

BRIGHT WATER WALDORF SCHOOL FAMILY HANDBOOK



Table of Contents

Introduction

Title Page

Table of Contents 1-2

Welcome and Introduction 3

History 4

Mission Statement and Core Values 4-5

Affiliations 5

About Waldorf Education 5

Waldorf Curriculum in Early Childhood 7

Statement of Non-Discrimination & Social Inclusion 10

General Information

Arrival and Departure 11

BWWS Parking 12

Extended Day Program 13

Festivals and Celebrations 15

School Policies

Media and Technology 17

Attendance and Promptness 20

In Case of Illness 23

School Closure 25

Field Trips 26

Grades Dress Code 28

Early Childhood Dress Code 29

Homework Guidelines 30

Playground Conduct and Rules 32

Student Support

Student Support 34

Discipline Philosophy in a Waldorf School 36

Table of Contents (continued)

Student Support (continued)

Student Support Spiral	37
Working with Students	37
Discipline Policy at BWWS	38
Student Support and Early Childhood Behavioral Guidelines	40

Emergency and Safety

Fire and Earthquake Drills	42
In the Event of a Major Disaster	43
Parent/Guardian Expectations	43
Reunification Plan	43
Sexual Harassment Policy	43
Child Abuse Mandatory Reporting	44

Communication

School Communication	44
Caregiver/Guardian–Teacher Communication	44
Parent and Caregiver Evenings	45
Caregiver/Guardian Education Events	45
Teacher–Caregiver/Guardian Conferences	45
Grade School Student Reports	46
Annual Meeting	46
School Directory	46
Email	46
Newsletter and Social Media	46
School Calendar and BWWS Website	47
Cell Phone Use	47
Appendix	48
Resources	50

Welcome to Bright Water Waldorf School!

We are happy you have chosen to both send your child or children to our school and to join our community! Our purpose is to provide a meaningful and intentional Waldorf education for all of our students, from the Caregiver & Child program through Grade Eight, in an urban setting. At Bright Water, academic excellence, social responsibility, and recognition of each student's gifts are our guiding educational ideals. Our deeply committed faculty works together to foster each student's sense of self-reliance, concern for community, and moral purpose. We look forward to partnering with you, our families, to educate our children.

- The College of Teachers and Staff

The Bright Water Waldorf School (BWWS) Family Handbook explains school policy and structure, including information about our mission, history, festivals, and procedures. We share these institutional expectations of conduct, academic responsibility, and communication to ensure a healthy school. This supports healthy relationships and builds integrity, trust, and respect among all members of our community.

Family involvement is vital to maintain the health and stability of the school. Caregivers and guardians are invited to support students and the school by attending parent/teacher conferences, parent evenings, class meetings, and other educational offerings in order to deepen their understanding of their children's education.

Please familiarize yourself with this handbook and refer to it as necessary. By enrolling their child(ren) at BWWS, caregivers and guardians agree to support these standards with their children.

BWWS governs itself through a horizontal model known as Sociocracy (<https://www.sociocracyforall.org/>). This provides us with a non-hierarchical, equitable system of governance where every voice in the community is heard equally, and where teachers and staff, community volunteers, and the Board all contribute to the overall health and operation of the school. With respect to our governance system, there are established pathways of communication for caregivers and guardians when they have a request for clarification, or a concern of any kind. We ask that these concerns or requests be first brought directly to the person to whom they relate. If further action is needed beyond what can be accomplished through this initial conversation, please contact the College Circle leader, and the Community Administrator.

Questions or concerns not covered in the handbook may be directed to admin@brightwaterwaldorf.org

History

Bright Water Waldorf School (BWWS) began as an effort to meet the expanding demand for Waldorf education in Seattle. The founding group had a clear vision of a school in a more urban environment that valued diversity and focused on education that would build the students' capacities to thrive as adults.

In September 1998, Bright Water School (as it was named then) opened its doors with one kindergarten class of fourteen children, taught by Holly Koteen-Soulé in her home in North Seattle. The following year, Bright Water's first 1st grade class was added in the house next door and taught by Michael Soulé. Bright Water School then moved to the basement of Unity Church in South Lake Union where Michael and Holly were joined by Carole Street, who taught the 1st grade class of 2000. Over the next four years, Bright Water School added a preschool and expanded all the way up to 4th grade. Thanks to the hard work of many parents and faculty, the school was able to move to the St. Mark's building on Capitol Hill in the fall of 2003. Bright Water School graduated its first 8th grade class in 2007.

Beginning in September of 2021, Bright Water Waldorf School moved locations to the Japanese Cultural & Community Center of Washington in Seattle's Chinatown-International District (CID). This move married together the school's desires to provide both an urban learning environment and place real value in the diversity of Seattle.

Mission Statement

Bright Water Waldorf School cultivates creative minds, capable hands, and compassionate hearts.

Core Values

Bright Water Waldorf School community is dedicated to continually deepening our understanding of each child's gifts and needs within the evolving tradition of Waldorf education. We prepare our students for both academic and practical life through an enlivened capacity for original thinking, self-awareness, compassion for others, as well as the will and skills to engage with the world.

Bright Water Waldorf School supports the distinct journey of each family by cultivating a collaborative relationship between the caregiver/guardian, teacher, and child. Bright Water Waldorf School is committed to building innovative forms and structures inside and outside the classroom. These include creating programs and a learning environment that ensure the long-term sustainability of the school as well as establish fruitful relationships with the larger community.

Affiliations

Registered and approved private school of the State of Washington

Accredited Member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA)

Associate Member of Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America (WECAN)

Candidate for full accreditation with NWAIS (Northwest Association of Independent Schools)

About Waldorf Education

In the words of founder Rudolf Steiner, Waldorf education strives to produce "human beings who are capable themselves of imparting purpose and direction to their lives." Bright Water Waldorf School encourages caregivers/guardians to learn as much as possible about Waldorf education because informed parents are better prepared to assist their child's learning as they progress through the Early Childhood program and the Grades program.

Waldorf education addresses the physical, emotional, and intellectual capacities of the developing child through an age-appropriate curriculum that integrates the disciplines of movement, fine arts, and practical arts into the study of humanities, science, and math. Through the development of these capacities, Waldorf schools strive to educate the whole human being in a healthy and balanced manner by developing the child's self-confidence and self-reliance while fostering personal integrity and a sense of social and environmental responsibility.

Waldorf educators work with the conviction that childhood is sacred and that children learn naturally when the curriculum meets their developmental needs: the very young child learns most successfully through imitation and imagination; the younger grade school child through the feelings and senses; and the adolescent through the intellect. We believe that children's imagination needs to be nurtured and protected, and that students should be engaged through active, thoughtful participation in their learning. Waldorf emphasizes the importance of children finding joy in learning and experiencing wonder, awe, and reverence for the world around them. Waldorf schools around the world base their educational philosophies on the insights of Austrian philosopher, scientist, and educator Dr. Rudolf Steiner.

The school encourages the development of strong bonds between teachers, students, and their families. We believe that these relationships support the abilities of the students to take risks and meet challenges. Our teachers are thoroughly trained in the methodology specific to Waldorf schools and approach the students with enthusiasm and respect for each child's emerging individuality. Bright Water Waldorf School prepares students to enter their high school years with self-discipline, independence, social aptitude, and analytical and critical thinking skills.

Waldorf education is multi-layered and multi-faceted: learning about this type of education is an ongoing process. The resources at the end of this handbook may be helpful in providing more information about Waldorf education and education in general, the stages of childhood, and media use as it pertains to the growing child. The AWSNA website listed contains a number of free articles on a variety of topics. For further resources or for a specific inquiry about an aspect of Waldorf education, please contact your class teacher.

Waldorf Curriculum in Early Childhood

Rhythm and Routines: Young children thrive on a consistent rhythm to their day. In the Early Childhood program, we carefully design our rhythm and routines to allow for a “breathing in” and “breathing out” throughout the day. Breathing in activities like painting and other artistic work are balanced by “breathing out” activities like free play and time outdoors. Rhythmic family routines, like mealtimes and bedtimes for instance, support your child throughout their days.

Repetition and Imitation: Young children are wide open to the world. Sights, sounds, and movement experiences are quickly taken in and imitated. Our goal is to provide them with experiences which, when imitated and repeated, support their development. Consistent daily, weekly, and yearly routines with ample time spent in nature can support your child’s feeling of security and goodness in the world. Our full-day program lives into this in an urban setting, taking daily walks to area parks for stimulation and play in natural city surroundings.

Reverence: Through rhythm, routine, and repetition in caring for our environment and for each other, we offer the child an experience of reverence and gratitude for the world in which they live. Daily verses, lighting a candle before meal time, lending a helping hand to friends, and tending our indoor and outdoor classroom spaces are intentional practices the teacher brings to offer an inner experience of care and gratitude.

