

Preschool Parent Handbook



Revised August 2024

Welcome

The Halton Waldorf School strives to provide a safe, warm, and nurturing environment that fosters your child's development. This handbook summarizes information about our school and the unique aspects of our Waldorf Preschool program. Please speak to your child's lead teacher if you have questions or concerns regarding your child and their day-to-day school life.

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Full article: [What Children Need, The Essentials of Waldorf Early Childhood](#) by Susan Howard

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Part I: Practical Items

1) Hours of Operation-Pick-Up and Drop-off Time

Pick-ups and drop-offs are outdoors. If you are late picking up your child, please notify the reception desk by calling our main number, 905-331-4387 or emailing reception@haltonwaldorf.com. Please be sure to connect with one of the teachers at both drop-off and pick-up, ensuring the teachers are aware of each child's arrival and departure.

Daily Schedule

8:00	Supervision begins for early drop-off (no additional fee for this service)	12:00	Lunch
8:15	Drop-off in the preschool yard	3:25	Full Day pick-up
8:30	Preschool day begins	3:45 –6:00	After-care program (additional fees apply)
12:00	Half Day pick-up		

2) Positive Relationships-Child Guidance & Discipline

A child's social and emotional development needs to build positive relationships with caring and trusting adults. Waldorf discipline is a process, not an instant act. Here is an [article](#) that may be helpful in your research. Note that the article gives some examples; your teachers will have their own unique ways of working with the children and discipline. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your teacher.

“The young child instinctively expects guidance. Without the certainty of his parents and teachers, he loses his security... Constantly being asked what he wants creates bewilderment in his mind... Instead, we must develop consciousness and consciously meet the child's paramount needs. They are easily stated: security and an awareness of growth, love, and a certain amount of protection ... The conscientious and conscious parent will have to play an active and positive role in the education, the leading forth of his child ... Lead the child by conveying firmness permeated with love.” (Margret Meyerkort, internationally respected Preschool educator).

3) Food

The school provides all food, snacks, and lunches daily. Healthy snacks are prepared and served during our morning and afternoon programs. Real Food for Real Kids serves all our full-day early childhood children a wholesome catered lunch each day. These lunches include well-balanced, nutritional, homemade, local foods, which can be fan favourites to even the most discerning children. We take pride in maintaining and being a waste-conscious and environmentally friendly school.

In addition, Real Food for Real Kids catered lunches will:

- promote healthy nutrition habits, change the way children eat and understand food
- introduce new and fun foods to your child's repertoire
- support Ontario growers, farmers, merchants, and businesses
- take the stress of making lunch each day
- save on washing lunch containers

Please pack a re-usable water bottle for your child and label it with the child's name.

4) Health

Fostering your child's health and well-being is important to us. Children who are ill are required to stay at home. In the case of fever, which can be lower in the morning and rise later in the day, a 24-hour period of normal temperature assures that the fever has passed. Coughs and colds run through the class very easily. As a matter of courtesy and respect, please let the teacher know of any contagious illnesses. **Please notify the school of all absenteeism by emailing reception@haltonwaldorf.com or calling 905-331-4387.**

Please notify the school and your teacher of all **ALLERGIES**.

[Exclusion Policy-Sick Children](#)

5) Communication at the school

Halton Waldorf School has created many ways to learn about the school community, including:

- The Website as well as our social media – Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
- Online Calendar
- Parent e-Newsletters
- Annual General Meeting and March Meet and Mingle
- Parent Evenings
- Parent Teacher Conferences

More detailed information can be found in the school's All Parent Handbook.

Communication with Teachers

At the beginning of the school year, your child's teacher will inform you when and where they can be reached. In addition to the class meetings held three times per year, teachers provide written communications via e-mail to inform parents of what is happening in the classroom. The teacher will be in touch to arrange a home visit for new students in August.

Any concerns that require longer conversations should be addressed in pre-arranged meetings. Long conversations are not possible when the teachers are with children.

Parent Questions and Concerns

We value healthy communication in all aspects of the school's life that model a civil society and learning community for our students. It is natural for concerns to arise within any school system, and we ask that such concerns be communicated productively and constructively. Please refer to the [Preschool Parent Issues and Concerns Policy](#) for further details.

6) Parent Meetings

Parent meetings are held once per term. These meetings may occur in person or outside when weather permits, and your teacher will email you details. They are for adults only. Nursing infants are welcome. At least one parent per family must be represented at these meetings to inform you fully about class activities and developments. Parent meetings will include opportunities for you to learn together about your children, a chance to participate in activities that will deepen your understanding of the young child's development and an opportunity to build your class community and strengthen relationships with each other and the teacher. A meeting will be devoted to grade one readiness in the winter term. All early childhood parents are welcome to come and learn why it is important in Waldorf education that a child is ready in every way to step into the next phase of learning in the grades program. Please speak with your child's teacher if you have any topics that you would like us to explore at parent meetings. We strive together with you to make these meetings meaningful.

7) Class Parent Representatives

Each class at the Halton Waldorf School has "class reps" who serve as members of the Parent Association (PA). Class reps are there to help the class teacher with practical items such as school trips, as well as help other parents in the class with questions that they may have about school activities. They also play a big part in organizing parents' tasks in school fairs (which happen twice yearly). Class parents will share information and 'action items' from the Parent Association meetings. Class parents can also take the initiative, in counsel with the teacher and PA, to fund-raise for special expenses that may come up in a class.

