of the Physician's Report or a separate California Immunization Record. In accordance with California state law, we require a copy of your child's vaccination card. This includes a screening for T.B. Additionally, within the registration packet, each parent/guardian received and completed "Preadmission Health History – Parent's Report." Completing this form gives the teachers valuable information regarding the child's health history including past illnesses, as well as the child's daily routines.

Immunizations

In accordance with California state law regarding immunization requirements for school entry, California schools are required to verify immunization records for all new student admissions.

Please visit:

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Immunization/School/shotsforschool.aspx> for age-related details pertaining to your child's particular immunization requirements.

Permission to Administer Medication

We will not administer any medication without a written prescription and without written authorization of a parent/guardian. This includes over-the-counter products. The school must have a release form completed if the child is to receive medication during school hours. Without this documentation, the school is unable to dispense any medication. It is required that the child's name be on the original container. Prescription medication is to be clearly labeled with the child's name, physician's name and phone number, the name of the medication, dosage and expiration date of the medication. No medication will be administered from anything other than the original container.

In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 22:

- Medications are kept inaccessible to children.
- Prescription medications must be administered in accordance with label directions as prescribed by the child's physician.

Identification and Emergency Information and Action to Be Taken in Medical/Dental Emergency

The school requires current identification and emergency information to be on file for every child. It is imperative for the teachers to be able to reach the parent/guardian in case of emergency. In the circumstance the parent/guardian is not reachable, the "Identification and Emergency Information" form also requires a listing of additional persons who may be called in an emergency. In the case of a medical or dental emergency, we will contact the physician/dentist listed on the form. If the physician or dentist cannot be reached, we will contact 911 or the emergency hospital as deemed appropriate, unless otherwise noted on the Emergency form. A copy of all emergency release forms is kept with the school files and a duplicate copy is kept in our disaster bin located on campus. It is imperative you keep your emergency release form current. In the event of an emergency or disaster, your child will only be released to those individuals you have identified in writing on that form as people who are authorized to take the child from the facility.

Children's and Parent's Rights

Each child shall have the following rights which include, but are not limited to (Reference, California Code of Regulations, Title 22):

- To be accorded dignity in his/her personal relationships with staff and other persons.
- To be accorded safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings, and equipment to meet his/her needs.
- To be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse, or other actions of a punitive nature, including but not limited to: interference with daily living functions, including eating, sleeping, or toileting; or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
- To be informed, and to have his/her authorized representative, if any, informed by the licensee of the provisions of law regarding complaints including, but not limited to, the address and telephone number of the complaint receiving unit of the licensing agency and of information regarding confidentiality.
- To be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice and to have visits from the spiritual advisor of his/her choice. Attendance at religious services, either in or outside

the facility, shall be on a completely voluntary basis. In childcare facilities, decisions concerning attendance at religious services or visits from spiritual advisors shall be made by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child.

- Not to be locked in any room, building, or facility premises by day or night.
- Not to be placed in any restraining device, except a supportive restraint approved in advance by the licensing agency.

As a parent/authorized representative, you have the right to (Reference, California Code of Regulations, Title 22):

- Enter and inspect the childcare center without advance notice whenever children are in care.
- File a complaint against the licensee with the licensing office and review the licensee's public file kept by the licensing office.
- Review reports of licensing visits and substantiated complaints against the licensee made during the last three years.
- Complain to the licensing office and inspect the childcare center without discrimination or retaliation against you or your child.
- Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the childcare center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
- Receive from the licensee the name, address and telephone number of the local licensing office:

Department of Social Services 714-703-2800
Community Care Licensing Child Care Division 750
The City Drive, Ste 250
Orange, CA 92868

Be informed by the licensee, upon request, of the name and type of association to the childcare center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption, and that the name of the person may also be obtained by contacting the local licensing office.

- Receive, from the licensee, the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

Note: California State Law provides that the licensee may deny access to the childcare center to a parent/authorized representative if the behavior of the parent/authorized representative poses a risk to children in care.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key element in any relationship, personal or professional. How we speak to each other, listen to each other and understand each other determines how well we live and work together. Our school consists of an intricate network of relationships. (For example, parent and child, teacher and child, parent and teacher, and parent and parent, to name just a few).

To meet one-on-one or in a group to share, learn, support and face challenges are central to developing a healthy community. Through regular meetings such as class evenings, parent/teacher conferences, information evenings, workshops and the weekly newsletter, the Waldorf School Orange County has, over the years, established different channels of communication. These channels of communication are a means to ensure that all the members of the community are

informed about and can participate in the life of the school. An important consideration, for all of us, is to imbue our communications with an attitude of interest and respect.