Nutrition: Children in our Early Childhood program bring a mid-morning snack. Children staying for the full-day program bring a packed lunch from home. We encourage families to pack snacks/lunches rich in whole, organic foods when possible.

[Video: Nutrition by Helle Heckman](#)

Lunchbox: for children staying full day only.

- Please provide a healthy packed lunch.
- Please refrain from sending sweets like candy, cookies, cake, etc. or notes/cards in your child’s lunch.
- Please choose an insulated container placed inside a child sized backpack that will hold small containers and the required "cold packs" to keep food fresh. All backpacks and containers must be free of media references, logos and

potentially frightening images like skulls and skeletons.

- Please place all food in containers that are reusable and easily opened by your child.
- Each child should bring a full water bottle to school everyday.

Sleep: “Early to bed, early to rise makes (one) healthy, wealthy, and wise.” A consistent rest time and an early bedtime will allow your child the 10-12 hours they require each day. Sleep is restorative for us all and essential for young growing children.

[Video: Sleep by Helle Heckman](#)

Toileting: An aspect of the sense of life is recognizing our bodily needs. It is our school policy that children three years and older be fully potty trained prior to attending class. At our school, being fully potty trained means the following:

- Your child willingly sits and voids into the toilet.
- Your child is no longer wearing pull-ups or diapers during the day, including during naps.
- Your child tells an adult that they need to use the bathroom.

As your child transitions to class, an occasional accident is understandable and in fact expected during the first few weeks of school. However, if after these first few weeks of school your child has consistent accidents (defined as two accidents per day, for three consecutive school days), we will ask that your child remain home until they are fully potty trained. Please do not hesitate to contact your child’s teacher if you could use support in helping your child become fully potty trained prior to the start of school.

Illness: In early childhood if your child becomes ill or does not seem themselves during the day, you will be called to pick up your child. Your child will wait in the office until picked up. If your child is ill, please notify the office AND email your child’s teacher. We strive to account for every child, every day.

Meeting the Four Foundational Senses in Early Childhood

Sense of Life: When the life sense is functioning well, we take it for granted. When someone's sense of life is functioning well, they can understand and can seek to satisfy their needs. For example, we can recognize hunger and need for a quiet environment, sleep when tired, and experience the loving warmth of another's attention. When our sense of life is depleted, this is when we notice this foundational sense most profoundly.

Warmth: There are two aspects to warmth we foster in our classrooms. The first is physical warmth, and the second is the quality of how we relate and interact with each other.

Article: [The Importance of Warmth](#)

Sense of Touch: Upon birth, the sense of touch is the first connective experience a human being has with the external world. The sense of touch offers children connection and a means of separation. This sense enables children to develop personal boundaries in relationship to others and their environment. In Waldorf Early Childhood, we understand that touch is the foundation of social, cognitive, and emotional learning. In the classroom, we provide natural toys: silk, wool, wood; as well as real work experience: dough making, beeswax modeling, and ample outdoor exploration to ensure children connect with their environment in the most natural way. This sense later evolves into the child's ability to connect, see, and understand themselves and other human beings.

Sense of Movement and Balance: The young child learns how to orient themselves in the world through the sense of movement, also called the proprioceptive system, and the sense of balance, also called the vestibular system. As each child develops their awareness of these senses, they are also learning to navigate themselves in the world.

In our early childhood classes, the children discover many opportunities for the development of these senses. Through morning circle activities (like skipping, jumping, rocking), free play (like building, sliding, pushing, lifting), movement adventures and outdoor play (like climbing, rolling, swinging, throwing, catching, balancing), and work activities (like chopping, kneading, raking, sweeping, washing), the young child activates and develops their ability to feel secure as they move through the world -- physically, socially, and emotionally.

Statement of Non-Discrimination & Social Inclusion

Bright Water Waldorf School does not discriminate on the basis of gender identity, race, religion, color, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic origin, or socio-economic status in its admission, financial assistance, or educational policies. Our school strives to be an inclusive, supportive environment for all.

At Bright Water Waldorf School, teaching active compassion is high among our pedagogical goals. As Waldorf caregivers/guardians and educators, working through an understanding of child development, we recognize that - first and foremost - children learn through imitation. As adults, therefore, we strive to be worthy of imitation in the social realm. We strive to model direct and respectful communication and social warmth, and to show a willingness to work through social conflicts.

We believe that every human being needs a healthy social environment in which to grow and develop. Because social conflict is inevitable, we make a commitment as a community to use difficult social encounters as opportunities to teach inclusion and to work for resolution.

At Bright Water Waldorf School, we have a clear community code of conduct (p. 34) and serious infractions of this code will result in disciplinary action.

Nonetheless, as a community, we make a commitment to approach social conflicts without blame. We understand that teasing, bullying and exclusionary behaviors are painful and potentially harmful to all involved, both active and passive participants. We also realize that human beings need help to navigate difficult social terrain and to take increasing responsibility for their actions as they grow from childhood into adulthood.

Therefore, our goal is to bring accountability to students as well as the opportunity to make amends, to help imagine better solutions and to allow all voices to be heard and acknowledged. We make a commitment to educating ourselves to provide continuity in adult responses to social conflict at home and throughout the school day so that students feel safe and secure. We strive to create a school community where the students themselves become advocates for fairness, justice and peace.

To facilitate this, we agree to do the following:

1. Educate ourselves as caregivers/guardians/teachers and include the study of social issues and social check-ins into our caregiver/guardian and faculty work.
2. Promote compassion through active practices.
3. Work on refining our resolution skills to give us a common tool for working with social conflict including the use of Disapprove - Affirm - Discover - Do over (DADD), Class Councils, Peace Circles and No Blame Meetings (see Student Support).
4. Focus on empowering the leadership skills of our students and teaching them to be advocates for equity and inclusion.

Arrival and Departure

Beginning of the School Day

8:00 AM Grades Arrival

8:15 AM Grade School Starts

8:30 AM Early Childhood Starts

Note: Dogs or pets are not allowed inside the school building, on the playground, or on field trips.

Early Childhood Program Arrival

Early Childhood students must be brought to the gate and signed in daily, with full legal signature, by an accompanying adult.

Grade School Arrival

Starting at 8:00 AM, grade school students may be dropped off at the playground gate in the alley once a BWWS staff member is on site. To allow a smooth flow of traffic, cars are asked to pull up, drop off and proceed out of the alley in a timely fashion. If you need to unload your vehicle, please pull off to the side so that other vehicles may pass.

From 8:00 – 8:15 AM, grades students arrive at school, put their belongings away and proceed to the playground.

Parking is available on the streets around the school. When driving near the school, be extremely mindful of children walking and getting out of and into cars. Please do not park in the alley without permission at any time.

End of the School Day

Early Childhood Program 12:15 PM, 2:45 PM

Grade School 3:00 PM

Please park and meet your child at the playground gate in the alley to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety for our children.

Please pick up your youngest children first.

Late Arrivals and Early Release

All doors and gates remain locked all day. If you need to access the building because of late arrival or early dismissal, please ring the bell on the Weller St. entrance. Someone from the office will open the door for you. You will need to sign your child in or out. Please email the class teacher and the admin (admin@brightwaterwaldorf.org) notice of late drop offs when possible, and early pickups.

Early Childhood Program Departure

All Early Childhood students must be signed out daily by their caregiver/guardian or authorized adult.

Grade School Student Departure

Grade school student dismissal is at 3:00 PM at the playground gate in the alley.

All students should go directly to be picked up and to leave campus without stopping to play, make phone calls, or socialize.

Caregivers/guardians are asked to pull up, pick up and proceed out of the alley in a timely fashion. All students who do not have permission to leave the campus by themselves must be picked up by an authorized adult and supervised by an adult upon leaving the school.

Students will be released only to adults who are authorized on the student's emergency contact form.

Any student who is not picked up by 3:15 PM will be signed into the Extended Day Program. An additional fee for each student will be billed each day a student is not picked up on time. Students who have permission to leave campus unaccompanied and are not signed up for after school activities must leave campus at 3:00 PM. If your student has permission to leave campus unaccompanied, please review the following with your student:

- BWWS students remain representatives of their families and of BWWS while off campus and should conduct themselves accordingly. Please refer to the Code of Conduct in this handbook to review/refresh these points.
- Students must leave campus promptly, and must not congregate on the BWWS campus after 3:00 PM.
- School grounds are closed after school at 3:00 PM. No playground equipment may be used after school. Only Extended Care and after school programs may use the grounds and buildings after 3:00 PM. Please do not allow your child to take sports equipment or other toys onto the playground after school.

Extended Day Program

The Extended Day Program is available for students in our full-day Early Childhood Program or in grade school. It operates until 4:15 PM for children under five years old and until 5:30 PM for five years old and above, Monday through Friday. Because a rhythmic program of activities for the children is essential to their well-being and security, the Extended Day program offers children a home-like, restful environment that is supportive of the Waldorf pedagogy and curriculum.