8) Building a Relationship between Home and School

As Waldorf teachers, we aim to create a safe and healthy environment for your child to develop and grow. We have planned a healthy rhythm for the young child, and through years of experience, we know how important your support at home is for your child to be successful at school. Parents can support their child's Preschool experience in the following ways:

- Spending as much time in nature as possible and reducing exposure to screens, TV, video viewing, and computer activities. During your interview, we can share views on technology and its developmental effects on the young child. We suggest some research on this topic; if you are looking for more resources, you will find some listed in the recommended reading section at the end of the handbook. The best way to see how technology affects your child is to observe them when they have been exposed to it and when they are not. How does it change the way they engage with the world around them? ([An article to get you started](#)) See more articles and resources in the recommended reading section below.

- A well-rested child will be content in the rhythm of the day. As you will determine the best bedtime for your child, it may be earlier for those who need an early start for school the next morning. You will find that your well-rested child wakes up alone in the morning, ready and willing to meet the day. To ensure your child is getting enough sleep and is well rested, preparation for bedtime between 7 and 8 p.m. is helpful. [Click here for more information about sleep and the young child](#))
- Rest time is a vital part of the daily rhythm in a Waldorf Preschool classroom. When young children can have a short rest and process the many social interactions and busy activities from the morning, the opportunity to have some alone time, be quiet by themselves for a short period, lie down and possibly let go for sleep can be refreshing for them in the afternoon. If your child rests in the afternoon at home too, they know that rest is as honoured at home as at school.
- Encouraging the family to sit together at mealtimes can support your child in sitting with their friends at school and sharing a meal together.
- Involve your children in simple [daily household chores](#).
- It is beneficial to consider the rhythm between activity and rest during the day and include both aspects in your child's day. Bring rhythm into your home life—active time, quiet or focused time, and so on throughout the day. You will find the day much smoother as well.
- Being on time for drop-off and pick-up
 - **Drop-off:** Children often arrive and enter play together very early on in the morning; it can be difficult for a child who comes late to enter the play once it has started. Arriving on time allows your child to engage and experience the health benefits of the rhythm and activities in the Preschool.
 - **Pick-up:** Some children may have difficulties leaving at the end of a wonderful day at school. Remind them they will return soon, and it is time to go. Remember, it is a wonderful sign that they love being at school.
- Please contact your child's teacher when a concern or question arises. Each teacher will provide a time when they are usually available.
- It is beneficial to attend all parent meetings – this is one way to strengthen your partnership with your child's teacher and your community.
- Familiarize yourself with Waldorf education through reading, participating in learning opportunities at the school and beyond. Check the newsletter for upcoming learning opportunities and see the handbook's recommended reading section and links.
 - [WECAN | Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America](#)

9) How We Work with Separation Anxiety

Children are naturally attached to their parents and families. When they experience a new environment with new people caring for them, they may experience separation anxiety, tears, or even tantrums. Our patience and loving care will help to ease the transition at this time.

During drop-off, this anxiety can be heightened. One of the most important aspects that will support your child through this transition is your confidence in the teacher, the environment, and the school. Your child needs to pass the child to the teacher in trust and with the knowledge that you will be contacted if the child is not coping well. The tears will eventually subside over time, and the child will realign themselves with their new surroundings. As teachers, we practice gentleness using songs and surround them with loving warmth to reassure them until the unrest passes.

For parents, the child's separation anxiety may look and feel traumatic. We assure you that when you are confident, your child will be confident, and this transition will ease gradually as your child builds resilience and adaptability. The care we provide to the children is grounded in love and respect for what your child is experiencing.

Parents are to drop off and pick up children at the outdoor entrance of the preschool playground.

10) The Importance of Warmth

The early childhood children will be outdoors for most of their time at school, as it is the ideal, health-giving place for them to be. Working together, we will be extra diligent about how the children are dressed. A warm child is free to grow and take part in the day.

“Warmth is probably one of the greatest gifts we can give our children. Not only the warmth of our love but also keeping their physical bodies warm. Children are developing their bodies, especially during the first 7 years of their lives. An infant and a young child will always feel warm unless they are on the verge of hypothermia because they have an accelerated metabolic rate. If we don't provide them with layers of cotton, silk, and wool to insulate their bodies, then they must use some of their potential "growth" energy to heat their bodies. (Full article by Dr. Susan Johnson can be found here:

<http://www.youandyourchildshealth.org/articles/warmth.html>

When we are outside, the ideal is that your child is warm enough, able to move freely, dry, protected from the sun, and clean enough to go inside later. We can change their clothes if necessary. Ensure spare clothes are in the cloth bags the children will keep at school.

11) Clothing Your Young Child at School

As noted above, the children must be dressed for any weather. We will begin our day outside every day, and only extreme weather, such as high winds, extreme cold, and thunderstorms, will stop us. The children need waterproof jackets and pants, rubber boots, closed shoes, long pants, and long sleeves (in warmer weather, this protects them from mosquitoes). Hats must always be **worn outdoors**.

When colder weather comes, the children need snowsuits and mittens. Wool hats, mittens and socks are the best for warmth and allow for moisture transference in a way synthetics do not. Undershirts, wool sweaters, or vests can be layered and removed if necessary – dressing in layers helps accommodate fluctuating temperatures. **We highly recommend at least 3 layers on the top and two on the bottom once the temperatures drop in the fall and until the warmth has penetrated the ground in the spring (young children spend much time on the ground)**. The warmth of the body of a young child is very important for the development of their organs. We have extra clothes at school if the weather changes dramatically throughout the day.