As a school, the focus of our work is within the classroom and what happens between the child and the teacher. Mutual respect and ease of communication between parent and teacher is the greatest support for developing healthy teacher/student relationships.

Classroom Questions

Any questions or concerns regarding the classroom need to be taken up with the teachers involved at the earliest possible opportunity. If you feel that your question or concerns have not been resolved, you need to bring them to the attention of the College Chairperson. (In the event that the teacher is the College Chairperson, the concern can be brought to any other College member).

If you still do not feel that your questions or concerns have been addressed, you are invited to write a letter to the College of Teachers and/or the Board of Trustees. We request that communications be made in writing and only use email for informational purposes.

General Questions

Questions concerning events, committee work, enrollment and billing procedures, afterschool care and items for the weekly newsletter should go to the Front Office and/or School Administrator.

Email Policy

The school roster and class e-mails are for school-related business only.

Emails sent to College and Board members should only be for informational purposes. If you have concerns, it is requested that you speak directly with the Teacher, College Chair, or Board Chair.

Newsletter and ParentSquare

Our primary means of communication within the school community are the bi-weekly Newsletter and the online communications platform ParentSquare. The Newsletter is intended to help keep parents informed about school activities and upcoming events. It is also used as a vehicle to further educate our families about Waldorf Education. Please contact the office for guidelines and schedules for submissions. All communications must be pre-approved by the College of Teachers to assure that the content is appropriate to our school's goals and philosophy.

ParentSquare is a comprehensive communication platform designed to foster collaboration between schools and families. It provides a unified system for announcements, event notifications, and two-way communication, making it easier for parents, teachers, and administrators to stay connected and informed. With features like messaging, calendar integration, and secure document sharing, ParentSquare ensures that important information is easily accessible and that school communities can engage more effectively.

Room Representatives

Room Representatives serve as the helpmates of the class teacher. They help the teacher with communications to the parents of children in the class, preparations for class meetings, and organizational tasks for class trips.

Room Representatives have the following responsibilities:

1. Attending all class meetings of the class (varies from one meeting per term to one meeting per month, depending on the class);
2. Transferring information back and forth between the class and the Parent Association;
3. Conveying information about school events to parents in the class and delegating the responsibility for organizing your class' portion of the event to one of the parents in the class;
4. Educating yourself as to the organizational forms that exist within the school, the functioning of the bodies, and the procedures and policies of the school;
5. Supporting parents in the class who have questions or concerns about the school by directing them to the proper channels by which to get these matters resolved (see Lines of Communication);
6. Attending monthly Room Representative meetings.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

In addition to serving individual classes as room representatives, parents participate in the life of our community through serving on the committees that best meet their interests and talents:

Committees

Committees accomplish much of the school's organizational work. Most committees are true partnerships of parents, teachers, board members and staff working in the school.

Please review the following list of committees and select areas to donate your time. Parents are needed to serve as chairpersons, co-chairs and general members. Whether available during the day or evening, or for limited blocks of time, our committees need your participation. To volunteer your services, contact the Parent Association chair. (Some committees require a nomination to serve).

List of Committees

Committee	Description	Jobs
Campus Beautification	Maintaining and improving the aesthetics of our campus by working on special projects and participating in "all hands" Campus Beautification Days; coordinating with the Grounds Committee on beautification tasks.	Planting, watering, general landscape maintenance.
Crafting for Service (separate and distinct from our social Craft Group)	Creating Waldorf-inspired craft items to be used for outreach events, benefits and festivals.	Sewing, knitting, felting, embroidery, doll-making, woodworking, jewelry making, and more.
Faculty & Staff Appreciation	Supporting annual faculty/staff appreciation, periodically providing meals for College of Teachers meetings.	Cooking, baking, decorating, planning, hosting.
Admissions Hospitality	Assisting our Admissions Director with welcoming potential and newly enrolled families to our school. Events	Cooking, baking, decorating, greeting, and providing a

PARENT HANDBOOK
2024-2025
 Early Childhood

Committee	Description	Jobs
	include New Family Orientation, Welcome Tea, Open Houses, Walks Through the Grades, Information Evenings, Mornings in the Kindergarten.	feeling of general warmth and helpfulness.
Company of Angels Bakers	Providing baked goods for our pastry shop in the Company of Angels on a rotating basis.	Baking
Special Event Support	Working with our Development Director on special events.	Decorating, cooking, organizing, administrative support, set-up, clean-up.
Yearbook	Helping to create a wonderful keepsake for students and families!	Photography and coordination.
Library	Organizing and staffing the school library for use by parents and students.	Cataloging, shelving, assisting library customers, increasing awareness of the library through book fairs and special events.