Parents who need care for their child after school may contact the school office for an Extended Day contract.

Drop-in care is available.

Your student must be signed out of Extended Care by an authorized pick-up person. The adult picking up a child from the aftercare program must sign the child out with a full legal signature each day. The school will only release students to those named as

“authorized to pick up” on the student’s Emergency and Consent Form. Please ensure the person picking up your child is authorized to do so by putting them on your student’s emergency contact form. Please visit the Parent Portal in BigSIS to make changes to the Emergency Contact or Authorized Pick-up form.

All Extended Day contract changes should be communicated in writing.

In case of emergencies such as late pick-ups, the Extended Day direct phone number is 206-624-6176. Regular school policies regarding dress, behavior, and bringing toys to school also apply to the Extended Day Program. Please note that children who are absent from school will also be assumed absent from the Extended Day Program. There is no fee adjustment for days missed. Additional fees will be applied for late pick up from the Extended Day Program.

Students may not leave campus and then come back to the Extended Day Program. Students who have caregiver/guardian permission and a signed form to leave campus unaccompanied but are signed up for the Extended Day program, need to remain in the Extended Day Program until the time their parent has designated on their Extended Day contract. If they need to leave earlier than planned, Extended Day staff will need to speak with a parent directly or receive a note indicating that the parents are requesting an early departure.

It is vital that we are able to contact you or another responsible adult in the case of a medical emergency. Please make certain that the information on your emergency form in the school office is current.

Festivals and Celebrations

Bright Water Waldorf School marks the rhythms of the year through the changing seasons and the coming and going of festivals. Festivals connect students and families and promote a sense of wonder and reverence for life and the world. As a school, Bright Water recognizes festivals and holidays in a variety of forms. These include: taking the day off, celebrating in school, and celebrating as a community. The active role students play in each festival provides an engaging way to understand many traditions and cultures and offers them the universal experiences of joy, celebration, and human courage.

Larger festivals such as Harvest Festival, Winter Faire, and May Faire serve to draw the wider community together. Celebrating festivals with our children in the natural cycle of the year helps align our lives with the rhythms of nature and the seasons as well as with that ineffable force which makes us all creatively alive. Parents often tell us that the festivals are one of the most important connections between their family and the school community.

The school community organizes both all-school festivals and class-specific festivals or celebrations. Please talk with your child's teacher if you wish to share your own traditions with your child's class. Refer to the school calendar on our website for festival celebration dates.

September Rose Ceremony

This all-school assembly and celebration marks the beginning of the school year and welcomes the new first graders. Each incoming first grader receives a rose from a member of the eighth grade class to welcome them to the grade school and start their journey through the grades.

Harvest Festival

The first all-school festival of the year, Harvest Festival is held just after the fall equinox. This festival brings consciousness to the changing of the seasons and of moving into the darkest time of the year. It is a time for strength, courage and self-reflection. Harvest Festival is a pageant of bravery and mythic archetypes that includes a grade school play followed by age-appropriate challenges for Early Childhood through eighth grade students. Through the experience of taking part in these activities, community members of all ages tap into their inner fortitude and prepare for the long, dark period ahead.

Día de los Muertos

The grade school, led by our Spanish Teacher, celebrates this day with students visiting and contributing photos to an altar/ofrenda to celebrate the lives of friends and family members who have passed. The seventh/eighth grade Spanish students also contribute to the altar with a craft that they have created in Spanish class.

Lantern Walk

The Lantern Walk in November is a festival celebrating the inner light, which burns brighter as the days grow shorter. This is an all-school evening event celebrated with songs, stories, lantern making and a procession.

Spiral of Light

This beautiful ceremony reflects our inward journey to find light in the darkness of the winter season. Children from early childhood through eighth grade walk an evergreen spiral to light their own candles and set them on the path. The mood is quiet and reverent.

Winter Faire

This community festival takes place on a weekend day in early December. At the Faire, children and parents can make various seasonal items such as hand-dipped beeswax candles, felted hats, and felted soap. There is also food, music and a market to purchase hand-crafted items. Members of the larger community are invited by the Festival Circle to lend a hand and dive into the fun!

May Faire

May Faire is our largest all-school festival and celebrates the glories of spring and the return of warmth, light, and growth. Flower crowns and maypole dancing are some of the highlights of this festival. Students in grades one through eight perform May dances for families and friends. This is typically held on the first Saturday of May. The Early Childhood classes may have their own additional celebration.

After the dances, an all-school picnic follows and our community enjoys various games and activities. These activities and games are led by our families and individual classes under the auspices of the Festival Circle.

Afternoon/ Evening of the Arts

The artistic achievements of our students are celebrated each year as we hold this showcase of music and visual arts.

June Rose Ceremony

This all-school assembly marks the end of the school year and honors the eighth graders. Each eighth grader receives a rose from their first grade buddy to mark the end of their journey at Bright Water Waldorf School. All grades classes offer a presentation to the eighth graders to celebrate them and to send them off to high school.

Graduation Ceremony

Eighth graders and their teacher are honored as they complete their journey at Bright Water Waldorf School.

Media and Technology

Philosophy Regarding Electronic Media

Current research is validating what Waldorf teachers have known for a long time: the consumption of media by infants, children and young people inhibits their healthy development. In today's world, phones, movies, games, music, podcasts, texts, social media, calculators, calendars, word processors, research libraries and other technological and educational tools are contained in the same apparatus and are often operating at the same time. It is increasingly easy and convenient for adults and children to be consumers of media, and we acknowledge there are positive uses of electronic devices and social media for adults.

As Waldorf parents and teachers we embrace the world of technology, and many of us choose to use electronic media ourselves. However, early media consumption by children hinders the educational foundation of inner picture building and transformation, and the strengthening of the will that are essential to Waldorf education. We encourage parents to make careful and conscious decisions about when and how media is introduced to their children.

As Waldorf educators, Bright Water teachers are actively guiding the students to build inner imaginations based on true stories and real world sense experiences. These are the foundation of our children's education; they are moral, beautiful, and true.

Students take these images into their sleep and come back the next day ready to build the concepts of their education from these pictures, which they have transformed and made their own. Media and virtual images take away from or damage these pictures. They divert children away from direct human interaction and authentic experience. Video games, in particular, do not portray the image of the human being in an authentic experience.

The Bright Water community works hard to foster authentic human experiences each day. We maintain and strengthen this by engaging in conversation within our class communities, to gain perspective on how media exposure relates to each age and stage of development. We ask families to use the same care in the context of media at home. At an appropriate developmental age, media can become a supplement to – not a substitute for – the richness of direct experience. Therefore, technology is thoughtfully introduced into the curriculum when it is developmentally appropriate and in a way that enriches students' learning.

Studies show that a direct experience, as opposed to a virtual one, has a measurable positive impact on brain development throughout childhood and adolescence. Further issues associated with media that are adversely impacting child development are well documented, including Continuous Partial Attention, early consumerism, obesity and the premature sexualization of children.

We recognize that media tools can be helpful in supporting students with diverse learning styles and would not leave them out of a helpful toolbox for those students. We also recognize that computer literacy is a necessity in today's world, but know that students learn to best use electronic media as a resource and tool when these media are introduced in a conscious way and after children have developed a rich experiential foundation.

Please think carefully about the Bright Water philosophy and the guidelines that complement Waldorf education. We ask families to actively support the philosophy in daily family life. BWWS expects families to take its recommendations regarding

electronic media seriously and embrace the guidelines in support of the education that you have chosen for your child(ren).

Resources

[WaPo | Melinda Gates: I Spent My Career in Technology. I Wasn't Prepared for Its Effect on My Kids](#) Melinda Gates, 29 Mar. 2019

[Going Screen-Free at Home: It's Not as Hard as You Think.](#) Edna Rienzi, September 2019

[MRIs show screen time linked to lower brain development in preschoolers,](#) Sandee LaMotte, November 2019

<https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/02/09/465557430/what-kids-need-from-grown-ups-but-arent-getting>

Media Guidelines

While we recognize that most families have some media as part of their home life, we do encourage families to consider limiting or discontinuing exposure to television, movies, video games, computers and other entertainment media, especially on school nights and school mornings. We ask that families respect the low media environment created for students at BWWS and extend that respect to families who aim to recreate this environment in their home life by making conscious agreements about what happens on play dates, carpool time, and so on.

We acknowledge that reducing home media in a rapidly expanding technological world can be a difficult task. We support our families in making this transition and are here to help you create solutions that will work in your home.

Attendance and Promptness

BWWS students thrive when there is a regular rhythm and routine in their lives. It is very important for children to develop habits of arriving on time at an early age, beginning from the time they start school. These positive habits help your child to learn about responsibility and commitment and develop self-esteem. As we go into the new year, this is an excellent time to develop new habits and set up our students for success!