Dressing your **child in clothing without cartoons, slogans, or writing during school frees them from the influences of external media during their day.** This allows your child and other children to develop their own imagination using creative ideas and thoughts as the source of inspiration for their play.

12) What to Bring

Please remember that all school-related items, including clothing, shoes, backpacks, etc., must be free of game—or media-inspired characters, cartoons, slogans, or writing. All clothing must also be suitable for free movement during play and circle games.

- **A hat every day, suitable for the season. We ask that your child always wear a hat** outside. We usually have extra hats; however, most children prefer their own.
- **Extra clothing is kept in a spare bag in the classroom.** It includes two pairs of socks, one pair of underwear, one pair of pants, one long-sleeve shirt, and one sweater.
- **Fair-weather splash pants**—We ask the children to always wear splash pants to protect their clothing and the carpets. We try to keep the dew, mud, and sand out of the yard! Please have a very thin pair of splash pants for fair, warm weather. We make exceptions in very warm weather.
- **Rain suit** - a one-piece rain suit is the best, but raincoats and pants are great too – see clothing resources below.
- **Indoor shoes**—The children need clean shoes or slippers that fit securely and provide good support. We request that shoes have no lights or noises that cause distractions.
- **Boots to start every day** – rubber boots unlined in the warm weather and lined for when the weather turns colder and still wet. Even in fine weather, most days start with wet grass from the dew, and wet shoes stay wet all day. You may keep outdoor shoes in the cloakroom for later if the day is fine and the dew is gone.
- **Winter Boots** - check to see that the boot is rated for -30 or -40 C. Be sure there is a removable liner and check them regularly to see that they are dry – boots that do not have a removable liner may not be dry before it's time to go outside again!
- **Snow suit** – one-piece or two-piece with overall style pants to ensure that no snow goes in between.
- **Long underwear**—wool is the very best. A silk wool blend is ideal for a sensitive child. The children spend a lot of time on the ground and the floor at school, so it is important to keep them warm and comfortable.
- **Scarves** - a scarf, neck warmer, or balaclava is necessary for everyone in colder weather.
- **Sun protection and bug repellent**—**The number one protection from the sun is clothing (hats and long sleeves).** Sunblock is our second choice. Please apply sunblock and bug repellent before school if you feel it is needed in the morning.
- **The following companies carry good quality, long-lasting clothing, outerwear, and boots for children:**
 - Mountain Equipment Co-op for seasonal outdoor gear
 - Warmth and Weather – for organic woollens and wool/silk as well as ethical rainwear (also **sold through school fundraisers**)
 - Northern Co. Kids for rainwear

13) What Not to Bring

We request your help selecting clothing for school that does not display media characters and slogans. These images can inhibit the development of a healthy imagination and play. We strive to create an environment where the child can express and play out of his or her own experience.

- **Children's toys and personal items** should be kept at home. Items from home are very distracting and create challenges with sharing. We have plenty of materials in the classrooms. If they do make it to school, the teacher will store the items until going home time.
- We further request that children do not wear **nail polish, hair dyes, or 'tattoos.'** **These adornments are suited to an older stage of life and distract the child and their friends from finding their own imaginative and creative play.** It becomes the focus of their time together.



Part II: Essential Aspects of Waldorf Early Childhood Education in the Classroom

14) Love and Warmth

“Children who live in an atmosphere of love and warmth, and who have around them truly good examples to imitate, are living in their proper element.” —Rudolf Steiner, *The Education of the Child*

Our teachers strive to provide an environment of love and emotional warmth, creating the basis for the child's healthy development. These qualities are striven for between the teacher and the child, in the children's behaviour toward one another, and among the adults in the school.

We also feel that the children are served if this love and warmth exist in the relationships between the teachers and the parents, the early childhood teachers and the rest of the school, and the surrounding community.

15) The Classroom Environment and Nourishing the Senses

The Waldorf classroom environment is a warm and supportive place where the child feels secure and loved. Physically, it is simple, beautiful, and harmonious to the eye so as not to overstimulate the child and to encourage their creativity and imagination.

Learning in the early years is profoundly connected to the child's physical and sensory experience; therefore, the physical surroundings of our classrooms, indoors and out, have been created to provide a

nourishing environment and diverse opportunities for a child's active self-education. By integrating diverse elements and bringing them into meaningful, understandable, and harmonious order, the teachers provide an accessible environment for the young child's understanding, feelings, and active will. These surroundings provide the basis for developing a sense of coherence for the young child. The child unconsciously experiences the love, care, and intentions expressed through the classroom's outer furnishings and materials. ([The Child at Work and Play](#))

16) Creative and Artistic Experiences and Rhythm

In our early childhood classrooms, education is the art of living. Teachers are artists in how they perceive and relate to the children and daily life activities. The teacher orchestrates and choreographs the rhythms of each day, week, and season so the children can breathe freely in a living structure.

Young children respond strongly to rhythm and are tremendously supported when they have rhythm every day. Therefore, the daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly rhythms are strong in Waldorf early childhood classrooms. "When there is rhythm, life can begin to become freer. Children are more relaxed, secure, less anxious, and stress-filled because they know that the adult they trust guides the flow of the day. Young children relax into this security and are often less clingy and demanding," Susan Weber of Sophia's Hearth article on rhythm. It also takes time to find rhythm. Give it time; it can take up to 40 days for a rhythm to settle into our lives, especially if it is new to you and your child. As your child settles into the rhythm of their class, please be aware that your child will be tired at the beginning of the school year; playing and being social all day is tiring for anyone.