The following volunteer opportunities require an interview process. If you are interested in any of the following, please contact the School Administrator:

- Board of Trustees
- Community Building Chair for Parent Association
- Parent Education Chair for Parent Association
- Fundraising Chair for Parent Association
- Outreach Chair for Parent Association
- SCRIP Store Assistant
- Company of Angels Salesperson/Cashier

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Registration

- All rising students are required to re-register during Registration Week.
- A late fee will be charged for those who do not complete their registration within this period.
- Without their registration completed, a student's place in the class will be held for eight weeks before being released for consideration of those in a wait pool.
- The student would then be required to re-apply for consideration.

Registration Fee

The registration fee is non-refundable and payable to The Waldorf School Orange County for enrollment as stated in the re-enrollment package.

Tuition

Tuition will be paid in full by July 10 for the following school year, or can be paid in two, nine or eleven equal monthly installments through the WSOC payment website beginning July 10. Parents should understand and agree that their child is subject to dismissal by WSOC if any tuition payment is delinquent more than thirty (30) days. All installments must be secured by electronic fund transfer.

Tuition Refunds

You may withdraw your student (cancel their tuition contract) and receive a full refund of all tuition and fees (except for the non-refundable registration fee) if written notice is received by the School on or before April 30 preceding the school year in question.

Parents may also withdraw their child by providing written notice to the School between May 1 and August 31 preceding the school year. Parents shall then be responsible for fifty percent (50%) of annual tuition and fees. Beginning September of the school year in question, parents may not cancel their tuition agreement under any circumstance and are not entitled to a refund of any tuition and fees for any reason whatsoever. Overhead, salaries, and other costs to the School do not diminish in the event of a student's absence, withdrawal, suspension, or dismissal from WSOC. Therefore, the obligation to pay all tuition and fees is unconditional and no portion of such fees paid or outstanding will be refunded or canceled.

Late Payments

Any tuition payments received after the 10th of the month will be assessed a \$15.00 late fee. As stated in the enrollment agreement, families are required to be current with tuition payments or make appropriate arrangements with the Business Manager to assure continued enrollment.

Returned Check Policy

A family will be on a cash or cash-equivalent basis for payment of school expenses if the bank returns three personal checks unpaid in a twelve-month period. This includes checks written for tuition, fees, and scrip and to the Company of Angels. Cash and cash equivalents include currency and coin, credit cards processed at time of payment, money orders, cashier's checks and payment by online banking.

Any person or family may reapply for the ability to write personal checks after being on a cash-only basis for twelve months. Application will be made to the Business Manager, which will make the final decision. Criteria for acceptance will be based on an acceptable payment history during and before the time when the person or family was placed on cash-only status.

Sibling Discounts

The second child receives a 10% discount on their tuition. The third and each additional child receives a 15% discount on their tuition.

Tuition Adjustment

Tuition adjustment is based on the ideal that Waldorf education should be accessible to all families who wish it for its own values, no matter what their economic status may be. Through our tuition

adjustment program, we ensure that the acceptance of a child into our school is not dependent on the financial resources of the child's family.

If a family is unable to pay the suggested tuition, the family completes a Tuition Adjustment application. A meeting will be set up with two members of our tuition adjustment committee. During this meeting, both the school's budget and the family's budget are reviewed closely. The tuition is based on an understanding of the school as a whole. Neither the family nor the school determines the tuition amount, and neither maintains a comfortable position in this process; each stretches to meet the needs of the other. The final step in this meeting is to arrive, by consensus, at a tuition amount that is kept confidential.

With the tuition adjustment program, we are attempting to move our thinking away from the abstract economics of dollar amounts by trying to gain a real understanding of the value of Waldorf education. Our tuition adjustment program involves a commitment to enter a relationship with members of our community and become aware of the needs and gifts of each member. It is working together in a fiscally responsible way toward the goals of our school, based on the values and ideals of Waldorf education, a value that is unique for every family, child and individual.

Annual Giving Campaign

Every year our school conducts an Annual Giving Campaign where we ask each family in our school to consider giving a financial gift, above and beyond tuition, to supplement operating expenses. Our tuition income covers approximately 85% of the costs to operate the school, with the other 15% coming from the Annual Giving campaign and the Company of Angels school store. Your support of these fundraising initiatives allows the school to keep our tuition costs down while still maintaining the quality of our program. Our goal in the Annual Giving campaign is to achieve participation from 100% of our families each year as we strive together to support our beautiful school.



WALDORF SCHOOL

ORANGE COUNTY

“

The healing social life is found when, in the mirror of each human soul,
the whole community finds its reflection.

And when, in the whole community, the strength of each one is living.

Rudolph Steiner