We value your family and your children in our community. As part of the commitment we make to your child's education, we want to ensure your child is getting the education we have promised to provide. The gift of a few extra minutes in the morning pays huge dividends now and well into a child's future.

Students who arrive at school with time to spare:

- Have the opportunity to collect their thoughts, greet their friends, share in social opportunities and development, organize their materials and focus their minds on the lessons to come. A typical school day starts with announcements, important details and introductions to new lessons and concepts. Without this information, students feel unprepared for future class events or key learning concepts and this can develop stress and anxiety in a child.
- Develop the habit of being punctual with important commitments. Being on time demonstrates that you are dependable.
- Learn how to assume responsibility and be productive. Arriving early benefits students' academic performance and future professional habits.

Did you know?

5 minutes late a day = 3 days lost in a school year.

30 minutes late a day = 19 days lost in a school year.

At BWWS, we encourage early drop-off to help families with busy work schedules and who live further away, but also so that students have time to transition from home to school life. For grades students, our playground opens at 8:00 am every morning.

Set your child up for SUCCESS!

GRADE SCHOOL LATE ARRIVAL Procedure:

Students must sign in at the office from 8:30 AM. Students must have either a note indicating the reason for the absence signed by a parent/guardian or must have a parent/guardian sign them in. If a note cannot be provided, a parent/guardian may call the school directly at 206-624-6176. The school will determine if the late arrival is excused or unexcused based on the information given by the parent/guardian.

Strategies for arriving on time:

1. If your family constantly struggles with school attendance, professionals suggest tracking the average time you are late by, and adding that time to your schedule. For example: if you are consistently 15 to 30 minutes late in the morning, set your alarm 15 to 30 minutes earlier. This creates a cushion of extra time for unexpected delays.
2. Lay clothes out the night before.
3. Pack backpacks and lunchboxes the night before.
4. Create a “Last Stop” area near the door you leave from each morning. This is where you place your keys, backpacks or musical instruments each evening.
5. Pack the car – Since everything you have to pack is in the last stop area, you will not be running around the house looking for the items.

BWWS Attendance and Promptness Policy

Our school attendance and truancy guidelines follow state requirements, which apply to all students ages 8 to 18 inclusive. Regular school attendance is vital at BWWS, and the integrity of the school depends on the participation of each member of the school community. **Our policy allows for 2 tardy arrivals a month to a maximum of 10 tardy arrivals for the year.**

Washington state law requires schools to do the following:

- Notify parents of the attendance rules and get a signature to show they received notice
- Notify parents every time a student is absent
- Meet with parents and students to find out why
- Try different strategies to improve attendance (and in some cases refer a student and/or caregiver/guardian to a Community Truancy Board or to court).

Washington State law requires students to be the following:

- In school
- On time
- Every day, unless there is a valid excuse (medical document)

<https://oeo.wa.gov/en/education-issues/attendance-and-truancy>

To uphold our BWWS policy, these are the steps we take when children are absent or tardy:

- A record is kept of all attendance on a daily basis.
- A review of our records is done on a weekly basis.
- An email will be sent to parents when students have reached an unacceptable level of tardies or absences. A copy of the Attendance and Promptness policy in the handbook that refers to our responsibility to the state will be included in the email.

A meeting will follow with the Pedagogical Circle and class teacher if absences or tardies continue to increase. The meeting is to determine a resolution, or if the student can continue attending the school as per the agreement of the enrollment contract.

Does it matter if the absences or tardy arrivals are planned?

No. A planned absence or tardy arrival is recorded and negatively impacts student learning just as much as an unplanned absence. The school will follow the same procedures for excessive planned or unplanned absences and tardies.

Attendance requirements - Early Childhood students

Punctual, regular attendance provides a reliable rhythm and establishes healthy habits for young children. Even though our youngest students do not work at desks, their full participation in the school day is vital in order to benefit from the Waldorf curriculum. Regular attendance fosters a child's well-being and their sense of belonging, and it strengthens their relationships with each other and their teacher. Being on time means they start their day with their classmates and teacher rather than arriving at a class 'already in progress.' Please help your children make the most of their days by bringing them to school on time. Attendance in our Early Childhood programs is just as important as in the Grade School and helps your child build healthy habits.

Attendance at School Events

Bright Water Waldorf School is enlivened by seasonal festivals and assemblies highlighting the students' achievements. Performances and festivals are an important part of your child's school experience and education at Bright Water Waldorf School. Each year we take into careful consideration the timing of each of these events. A great deal of work by both the students and the teachers goes into each performance.

May Faire and the Afternoon/ Evening of the Arts are two events with mandatory student attendance. All grade school students are expected to be at May Faire for the May dances. All strings and band students are required to be in attendance for the Evening of the Arts. Please be sure to mark these events on your calendar and plan accordingly. If your student must miss an event, please inform the teacher as soon as possible. Of course, illness and unexpected events do occur, but unexpected absences not due to illness or emergency affect all of the students and take away from their experience and the performance overall.

In Case of Illness

A well-rested child, who is dressed warmly and fed a wholesome diet, has all their bodily forces strengthened. These strong forces help children withstand any illnesses and ailments that may arise and, therefore, more readily learn.

Please keep your child at home if they are ill. If your child is ill, please call the school office and let us know that they will be out of school. Parents will be contacted to take their child home if they become ill while at school or suffer any kind of significant injury.

Wellness Guidelines

Children with any of the following symptoms will not be permitted to remain in school:

- Fever of 100 ° F or more and/or any of the following:
- Vomiting on two or more occasions in the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea: three or more watery stools within a 24-hour period, or any bloody stool
- Rash, especially with fever or itching
- Headache
- Earache
- Signs of irritability or confusion
- Sore throat
- Fatigue that limits participation in daily activities
- Eye discharge or conjunctivitis
- Sick appearance, not feeling well and/or inability to keep up with school activities
- Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered and 24 hours has passed since starting antibiotic treatment, if treatment is necessary
- Untreated lice or scabies

Following an illness or injury, children will be allowed to come back to school when they no longer have the above symptoms, no longer have discomfort, and Public Health and Communicable Disease guidelines are met. All students returning to school after an illness must upload a negative Covid-19 test to health@brightwaterwaldorf.org.

Prescribed Medications

Although staff will administer first aid as needed, this does not include medicines (i.e. aspirin, cough medicines, etc.). Prescribed medicines for grade school students that need to be taken during school time are to be given to the school office with written instructions for use.

For Early Childhood students with prescribed medications, please complete the following:

- Allergy Packet
- Medicine Authorization form, signed by Physician. Currently, sunscreen and lip balm are considered medications.

Each class teacher must be trained by the parent on how to properly administer medications prior to the child attending class.

If your child suffers from asthma or allergies, contact the office to obtain forms so that we may keep a record of your child's health needs. The school must be notified immediately if a child is diagnosed as having any of the following conditions:

- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease
- Meningitis–Measles, Mumps, Rubella
- Lice
- Scabies
- Covid-19

Students with these conditions must be kept at home until they are no longer contagious. In the case of lice, the child may return once they have been free of both lice and nits for at least 24 hours. In the case of Covid-19, we ask that students no longer test positive.

School Closure

Please know that we do not take the decision to close the school lightly. When we do, our intention is to keep families and staff safe when traveling to and from the various areas around the Puget Sound.

In cases of extreme weather conditions, BWWS usually follows the decisions made by the Seattle Public School District (SPS). Please watch for updates on local TV and radio stations or check the SPS website for closure information. All families will receive an email from BWWS around 6:00 am on the day of the closure or a late start, and we will post the information on our website and on social media.

If there is a late start, we will observe the following schedule: School will begin at 10:15 am. In the event of an individual BWWS closing unrelated to weather events, information will be communicated on our school website, social media and class or all-school emails.

Field Trips

In our grade school, field trips are an extension of classroom work with specific learning objectives and opportunities for social and academic development. Students are expected to attend field trips as they are a part of the curriculum offered by the school. The class teacher plans all trips and is supported by class parents who provide transportation and additional supervision. These trips not only offer the students an opportunity to enrich their studies in another setting, but also allow caregivers/guardians, students, and teachers to share experiences in a less formal way. The first overnight adventure is typically a farm trip in third grade. The first field trip in Early Childhood is the 6-year-old hike.

The following procedures are intended to protect the safety of our students, staff, and volunteers while participating in field trips. All adults with supervision responsibilities during a trip off campus must be familiar with the procedures and demonstrate a commitment to abide by them. Adhering to these expectations of proper behavior during field trips supports the teacher in keeping the group safe and engaged in the experience.