Within the Preschool's daily rhythm, there is provision for free play and group activity. At free play time, children may choose to involve themselves with a group of others or play alone in various centres within the room. Many natural materials are available, like wool, shells, rocks, pinecones, driftwood, and handmade toys that leave much to the child's imagination, calling forth the child's natural creativity. At this time of the day, the child may also decide to join one of the many tasks in which the teacher is involved, such as watering the plants, sewing, dusting, preparing the table for snacks, sweeping, digging, finger-knitting, gardening, mixing, and kneading the dough for bread, and chopping vegetables for soup, to name a few. Snack time, circle time, story-time or puppet shows are examples of group activities in which the whole class participates. The day is set up to move between times of free play and times of group or formed activity. This is called "the in and out breathing" of each day. When the day is structured this way, it supports healthy breathing in the child, creating a health-giving education.

In addition, the teacher offers the children opportunities for artistic experiences in singing and music, movement and gesture through rhythmic games, and creative speech and language through verses, poetry, and stories. The children may model with beeswax, draw, and paint watercolours. Puppet shows put on by the teacher are an important element in the lives of preschoolers and kindergarteners.

17) Imitation and the Young Child

The teacher knows that imitation is one of the child's main learning tools at this age, and the teacher cares to be worthy of imitation. Each action, if done with quiet and loving reverence, will be imitated by the child so that the qualities of wonder and reverence will grow within them, feeding those soul qualities that are so important – reverence towards all living things, respect, consideration, and tolerance towards our fellow human beings. To read more about imitation, see the following article by Susan Weber.

18) Free Imaginative Play, Inside and Out:

Little children learn through play. They approach play in an entirely individual way, based on their unique configuration of soul and spirit and their unique experiences of the world in which they live. How a child plays may offer a picture of how he will fulfill his destiny as an adult.

The Preschool teachers create an environment that supports healthy play. This environment includes the physical surroundings, furnishings, and play materials; the social environment of activities and social interactions; and the inner life of thoughts, intentions, and imaginations held by the teachers.

Outdoor Play: The emphasis on outdoor play is integral to the Waldorf Preschool curriculum. Its benefits for the young child are wide-reaching, from supporting physical health to connecting with our natural surroundings.

The children start their day outside playing on the climbing structures, digging in the sandbox, swinging high into the air, or helping their teachers with tasks such as raking leaves, shovelling snow or gardening in the spring and fall. We are fortunate to have several community paths through the forest, and we may "take the scenic route" to enter the school by walking through the forest. There are many things to see along the path, a whiskey frisky, a mushroom, and many other treasures.

Nature walks also allow the children to experience seasonal changes; the new buds of spring are always noticed, as are the changes in the leaves and the first frosty puddle. Some days the children will hike to the pond to visit the ducks and watch sticks float away from shore. On other days the children emerge from the forest at Stoney Park. Two large rocks challenge the children's will as they work hard to reach the top. They are often perplexed as to why their teachers don't just lift them onto the rock, but nothing can replace the sense of accomplishment after climbing up all by themselves.

Daily outdoor play in all sorts of weather allows the children to develop their senses of balance, movement, touch, and well-being. It allows them to develop relationships with themselves, their peers, and the world around them. Our time outside is as good for the body as it is for the soul.

19) Protection of the Forces of Childhood

The lively, awake, yet dreamy way of the little child's consciousness is encouraged to thrive in early childhood classrooms. This means that the teacher works to avoid a lot of verbal instruction. Instead, their gestures and actions provide a model for the child to imitate. Each day is filled with familiar daily rhythms and activities which provide a context where the need for verbal instruction is greatly reduced and simple; imagery in stories, songs, and games provides experiences that the children can internalize but that do not require intellectual or critical reflection or explanation. ([For more information on this subject, click here](#)).

20) Gratitude, Reverence and Wonder

"Gratitude grows naturally in children through witnessing the gratitude the adults feel as they receive what is freely given by others, and in how they express this gratitude. If a child says "thank you" very naturally—not in response to the urging of others, but simply through imitating—something has been done that will greatly benefit the child's whole life. Out of this an all-embracing gratitude will develop toward the whole world. This cultivation of gratitude is of paramount importance." —Rudolf Steiner, *The Child's Changing Consciousness*

“Out of experiences of gratitude, the first tender capacity for love, which is deeply embedded in each and every child, begins to sprout in earthly life. If, during this first period of life, we strive to create an atmosphere of gratitude around the children, then out of this gratitude toward our everyday world, toward the greater universe, and also out of thankfulness for being able to be a part of this world, a profound and warm sense of devotion will arise... upright, honest, and true.” — Rudolf Steiner, The Child’s Changing Consciousness

Throughout each day, in our classrooms, a sense of gratitude, reverence and wonder is fostered with the children, and this is the basis for what will become a capacity for deep love and commitment in later life, for dedication and loyalty, for true admiration of others, for fervent spiritual devotion, and for placing oneself wholeheartedly in the service of the world.