Bright Water Waldorf School Field Trip Procedure

1. A Field Trip Permission Form must be completed by a child's caregiver/guardian before any child may attend a Bright Water Waldorf School Field Trip. This form can be found on BigSIS and be filled out BEFORE classes begin in the fall. Bright Water Waldorf School will not accept verbal consent.
2. At the time of a field trip, children without permission slips will be sent to the office during which time their parents will be called and asked to pick them up.
3. Students must bring all necessary attire and equipment. Students without proper clothing or equipment will not be allowed to attend.
4. ONLY students enrolled in the class may attend a field trip; siblings or friends may not attend field trips. Pets are not allowed on field trips.
5. A Field Trip Driver Form and up-to-date license and insurance information must be provided by all parent/guardian drivers on field trips. Field Trip Drivers must check in with the office prior to the field trip to ensure that all documentation has been completed.
6. A Chaperone Form in BigSIS must be completed by every caregiver/guardian who serves as a chaperone on a field trip, whether they are driving or not. A caregiver/guardian need only submit one Chaperone and one Field Trip Driver Form per school year unless there is a change in the information submitted. The

Business Administrator is the designated staff point person for field trips and receives all forms. Teachers should check in with the office at least one week prior to the scheduled field trip to ensure that all forms have been received.

The class teacher and any applicable co-coordinator(s) will ensure the following:

- Completed Field Trip Notification forms for all children in the class are submitted to the office at least one week prior to any field trip.
- Only children who have submitted a completed Field Trip Permission Form may go on the field trip.
- Only caregivers/guardians who have submitted a completed Field Trip Driver Form and/or Chaperone Form with up-to-date license and insurance documentation may drive children on a field trip or serve as a chaperone on a field trip.
- All chaperones must have a clear background check on file.
- The teacher is the leader of the group and creates the itinerary for the field trip. Field trips are made possible by caregivers/guardians who give of their time to drive and chaperone. Chaperones/drivers support the teacher's goals, follow the itineraries for the trip and assure the children's safety. Absolutely no changes to the itinerary will be made by accompanying chaperones/drivers without consultation with the class teacher.
- Final decisions of chaperone attendance on each field trip will be left to the discretion of the class teacher. Please note that, for some field trips, there will be no parent chaperones. Because all adults involved in a field trip must be focused on their supervisory role, attendance of siblings or other children is not allowed unless notified otherwise by the teacher. Families are encouraged to rotate this involvement so all who are interested can participate.
- All state laws for transporting children must be obeyed. For regulations regarding the proper seating of children in a motor vehicle, please reference Washington State Child Restraint Law at <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=46.61.687>. BWWS Media policy/food policy/cell phone policy en route to field trip sites must be followed. Please reference these policies for further information. Teachers will review guidelines with drivers/chaperones prior to any field trips.
- For overnight field trips, teachers will provide BWWS notice of the safe arrival of students at their destination and expected return to school. The school office will then forward this information to the class parents via email.

Grades Dress Code

Bright Water Waldorf School's dress code ensures that students have clothing to support learning, working, and moving without distractions or discomfort. Clothing that does not inhibit movement and provides adequate protection from the elements is required.

At Bright Water Waldorf School, we see it as our task to guard and cherish the children in our care. To do this, we strive to create a nurturing space in which children can safely learn, wonder and grow. With this in mind, we ask our families to partner with us to protect our children from a consumer culture that does not care for their individual well-being but sees them as prospective customers. We ask parents to keep media images, branding, and obvious logos off their children's clothes, lunch boxes, and gear, as much as possible, and particularly in the Early Childhood and 1-5 classes. Our students work and play best together when they do not need to negotiate the social status of branded items or media graphics, and when their imaginative faculties are less influenced by commercial entertainment.

We also recognize that exploring one's individuality is a crucial part of the development process. Students at Bright Water are empowered to explore their burgeoning individual style and freedom in a safe and comfortable environment that resists the reinforcement of racist, sexist, classist, and ableist stereotypes, and other forms of bias. Individual style choices are celebrated here as an antidote to marginalization and oppression based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income, ability, or body type/size.

Bright Water Waldorf School's dress code ensures that students have clothing to support learning, working, and moving without distractions or discomfort. Clothing that does not inhibit movement and provides adequate protection from the elements is required.

Guidelines (Consider the following as you shop for school):

Weather: Students need seasonal attire: rain jackets, winter jackets, rain boots and rain pants in the lower grades; pants, sweaters, winter hats, and gloves should be worn on cold and or rainy days. Every student should have an extra pair of clean, dry socks.

Daily Wear: Clothing should be clean and in good repair, and must allow for comfortable movement and full participation in all classes and at recess.

Shoes: Proper footwear is essential, as students have outdoor recess twice a day plus various other movement activities throughout the day. Flip-flops and crocs are discouraged. Sensible shoes are to be worn in all classrooms.

Words/Images: Students should wear clothing without distracting words, swear words, hate speech, alcohol/drug references, or similar images.

Early Childhood Dress Code

Guidelines for Early Childhood

While the above guidelines apply to EC as well, please consider the following when shopping for your EC child:

School Clothes:

- Clothing that allows for freedom of movement
- Layers to provide warmth for our changing weather (for example an undershirt with a short/long sleeve shirt and a vest or sweater)
- Clothing free of media references and potentially frightening images such as skulls and skeletons

Footwear:

- All shoes must be free of flashing lights and logos. Please refrain from sending your child to school with lace-up shoes until s/he is able to tie them independently.
- Inside shoes which are well-fitting, do not fall off easily and can be put on and taken off independently
- Sturdy outdoor shoes for walking, running, jumping, and climbing
- Rain boots, preferably insulated

What to leave at school:

- Outerwear
- Waterproof Rain jacket
- Waterproof Rain pants
- Sun hat
- Warm hat and/or balaclava
- Two pairs of gloves/mittens, at least one waterproof pair
- Extra layers for under your child's waterproof raincoat like a wool sweater and an insulated vest
- Two pairs of wool socks for inside rain boots
- Extra Clothes to leave at school:
 - Long-sleeved shirt
 - Short-sleeved shirt
 - 2 pairs of pants or leggings/skirt
 - 2 pairs of socks
 - 2 pairs of underwear

Homework Guidelines

At a Waldorf school, we entrust the teachers with knowing their students, so homework may vary from class to class and year to year. Daily homework does not start until the students are developmentally ready for it. Deepening the main lesson learning by processing information and building executive function (working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control) are the primary purposes of homework at Bright Water Waldorf School. It is a learning opportunity in self-regulation, self-sufficiency, unsupervised reasoning and planning, task and time management, building organization skills and good study habits, and scheduled accountability. Research for papers and projects becomes more independent in middle school, as obtaining and disseminating information are important skills to have practiced before entering high school. Homework can present a healthy challenge and training for future endeavors.

Traditional homework at Bright Water Waldorf School begins in fourth grade. In third grade, students are asked to do home chores and practice reading and math facts. In fourth grade, homework begins with nightly instrument practice, reading, math and

vocabulary practice. In middle school, a teacher may assign a project on Monday that is not due until Friday. This is a good way for the adolescent to learn time management skills. Other homework assignments in middle school may include finishing main lesson book work, working on a final draft of a paper, finishing a drawing of a map, practicing vocabulary words, or studying for a test.

Teachers advise parents that if the work takes more than the guidelines (10 minutes x the grade level), the student should stop. Teachers can then assess student learning needs. A homework log is sometimes sent home for parents or caregivers to sign. There is typically no homework assigned over breaks except reading.

Daily Guidelines

10 minutes x the grade (maximum) including instrument practice.

1st Grade	No daily homework (parents read with children).
2nd Grade	No daily homework (parents read to children and children practice reading to parents and practice math facts).
3rd Grade 15-30 Min.	Habit building - home chores, reading, spelling words, math facts.
4th Grade 40 Min.	Math, strings, reading and spelling practice.
5th Grade 50 Min.	Math, strings, reading and spelling practice, main lesson book work.

6th Grade 60 Min.	Math, strings/band, reading, spelling and vocabulary practice, main lesson book work, researching material for papers and essays, studying for tests.
7th Grade 70 Min.	Math, strings/band, world language, reading, spelling and vocabulary practice, main lesson book work, researching material for papers and essays, studying for tests.
8th Grade 80 Min.	Math, strings/band, world language, reading, spelling and vocabulary practice, main lesson book work, researching material for papers and essays, studying for tests.

Playground Conduct and Rules

Both school play yards are fenced and kept locked outside of pick-up and drop-off. Locked gates are only opened by BWWS staff and Japanese Cultural and Community Center staff.

Recess is a time for breathing out, having fun and being kind. Rules for the playground are comprised of general school rules and conduct, and the following playground specific rules:

- All students must have appropriate gear for the weather, which may include rain coat, rain boots, rain pants, warm hat or warm coat, mittens or gloves.
- Children must ask teachers' permission to go into school for any reason.

- No playground/sports related equipment may be brought to school without permission.
- Equipment/tools need to be put away at the end of recess.
- Notify a teacher if a ball goes over the fence. Only adults may retrieve balls from outside the playground area.
- Students are not allowed to go in the space between the cedar fence and the chain link fence.
- Students must remain visible to a BWWS staff person at all times.

Play

- No-playing areas: between the wooden fence and chain link fence; in or around the garbage and recycling bins; on the ramp railings leading into the school; in the thick bushes and bamboo.
- No climbing onto railings and roof of playhouse.
- No climbing or sitting on fences.
- No climbing on or walking on eating tables.
- Building materials must be handled safely.
- The water hose may only be used with a teacher's permission.
- Shovels are permitted only for specific digging projects in sandbox, wood chip pile, and/or garden beds.
- Ropes are only to be used for jump rope.
- No running with sticks.
- No pretend guns.
- Throw only appropriate sports equipment.
- Balls may be thrown/kicked TO people, not AT people.
- Ball tag, football, soccer, kickball and dodgeball games are not allowed on the playground. Balls should not be kicked toward the fence.
- No tackling, pig piling, or restraining people.
- Only standing or Greek style wrestling with a teacher's permission in a designated area (no other wrestling is allowed).

Student Support

Bright Water Waldorf School is committed to healthy social relationships among students, teachers, and all members of the school community. This value is reflected throughout the curriculum and implicit in the working of the school. Our school has adopted a student support process based on the work of Kim John Payne, who is respected worldwide for his work in helping children navigate challenges as well as conflict through a “No Blame Approach.” Please refer to the DADD in the appendix.

Please visit the website <https://www.integrativestudentsupport.org> for more information on his work.

The Office/Care Center

Students in need of a break from a group activity or from class, an ice pack, a Band-Aid or a place to go when feeling ill may go to the office. Our office has many functions, one of them being a center of much of the care that students receive when they are injured or need a quiet moment.

Community Code of Conduct

Our students, parents, teachers and adults come from many backgrounds and beliefs. Our goal is to respect and honor all. The Code of Conduct applies at all school occasions, assemblies, festivals and outings.

In upholding our Code of Conduct, we seek to create an environment that protects the health, safety and learning of our students, parents and teachers. Bright Water Waldorf School is a community that embraces diversity.

In the interest of everyone at Bright Water Waldorf School, it is necessary that the following expectations are upheld by the students, teachers, parents and all adults who are a part of the school.

We ask all students, staff, and parents:

- To remember that everyone's personal safety and well-being comes foremost;
- To be at school and in the classroom on time for every lesson;
- To conduct themselves during the lessons to create a healthy learning environment for the whole class with minimal interruptions;
- To treat all teachers, staff, parents, and students with kindness and respect;
- To help keep the classroom and the school grounds clean and tidy;

- To treat all property with care (students may be required to repair or replace damaged items);
- To remain within school boundaries while on field trips and at school and never to leave the school campus without permission;
- To do class work to the best of the student's ability;
- To keep school books in good order, up to date, and in good condition To hand in all required assignments on time; and
- To leave any electronic devices at home or turned off in a backpack until off campus grounds.

For faculty we add:

- To be on time for every lesson;
- To treat students with courtesy and respect, especially when discipline is needed;
- To treat colleagues and parents with courtesy and respect at all times;
- To be supportive and encouraging to all the students in their care, in words and actions equally and without favoritism;
- To strive to be consistent in their approach to discipline issues, individually and as a faculty;
- To provide all the students and parents with opportunities to express concerns and questions outside lesson time;
- To provide parents with opportunities to learn more about Waldorf education;
- To notify parents in a timely manner when expectations for schoolwork and behavior have not been met; and
- To familiarize themselves with State Laws regarding neglect and abuse, to be alert to signs and symptoms of such neglect or abuse, and to implement legal requirements accordingly.

And for parents we add:

- To ensure that their child or children arrive on time to school every day;
- To strive to treat teachers and staff with courtesy and respect at all times, especially in times of disagreement;
- To provide a home atmosphere conducive to the child's social, emotional and educational well-being with adequate rest, and nutrition;
- To collaborate with faculty in implementing discipline policies;
- To review the discipline policy and school rules with their child or children;
- To be supportive and encouraging to all the adults and students in the community, in words and actions equally and without favoritism; and

- To make use - when possible - of the opportunities given by the school to learn more about the philosophy of Waldorf education.

The intention behind these expectations is to create an awareness of what is necessary, to collaborate meaningfully, and to embrace the educational opportunity provided through Bright Water Waldorf School.

Discipline Philosophy in a Waldorf School

The guiding principle in a Waldorf school is that all students are loved and cared for above all else. Other principles that inform our work include the following:

1. Repetition and Rhythm is the foundation of discipline: Children thrive when there is rhythm and clear expectations. One type of rhythm is sound rhythm. Sound rhythm is one of the first tools used to bring discipline—a song, a bell, clapping, etc.
2. Consistency and follow-through: Children want to know that they can expect the same fair judgment and treatment along with follow-through from the adults who care for them. Without that, students will act out. Consistency brings security and trust.
3. Healthy Boundaries: Students are told prior to lessons, activities, and before any outing what is expected of them. When students test or push the boundaries, the teacher reminds them of the rules, states clear expectations, and consistently follows up with necessary next steps. Teachers can also support students in learning how to advocate for themselves and to develop their own healthy boundaries.

Change can bring upheaval - Transition between activities or classes can be difficult for some students. A class play, a field trip, a festival, a birthday, or a holiday break may also present challenges for students who struggle with change. The teachers design transitions to be as smooth as possible.

Student Support Spiral

Working with Students

Establishing a well-balanced “breathing” rhythm in the daily routine is the main method that Waldorf teachers use to provide an engaging environment and a balance of work/activities. This allows the body and mind ample breathing and prevents challenging behaviors from arising. The rhythm of the day, the weekly schedule, and every lesson is crafted with in- and out-breaths. Teachers lead the children from an activity that requires them to contain their energy and focus like a poem/verse, solving math problems, or writing (the in-breath), and then shift to an activity that allows them freedom to release energy like singing, jump rope, or playing games (the out-breath).

Common Tools used to support students in the classroom with social/emotional, physical, and academic development (Grades 1 – 4):

- Balance board to stand on
- One legged stool
- Beeswax
- Knitting
- Spending time in a different location of the classroom: Cozy corner, book nook, or a peaceful chair
- Class walks to the park
- Playing a game or extra time for free play outside
- Pedagogical Stories - teachers create a story that mirrors the struggle or situation. This is an implicit method of teaching that provides learning for the class as a whole and a new perspective of the challenge to the children. The story models a resolution for the students to take into their play and work in the social realm.

Tools used to support students in the classroom with social/emotional, physical, and academic development (Grades 5 – 8):

- Noise canceling headphones
- Stretch bands on chair
- Putty or squeeze ball for restless hands
- Class walks to the park
- Extra recess time
- Gratitude circles
- Class councils

Common Tools used to support students outside of the classroom with social/emotional,

physical, and academic development:

In a classroom setting, the teacher is working with both individual and group needs. At times students may become overwhelmed, tired, or unable to focus. This can have an impact on the group learning environment. Some students need a reset or a break from class activities.

It can be as simple and fast as “walk out of the classroom and walk back in quietly” or “Instead of running, walk back where you came from, and this time use your walking feet.” Some students are asked to go out of the classroom and count backwards from 25 or say their times tables before coming back into class. This is an activity that can calm, redirect or refocus a child.

Students in all grades may benefit from the following:

- Concentrating on their breathing and having a moment of quiet
- Performing a purposeful task
- Going to the bathroom and washing their face
- Taking time outside their classroom (on a bench or a chair)
- Visiting the office Cozy Corner to read, draw, talk, or take a break

Teachers want all students in the classroom and engaged in class activities. Teachers are always looking for ways to support every child in their growth and work as individuals and as part of a group. Along with academics, the development of the children’s social and emotional health is an important part of education within a Waldorf school.

Discipline Policy at BWWS

The Faculty has developed Support Levels, including interventions implicit in the curriculum (e.g., curricular stories) as well as explicit interventions:

1. Support Level One

- Unacceptable Behavior: Physical/verbal harm, disrespectful/disruptive behavior, use of profanity, threatening behavior, accidental damage of property.
 - Support: Conflict resolution conversation/peer mediation with all concerned.
 - Teacher will note behavior and may contact caregivers/guardians as well as write up an incident report.

2. Support Level Two

- Unacceptable Behavior: Continued Level One Behavior, skipping class, willful

damage of property, use of illegal substances.