[Read more about how gratitude, reverence, and wonder work in Waldorf education](#)

21) Joy, Humour and Happiness

The teacher’s earnestness about their work and serious striving is balanced with humour and a demeanour that bespeaks happiness. There are moments of humour and delight in the classroom every day, even when the days are difficult!

22) Adult Caregivers on a Path of Inner Development

Waldorf educators recognize that their thoughts, attitudes, and imaginations are as real and alive in the adult who cares for the children as their actions. The invisible realm behind the teacher’s outer actions profoundly influences the child’s development. This is true for parents as well as teachers.

Teachers see the child as a threefold being—of body, soul, and spirit. This recognition provides a foundation for the daily activities in the classroom and the relationship between adults and children. This is a realm that is largely hidden and difficult to observe directly. Yet, ultimately, this realm may affect the development of children most profoundly. It is not merely our outer activity that influences the growing child. What lies behind and is expressed through this outer activity is also crucial. Ultimately, the most profound influence on the child is who we are as human beings, who we are becoming, and how.



Part III: Preschool Policies and Procedures

1. Preschool Program Statement

This Program Statement is provided to current and prospective parents of children in the HWS Preschool Class. It describes the goals and approaches used in our Childcare program.

This statement complies with Ontario Regulation 137/15, reflecting the Childcare Early Years Act requirements. It is based on the document: *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years* is to be used to guide licensed early years programs. *How Does Learning Happen?* <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/howlearninghappens.pdf>

Children are capable, creative beings who learn best through play. Play is the child's work, and a play-based environment allows children to grow their imaginations and learn at their own pace. The task of Halton Waldorf School is to enable students to meet an ever-changing world with knowledge, clarity of thought, creativity, compassion, and responsibility. In its content and sequence, the curriculum meets the developing child's physical, emotional, and intellectual needs and fosters reverence and respect for the earth and all people. Integrating the arts and practical activities enables students to fully engage and develop their unique capacities.

Our educators are thoughtful reflective learners who continually work to develop their practice. We take our responsibilities seriously, including the trust you have given us to care for your child and our continual striving to keep the child at the center of our practice. Faculty, board, and parents work together to support the educational task and the school's social mission. Students, faculty, staff, and parents contribute and learn through community activities, service, and dialogue within our school and the Halton and Waldorf communities.

We offer and support many opportunities to deepen the understanding of Waldorf education and its underlying principles. We aim to create a healthy, beautiful, and sustainable environment supporting the school's pedagogical mission.

We work with the Ministry of Education's learning foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression to allow children to grow with security to the fullest of their potential. Through our interactions, we strive to build acceptance, learn to care for others, and experience community. Love

and emotional warmth create the basis for a child's healthy development. These qualities should live between the adult caregiver and the child, in the children's behaviour toward one another, and among the adults and families at the school.

The warmth and intention we bring to our interactions with children allow them to feel safe and valued. The environment we build, both inside and outside our classrooms, is designed to allow children to experience a feeling of wonder and reverence for the world around them. Our programs focus on storytelling and circle time to support communications and lay the foundations of literacy. At the same time, our play environments are open-ended to allow children to explore materials with an open imagination to develop creativity and problem-solving. This is supported through proper nutrition, healthy habits, active outside time, and adequate rest.

Children learn through imitation. Meaningful work and chores are part of our day. We provide rich opportunities for the children to explore the social and natural worlds through self-initiated free play. We also understand that a strong rhythm and routine help children to feel secure and calm. Through this state of security and calmness, the quality of the children's play will be richer. Teachers are often busy throughout the day sweeping, washing, and gardening. The children are welcome to take part in these activities. Children can achieve satisfaction and purpose when participating in daily life. Our program includes a consistent and predictable rhythm filled with songs and activities that bring joy and goodness to the children's day.

The children's social, cognitive, and physical development is fostered in our program through creative arts, storytelling, cooperative activities, and free play. Each day also includes outdoor time where children can play and work outside. We believe children learn best in their early years when active and engaged in healthy movement.

Seasonal festivals are a highlight in our children's program; they prepare for these special times. These festivals also unite families and the community to foster meaningful relationships with faculty, parents, children, and the community.

Our teachers recognize that they play an important role in the class by creating a calm and secure environment. They understand that children can best discover the world around them in this atmosphere and gradually find their place within it.

Teachers in a Waldorf environment are challenged to engage in a constant renewal process. Teachers actively observe the children in their care and seek to work consciously and artistically to create the experiences that will serve their development. The teacher's devotion to this task awakens them to the importance of self-education and transformation in the community context. Their ongoing study of child and human development and artistic and meditative practices become essential elements for the practice of Waldorf, early childhood teachers.

Halton Waldorf School is a non-sectarian school that supports cultural, social, economic, religious, and ethnic diversity. The study of anthroposophy is the foundation of the pedagogical work and an integral part of the school's identity. Our teachers work toward providing experiences that are essential for healthy early childhood education. They include:

- Love and warmth
- Creative, artistic experience
- Free, imaginative play
- Joy and humour
- Care for the environment and healthy nourishment for the senses and body
- Meaningful adult activity as an example of the child's imitation

- Adult caregivers on a path of inner development
- Gratitude, reverence, and wonder

In our individual work and as an organization, we strive for ongoing observation, research, self-development, and renewal. The well-being of the students and the social and financial health of the school are the basis of our decisions.

Holistic View of the Child:

The HWS Preschool class carries a view of the whole child, mind, body, and spirit. This holistic perspective can be considered from various angles. In this document, we will use the following sections:

a. Promote the children's health, safety, nutrition, and well-being.