- Support: Conflict resolution conversation/peer mediation with all concerned
- Caregivers/guardians will be notified
 - An incident report is placed in the student's file, with a copy going to the caregivers/guardians
 - Caregivers/guardians conference recommended

3. Support Level Three

- Unacceptable Behavior: Continued Level Two behavior, bringing a toy weapon to school (one that cannot cause harm), leaving school without permission.
 - Support: Conflict resolution conversation/peer mediation with all concerned parties
 - Caregivers/guardians will be notified
 - An incident report is placed in the student's file, with a copy going to the parents/caregiver
 - Caregiver/guardian conference mandatory
 - Suspension of student possible

4. Support Level Four

- Unacceptable Behavior: Stealing, significant threatening behavior (intimidation, threats, and any type of weapon), bringing an imitation of a weapon to school, serious physical abuse, serious use of profanity (such as swearing at a teacher).
 - Support: Conflict resolution conversation/peer mediation with all concerned
 - Caregivers/guardians informed immediately by phone
 - An incident report is placed in the student's file, with a copy going to the parents/caregiver
 - Caregiver/guardian conference mandatory
 - Suspension of student likely

5. Support Level Five

- Unacceptable Behavior: Deliberate injury of a person, continued theft, drug possession or use at school or at school functions, sexual behavior, bringing a weapon to school.
 - Support: Conflict resolution conversation/peer mediation with all concerned
 - Caregivers/guardians will be informed immediately by phone
 - An incident report is placed in the student's file, with a copy going to the parents/caregiver

- Caregiver/guardian conference mandatory
- An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the caregivers/guardians
- Immediate suspension, during which it will be decided what further action is needed

Please note that, in these cases, the following process includes the school's legal responsibility to inform the police or social services or both, depending upon circumstances. It is likely that expulsion will result from Level Five behavior. These steps are the minimum responses and may vary depending on the circumstances.

When identifying concerns and working with students, it is important to recognize the work of the teachers in this process. Teachers routinely document observations, including social, academic, or behavioral concerns. Observations and feedback may be solicited from and/or shared with caregivers/guardians and other teachers. Teachers exercise discretion and respond in an appropriate manner according to the age of the child.

Student Support and Early Childhood Behavioral Guidelines

In Early Childhood, young children are learning about navigating the social world. Failures along the way are the places where we witness development unfolding. We understand that children are at various stages in learning to moderate behavior when flooded with emotion. In our classrooms our expectation is that children are making progress toward inhibiting impulses (striking another child or adult, spitting, pushing, pulling hair, pinching/squeezing, biting) when flooded with a wide range of emotions. Below is our framework for monitoring, support, and progress. While the support levels in the grades refer mainly to the severity of the incident, in early childhood the levels are based on recurrence.

1. EC Support Level One: First incident
 - a. An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the caregivers/guardians
 - b. Teacher reflects on what/if any adjustments need to be made in the school environment, the play constellations, or rhythmic order, in order to shift behavior.
 - c. Child's caregivers/guardians reflect on what/if any adjustments need to be

made to home rhythms

- d. Class community continues to provide support by reminding all children that each child in our community “is still learning,” and the community continues to display confidence that the adults are supporting all children in the class.
2. EC Support Level Two: Second incident
 - a. An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the caregivers/guardians
 - b. Given that this is a repeated incident, the teacher reflects on what/if any adjustments need to be made in the school environment, the play constellations, or rhythmic order, in order to shift behavior. The teacher also reflects on how the child's four foundational senses are being met.
 - c. Caregivers/guardians are asked to reflect on what adjustments need to be made to home rhythms and how the child's four foundational senses are being met.
 - d. Community continues to provide support by reminding all children that each child in our community “is still learning” and that adults are supporting all children.
 3. EC Support Level Three: Third incident
 - a. An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the parents/caregivers
 - b. Teacher notifies The Pedagogical Circle and brings their reflections on what changes have or could be made to the play constellations, environment, rhythms, or activities to support the child's four foundational senses.
 - c. Teacher, caregiver/guardian and Pedagogical Circle meet to discuss and create a support plan which may include seeking outside support. This conversation is documented on an Education Support Caregiver/Guardian Teacher conference form. The caregiver/guardian brings reflections on how home rhythm and the four foundational senses are being met.
 - d. Regular data collection for the class teacher is set up by Pedagogical Circle.
 - e. Community continues to provide support by reminding all children that each child in our community “is still learning” and continues to display confidence that adults are supporting all children.
 4. EC Support Level Four: Fourth incident

- a. An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the parents/caregivers
 - b. Caregiver/guardian is contacted, and the child goes home.
 - c. The student has a rest day the following day, which allows the class to hear a pedagogical story about the situation and how to support the student experiencing challenging behaviors.
 - d. The caregivers/guardians and teacher have a conversation to further develop the student support plan, which is recorded on the Caregiver/Guardian-Teacher conference form. It is sent to the caregivers/guardians AND to the Pedagogical Circle.
 - e. Documentation of the support plan goes in the child's file.
 - f. Teacher and Pedagogical Circle review data to see if there are patterns to the behavior. This is a way to systematically determine which challenging behavior is decreasing.
 - g. Community continues to provide support by reminding all children that each child in our community "is still learning" and continues to display confidence that adults are supporting all children.
5. EC Support Level Five: Fifth incident
- a. An incident report will be written for the student's file, with a copy going to the parents/caregivers
 - b. Child is sent home and has resting days until the parents/caregivers, teacher, Pedagogical Circle can meet to review the data. If behavior has not improved, there is a discussion of other schooling options for the child.
 - c. Community continues to provide support by reminding all children that each child in our community "is still learning" and continues to display confidence that adults are supporting all children.

Fire and Earthquake Drills

In accordance with Seattle City regulations and under the guidance of the Seattle Fire Department, BWWS has developed an emergency/safety plan to provide safe care for students in the event an emergency or disaster occurs during the school day. Our teachers and staff are trained and prepared to handle emergencies, and they maintain a safe environment for everyone. A copy of the Emergency Safety Plan is available for review in the school office.

In the Event of a Major Disaster

Out-of-state contact information: In the event of a major disaster, local phone communications may be down. The school will endeavor to report pertinent information to our out-of-state emergency contact, Sandpoint Waldorf School, 208.265.2683. This number is only used in case of a major disaster.

Caregiver/Guardian Expectations

Coordination between BWWS and caregivers/guardians is essential in an emergency. In an emergency, following any directive in school communication is essential, including instructions to remain away from campus until further notice or to report to an alternate reunification site off campus to pick up your child.

Reunification Plan

Circumstances may occur at the school that require parents to pick up their students in a formalized, controlled release. The process of controlled release is called a reunification and may be necessary due to weather, a power outage, hazardous material spill or if a crisis occurs at the school. Because a controlled release is not a typical end of school day event, a critical aspect of crisis response is the accountable reunification of students with their caregivers or guardians in the event of a school crisis or emergency.

Sexual Harassment Policy

It is the policy of Bright Water Waldorf School to provide a school environment free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, and to maintain an environment in which all students and adults are treated with dignity and respect. Sexual harassment can differ from other types of harassment.

Sexual harassment includes conditioning any benefit (employment or educational) on submission to sexual demands, or verbal or physical behavior that unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance or creates a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment. Behavior which may be considered sexual harassment ranges from licentious comments to gender stereotyping or discrimination. It must be defined within the context of the situation. No student shall be subjected to sexual overtures or conduct, verbal, visual, or physical, which is intimidating, hostile, offensive, or

unwelcome. Such conduct by adults or students is deemed unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated by the school.

Child Abuse Mandated Reporting

Like doctors, therapists, and other professional caregivers, Bright Water Waldorf School employees are legally responsible for the well-being of the children in our school and are mandated by Washington law to report any signs of abuse to a child in our care to Child Protective Services. This law requires that we immediately report behavior, comments, or physical marking indicative of abuse to Child Protective Services. Furthermore, we are legally bound to cooperate with authorities regardless of who initiates a report. Under Washington State law, parental permission is not required to authorize the interview of one of our students on school premises by a law enforcement representative or a Child Protective Services employee.

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/mandated-reporter>

School Communication

Effective communication is an important element in the successful function of every school. Our various means of communication are described below.

Where can I get my questions answered? Below are some of the ways in which caregivers/guardians and teachers communicate throughout the school year. School staff is available by phone, email, or in person to answer questions and hear concerns, or to assist you in finding the right person to ask/making sure your question is answered in a timely way.

Caregiver/Guardian–Teacher Communication

Caregivers and guardians are strongly encouraged to follow the established, sociocratic pathways of communication when they have a request for clarification, or a concern of any kind. We ask that these concerns or requests be first brought directly to the person to whom they relate. If further action is needed beyond what can be accomplished through this initial conversation, please contact the College Circle leader, and the Community Administrator.

Occasionally, caregivers/guardians may have questions or concerns they want to discuss with the class teacher. Because the teacher is “on-duty” during the time caregivers/guardians drop off and pick up their children, it is best to arrange a separate time to talk that is mutually convenient. You may leave a message with the office to be placed in the teacher’s box or e-mail any teacher directly to schedule a meeting time. Below are some of the ways you will learn about your student’s progress and the Waldorf curriculum.

Parent and Caregiver Evenings

These meetings are generally held monthly or bi-monthly and are an integral part of school life, offering parents and caregivers an opportunity to learn about their child’s developmental stage, view and talk about their child’s work, build social relationships within the class and parent body, and participate in the types of activities students experience at BWWS. These meetings include discussion on various aspects of Waldorf education, class activities, and curriculum. Attendance at these meetings is essential to your child’s success, to the class, and to the school as a whole. The school recommends that at least one adult from each family is in attendance. If you are unable to attend a meeting, please notify your child’s teacher.

Caregiver/Guardian Education Events

Caregivers/guardians are invited to attend the various parent education offerings throughout the year at BWWS as well as others held at schools in our area. These events can offer parents a classroom experience, lectures about child development, parenting strategies and Waldorf Education.

Teacher–Caregiver/Guardian Conferences

Teacher–Caregiver/Guardian conferences are scheduled annually, in November, for all students in Early Childhood through grade school. These conferences give parents and teachers the opportunity to discuss the development and well-being of the child as well as share impressions about a child’s progress in class. Meetings are necessary to maintain clear communication between caregiver/guardian and teacher. Additional meetings may be scheduled at other times during the course of the year at either the request of the teacher (class or subject) or parent. This can be helpful to establish a complete picture of the child.

Grade School Student Reports

Student reports are published twice a year in December and June. In first grade, students only receive a year-end report in June. Reports include a narrative of all blocks and subjects with a record of progress in the academic and social realm as well as skill building. Reports are posted on BigSIS and accessible to families through a secure login on the school's website. The reports will stay online for a set period of time.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is hosted by the Board of Trustees generally in January. At this meeting, the Board presents a State of the School report, which includes a financial update. This is a great opportunity to meet our Board!

School Directory

Contact information for enrolled families is available via BigSIS. Enrolled families set up an account for this online portal via an invitation emailed from the school. Individual family contact information can be found here, and enrolled families have the ability to print a class roster or an entire directory from the site. It is up to each family to keep this information current: the school requests that you review your contact information annually for accuracy. All communications using directory information should be school related. Families have the option to decide whether or not they would like to share their information on the portal and in the school directory.

Email

The school maintains a comprehensive all-school email list as well as individual class lists. Email is a useful tool for communicating matters pertinent to the class such as meeting times, field trip information, or schedule changes. Email is not a recommended venue for discussion. Over the years, email has been the greatest source of miscommunication, misunderstanding, and ill will. Please help us keep a healthy and respectful community by communicating in person or by telephone as a first choice when engaging in discussion. The school considers email a tool for announcements rather than discussions. School email lists or addresses are not to be used for commercial purposes, for airing grievances, or for personal or business solicitations.

Newsletter and Social Media

The Bridge is our community e-newsletter, which is sent out every month. Please contact the office if you have not subscribed. Bright Water Waldorf School also maintains a presence on Facebook and Instagram.

School Calendar

Our online school calendar has the most up-to-date information on activities and events happening at Bright Water. Please find it on our website and consider syncing it to your phone.

BWWS Website

www.brightwaterwaldorf.org is the home of Bright Water Waldorf School on the worldwide web and provides a wealth of information for prospective families. It also provides links and helpful information for current families, including information about programs, faculty and staff, school events, fundraising, and resources on Waldorf education. Please visit our website to access our calendar and stay abreast of all the events and activities at BWWS.

Cell Phone Use

Please refrain from cell phone use in the lobbies, hallways, and play areas. Our intention is that we are present with each other and with the children while on campus. We kindly ask you to step into the school office if use of your phone is essential. You may also use our school phone. Children may obtain permission from their teacher to ask someone in the office to contact their caregiver/guardian for them. Should a parent wish to leave a message for a child, we will be happy to convey it. In an emergency, we will be glad to bring your child to the telephone to speak with you. Cell phones are not allowed to be used on campus by students. If cell phones are brought to school, they must remain in the student's backpack for the duration of their time on campus. If a student needs access to a cell phone for an after-school activity, the phone should be given to the teacher or coach in charge. Continued disregard will result in disciplinary action.

Appendix

Bright Water Waldorf School invites parents and caregivers to strengthen the bridge between home and school by striving to refine resolution skills at home by utilizing D.A.D.D methods based on the work of Kim John Payne, M.Ed.

D A D D

(Describe/Disapprove) (Affirm) (Discover) (Do-over)

A GENTLE, EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE TOOL FOR CAREGIVERS AND GUARDIANS

This conflict resolution process can be adapted to suit almost any age, providing a natural framework for guiding children towards more positive behavior. It is a process in which teachers and caregivers/guardians can use their own words and their own language, helping it feel natural for the child.

1. Connect Before You Direct

You have to connect with the child before you can direct their behavior in a more positive direction. Touch them gently on the shoulder, make eye contact – once you have made a face-to-face connection, there is a shift in their thinking.

2. Stay Close

Your calm physical presence will help calm your child. Being calm, and staying close, right by their side, you have a much better chance of ‘holding’ your child.

3. D.A.D.D. (Describe/Disapprove – Affirm – Discover – Do-Over)

4. Insist

Insist that your child can do the right thing. Insist that they ‘do-over’ their actions. Your children will consistently test your boundaries – it’s their job! It is your job to consistently reinforce the boundaries that you have chosen for your child.

5. Follow through

Stay close, and help your child follow through with whatever action you have insisted upon. Be beside them whilst they do it. They are learning how to live up to social expectations and boundaries, and we can help them as they learn.

6. This process focuses on learning, not a forced apology

With two to seven-year-old children, you do not have to do all of the steps, all of

the time. Once you are familiar with the process, you begin to learn which steps work better for which ages.

Discovering the cause of an incident may be impossible with a two-year-old child, and a do over becomes irrelevant for two to four-year-old children if it cannot be done right away, in the moment. If you have to wait for a three to four-year-old child to calm down, chances are they will have forgotten about the incident and have no idea what you are talking about when you finally come back to it.

The less you talk, the more children listen. Try to model behavior you want to see – imitation of positive behavior comes more naturally to children and is easier than correction of difficult behavior!

7. Modeling Genuine Apologies at Home

Caregivers/guardians can model or demonstrate by making authentic apologies and do-overs to each other in front of the children “Oh honey, I am sorry, that came out unkindly. Let me try again. I guess we are all learning to be kind.”

Caregivers/guardians only need to do this – genuinely – a few times for the children to begin imitating.

Bright Water Waldorf School defines diversity as the broad spectrum of cultures, races, ethnicities, languages, genders, sexual orientations, religious persuasions, socioeconomic backgrounds and abilities that together make up our city, country and the world. Embracing diversity in our daily practices elevates the experience for every member of our community and builds reverence and compassion for life in our ever-changing world.

Bright Water Waldorf School has created and continues to foster a program, culture and inclusive community of students, families, trustees, faculty and staff that embrace diverse perspectives, cultures, backgrounds and identities. The school is committed to caring for all members of its community.

Resources

Early Childhood

[What Young Children Really Need: The Essentials of Waldorf Early Childhood](#)

[Education](#)—Susan Howard (also contains Strengthening the Foundational Senses of the Young Child—Nancy Blanning and Laurie Clark

Work and Play in Early Childhood—Freya Jaffke

[Video Series: The Five Golden Keys](#)—Helle Heckman

Children at Play—Heidi Britz-Crelius

The Young Child—D. Udo de Haes

Festivals, Family, and Food—Cary & Large

The Education of the Child—Rudolf Steiner

You Are Your Child's First Teacher—Rahima Baldwin

Over the Rainbow Bridge—Patterson & Bradley

Rhythms of Learning—Roberto Trostli

Websites

AWSNA: Association of Waldorf Schools of North America

Whywaldorfworks.org

General Education

Waldorf Education—Jack Petrash

Between Form and Freedom—A Practical Guide to the Teenage Years—Betty Staley Catching Up or Leading the Way?—Yong Zhao

The Hurried Child—David Elkind

Odd Girl Out—The Hidden Culture of Aggression in Girls—Rachel Simmons Real Boys—William Pollack

Endangered Minds—Jane Healy

Your Child's Growing Mind—Daniel Goleman

Failure to Connect—Armstrong & Casement

Emotional Intelligence—Mary Pipher & Ruth Ross

Punished By Reward—Armstrong & Casement

Reviving Ophelia—Mary Pipher & Ruth Ross

Raising a Daughter—Don and Jeanne Elium

Toxic Childhood Syndrome—Sue Palmer

We gratefully acknowledge the examples of the following schools, whose templates helped us to shape this Handbook:

Linden Waldorf School

Cedarwood Waldorf School

Seattle Waldorf School

Philadelphia Waldorf School

Pleasant Ridge Waldorf School