Goal: HWS knows that the early years set the foundation for children's health and well-being. We understand that the first step in establishing and nurturing health, safety, and well-being for the children in our programs is through their connections with the teachers.

Approach: The teachers at HWS recognize that children and their families will benefit most when the approach includes involvement and support from everyone who plays an important role in early childhood education at HWS. Settings that promote the well-being of children include a focus on basic practices such as supervising children adequately, ensuring the safety of equipment and the environment, good hygiene, and safe sleep procedures, managing illness and injuries effectively and meeting children's nutritional needs. They also allow flexibility to respond to individual needs. To foster health-supporting behaviours in HWS, we need to support the development in early childhood, which includes a healthy social and physical environment, decision-making processes, procedures, and policies. It should also promote health and well-being and prevent injury. It will shape a respectful, welcoming, and caring environment for the children and those providing their care.

Early childhood teachers will work to create an environment that promotes healthy eating by:

- Serving a variety of healthy food choices
- Providing adequate time and space to eat
- Respect children's appetites and enable them to eat the right amount for them.
- Providing appropriate supervision while children eat meals and snacks.
- Assuring that lunch and snacks are eaten in a calm, positive atmosphere.

b. Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers, and staff.

Goal: HWS strives to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families by creating positive interactions and collaboration. We understand that relationships of trust are the basis for learning and cooperation. Every child is entitled to be given the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and social skills and learn how to problem-solve. HWS is committed to working collaboratively with everyone to provide families with the best possible childcare service.

Approach: HWS provides a positive learning environment for the children. As they develop a secure relationship with their teachers, the children will grow a sense of belonging.

Children develop a sense of belonging by positively interacting with their peers through self-directed play and engaging activities. This is noticeable when observing the interactions between the children, their families, and our teachers. This sense of belonging develops and strengthens over time at HWS.

c. Encourage the children to interact, communicate positively, and support their self-regulating ability.

Goal: At HWS, our inclusive programming gives the children a sense of belonging. Positive learning environments and experiences focused on active play-based learning encourage communication, self-expression, and self-regulation within each child.

Approach: Our programs focus on active play-based learning as the way that children naturally learn best. It is their natural response to the environment around them. Children learn through play when manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with different materials. Play allows them to actively construct, challenge, and expand their understandings by connecting to prior experiences, opening the door to new learning. Intentional play-based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and think critically. Our program supports children's self-regulation and ability to deal with stress and remain calm, alert, and ready to learn. When children are calmly focused and alert, they can best modulate their emotions, ignore distractions, inhibit their impulses, and understand the consequences of their actions. We are continually learning about how to create learning environments and programming that help support children's self-regulation—to help children remain or return to a state of calm.

d. Foster the children's exploration, play and enquiry.

Goal: At HWS, children can experience a variety of safe, age-appropriate, and interesting environments that nurture their healthy growth and development. HWS fosters emerging independence, self-confidence, and skill development in the children.

Approach: At HWS, play and exploration are at the core of early learning. The environment is where learning is fostered and takes place. HWS believes that children learn through play and are given opportunities to explore, test, try and learn. Our teachers understand the developmental stages of children and work tirelessly to ensure every child has a positive experience.

e. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.

Goal: Play is the child's work and is essential to healthy development. Child-directed play provides the best learning opportunities. Teachers can better understand children's interests and perspectives when they listen and observe.

Approach: HWS offers children ample opportunity to direct their play, explore new ideas, and expand old ones. Adults' role is to enhance children's experiences, not to take over or determine the direction of the play. They provide emotional support and encouragement.

f. Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.

Goal: Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways. The ability to express thoughts, emotions, needs and wants is essential to healthy growth and development for children. Children who can express themselves in a variety of ways feel more competent and understood by others,

Approach: Teachers will respond to children's efforts to communicate, understand, and support their needs. Challenging behaviour often expresses difficult feelings and/or unmet needs. The teachers will seek to understand more deeply what children are expressing and help them verbalize their feelings and meet their needs.

g. Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest, and quiet time, into the day, and consider the individual needs of the children receiving childcare.

Goal: At HWS, we believe every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses. We create a supportive environment which promotes daily physical activity.

Approach: In addition to daily indoor activities, the children will spend at least one hour outside. We believe that children need activity and time to recharge. Each child can rest, relax, and/or sleep after lunch.

h. Foster the engagement and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

Goal: At HWS, we strive to maintain open and ongoing communication with all our families.

Approach: At HWS, the parents and teachers can communicate face-to-face daily during the drop-off and pick-up times. This is an opportunity to pass along information about the child's night/day and share any concerns, issues, or questions they may have. It is also a time to share the child's successes and milestones. If a parent or one of the teachers has something they want to discuss that would require more conversation, a phone meeting or a time for them to meet will be scheduled. Aside from this daily communication, we offer parent/teacher conferences twice a year. This is a time to discuss the children's progress and development in more detail. HWS welcomes feedback and input from parents.

i. Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and staff

Goal: HWS is committed to involving local community partners and engaging those partners in supporting HWS children, families, and teachers.

Approach: We have many community partners—individuals, organizations, and agencies—who financially support HWS children and families or through in-kind support. We collaborate with these partners and continue to create more opportunities to expand these relationships on behalf of our children and families.

j: Support staff, home childcare providers or others who interact with the children at a childcare centre or home childcare premises in relation to continuous professional learning

Goals: HWS is committed to hiring, training, and fairly compensating all teachers and staff. We hire teachers who have a positive and sensitive attitude towards children. Our non-discriminatory hiring practices provide individuals of all backgrounds with employment opportunities. We believe everyone has worth and is entitled to be respected, supported, and treated fairly.

Approach: Formal professional learning is vital, but we also know that the most central professional growth happens day-to-day, as our teachers co-learn with children and each other as self-reflective professionals. All teachers working with young children have completed studies in Waldorf Teacher Training. Others have completed training in the field of early childhood and are registered with the College

of Early Childhood Educators. All program teachers attend annual conferences and receive training on an ongoing basis.

k: Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) of subsection 46 (3) on the children and their families.

Our program focuses on our core values at HWS. We believe that children are important. We feel that children need the opportunity to discover how to interact with others in a safe and nurturing atmosphere as they develop their self-worth, confidence, and communication skills.

Our programming encourages people to express their thoughts, feelings, and acceptance of others. Our teaching staff communicates and listens effectively and purposefully with families and fellow educators.

We appreciate and include many different aspects within our program to create a well-rounded, interesting, and exciting experience for the children with whom we are privileged to spend our days.

As required by the Ministry of Education's Child Care Early Years Act, all new staff, student teachers, and volunteers shall review this program statement before interacting with children, annually thereafter, and any time this statement is modified.

2) Admissions

Admission Process:

1. Submit an application

- Download the application
- Complete and return to Samantha Peris, Admissions Manager, by mail or scan and email samantha.peris@haltonwaldorf.com
- Enclose the application fee (non-refundable)
\$350 for Preschool (upon acceptance, \$250 goes towards their tuition fee) (Base Fee)

2. Admissions Interview

- Interview between the parents and teacher, which may involve your child at the teacher's discretion.
- The Admissions Manager will contact you once your application is received.

3. Sign the Contract

- Upon acceptance by the Faculty, the Finance Office will produce a contract.
- Review of the contract and payment options can be done in person or over the phone.
- The Tuition Adjustment process may be discussed at this point if appropriate.
- Two to three weeks is the normal return deadline for new contracts.

Discharge Policy:

The Halton Waldorf School's policy is to make every effort to serve all children and their families. We work collaboratively with parents, staff, and various community support systems to meet each child's needs.

Our policy is to assist children and parents in making any behaviour changes that staff, administration, and/or outside agencies feel are necessary for the health, needs, and safety of the child and the other children in the school.

Continual attempts will be made to find appropriate solutions to resolve the problems. The pedagogical director, early childhood section chair, and EC faculty will provide support and guidance through this process. Parents are actively involved throughout the decision-making process.

If a child is experiencing problems that may pose a direct threat to the safety of the other children or staff, the parent/guardian may be required to withdraw the child from the program and make other childcare arrangements.

The following procedure will be followed when a child's behaviour is an issue:

1. The initial interview will be an informal meeting between the parent(s) and the teacher. At this meeting, the parent(s) will be informed of the child's social behaviour (s).
2. The Teacher may request the support of a medical practitioner or the Therapeutic Support (Parental consent required). In most cases, the above steps will be sufficient. If not, the following course of action will be followed:
 1. Written notice for a conference with the Early Childhood Section Chair, Supervisor and/or Teacher members. An action plan will be developed so that all parties are consistent with the strategies that must be implemented. The type of support needed will be determined at this time.
 2. When safety is questioned, the parent may be asked to provide 'on-call' support or remove the child from the classroom. An action plan will be developed to ensure the child's return to the program.
 3. Should the EC faculty or the parent deem the child's needs beyond the staff's expertise, a recommendation will be made in writing for the parent(s) to withdraw their child and enroll the child in an alternate facility where his/her needs may be addressed.
 4. the parent/guardian will be given sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements whenever possible. However, if a child's individual needs or behaviour pose a serious threat to the safety of other children and staff, the parent may be required to immediately withdraw the child from the school at the school's request.

Waiting List:

The Admissions Manager will notify families on the Waiting List by phone or email as soon as a spot becomes available and will also inform them of their child's spot on the list. The privacy and confidentiality of the children on the waiting list will always be maintained.

We cannot accept fees to hold a spot on our waitlist. Fees will be charged once the family has access to a space and accepts the spot.

Parents on the waiting list whose applications are under consideration are encouraged to learn more about Waldorf Education and to attend our open house tours on the first Tuesday of each month.

3) Enrolment Fees for Preschool (age 3 – 4):

- 5 mornings (8:30 -12:00) \$11,600 (Base Fee)
- 5 full days (8:30 -3:25 pm) \$19,360 (Base Fee)

Additional enrollment Information, dates and times are available on the Halton Waldorf School website: haltonwaldorf.com/admissions/tuition-information

Halton Waldorf School will opt out of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System.

4) Activities Off the Premises:

Often, the children walk through the “forest” behind the school's property. There are paths made of wood chips that we can follow. One path leads to “Stone Park” (a beautiful open field with two large boulders), and the other takes us to a bridge where we see a duck pond. The end of the path also takes us back to the school.

Permission forms for our “forest” outings are included in the summer enrollment package and must be signed before the child’s start date.

5) Holidays Observed & School Closures:

We offer a 37-week schedule. Dates can be seen on the [HWS school calendars at this link](#):

- Our program does not operate on the following days: Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas/Winter Break (2 weeks), Family Day, March Break (2 weeks), Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Victoria Day.
- The Preschool room is closed one day in October, February, and May (Professional Development Days). It is also closed for two additional days in October and February for Parent-Teacher meetings, which are important opportunities for dialogue and exchange. After the parent-teacher meetings in October, the following two days are also closed for a midterm break.
- The specific dates for each of these non-school days are posted on the website calendar at the beginning of each academic year (September), and a listing of these dates is distributed to each family at the beginning of the school year.

6) Services Offered:

Halton Waldorf School (HWS) offers half- and full-day preschool programs in a five-day block.

- The half-day program runs from 8:30 am to 12:00 pm and includes a daily morning snack.
- The full-day program runs from 8:30 am to 3:25 pm
- All children may be dropped off for the Before Care Program as early as 8 am; formal programming begins at 8:30 am.
- Full-day children receive a morning snack, a hot lunch, and a light afternoon snack after their rest time every day.

7) Administration of Medication:

Halton Waldorf School administers prescription and non-prescription drugs in the original container to children when requested by the parent in writing. Prescribed medications will be received and administered to children, always ensuring that the medication is in the original container, clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the drug, and instructions for storing and administering the drug. When administered, medication is dispensed and will be noted on the Medication Administration Log.

8) Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures:

It is expected that a fire drill will be held each month in your child's Preschool Class. Emergency Procedures are posted in each room, and all staff are trained in what to do in case of an evacuation emergency. Because our fire drills are not announced and we completely evacuate the building, proper footwear must always be worn.

If it is deemed 'unsafe to return' to the school, the evacuation site to proceed would be Halton Waldorf High School, 2254 Orchard Rd. In the unlikely event that this was to occur, your child's teacher would immediately contact parents by phone, providing you with the details of how to pick up your child. For any emergency situations involving a child with an individualized plan in place, the procedures in the child's individualized plan will be followed.

Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for, and are supervised always during an emergency.

9) Supervision Policy for Volunteers and Students:

A Halton Waldorf School employee will always supervise volunteers & students. Direct unsupervised access (when the adult is alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of the Halton Waldorf School.

NOTE: Volunteers and placement students may not be counted in the staffing ratio. Staff supervises children according to standards, which includes always meeting ratios. No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age.

10) Supervisor Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

Supervisor or designated staff:

1. Provides consistent supervision, orientation and mentorship to students or volunteers throughout the placement.
2. Ensures the following will be discussed/reviewed and implemented with students/volunteers:
 - An orientation.
 - Review all the policies and procedures in the preschool binder.
 - Students/volunteers will review the policy and attachments and annually sign off on the forms.
 - Review individual plans for children with anaphylaxis and the emergency procedures before the commencement of the placement.
 - Criminal reference checks are required and collected for all volunteers having direct contact with children. This policy does not apply to students in childcare programs by an

educational institution. Note: Criminal reference checks are required and collected by community colleges and universities before students begin a placement in childcare.

- Discusses roles and responsibilities of the childcare staff and obtains program expectations from volunteers and students.
- Ensures that the policy (Child Care Supervision for Volunteers and Students) is reviewed annually with new employees before they begin employment and annually afterwards.
- Halton Waldorf School's insurance covers students and volunteers.

11) Prohibited Practices:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller, or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is to prevent a child from hurting himself or herself, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking the exits of the childcare centre or home childcare premises to confine the child or the child in an area or room without adult supervision unless such confinement occurs during an emergency is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.
- Depriving the child of basic needs, including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.

12) Student/Volunteers Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

- All staff will monitor students and volunteers on an ongoing basis. If there are any concerns, they will be recorded and addressed to the student or volunteer.
- Students/ volunteers will read and review operator policies and procedures.
- Volunteers will provide up-to-date criminal reference checks before commencing work.
- Students will abide by college/university policies regarding student conduct, roles, and responsibilities.
- Students and volunteers will sign off on all the policies and procedures, acknowledging that they have met with the supervisor or designated staff and reviewed and understood the policies.

13) Preschool Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

This policy aims to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the preschool room teachers, licensee, and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues or concerns.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each childcare centre in which it operates (i.e., the operator).

Staff: Individuals employed by the school (e.g., preschool teacher, supervisor).

Early Childhood Coordinator: This is the individual who supports the Early Childhood Programs and Faculty. This person also led the creation of parent education.

Pedagogical Director: This individual oversees Faculty Support, Administration, and Governance in the school. This person also facilitates community life and addresses issues with the parent body.

Administrative Director: Manages the school's day-to-day operations and supports the governing bodies.

The Collaborative Circle: This is the school's decision-making body. It is comprised of the Faculty, the Pedagogical Director, the Administrator, and the Section Chairs. This group is responsible for human resources decisions, programs, policies, and procedures.

Pedagogical Meetings: All faculty members and staff meetings focus on study and pedagogical work.

Ombuds Committee: This Committee provides members of the school community with an opportunity to appeal the process that has led to a decision by the board, faculty, or administration. It comprises a faculty member, a board member, and a former parent.

Policy:

We value healthy communication in all aspects of school life, which models a civil society and learning community for our students. It is natural for concerns to arise within any school system, and we ask that such concerns be communicated productively and constructively.

We seek to create an environment that supports the growth of all community members. First and foremost, we are committed to what is best for the students and the school.

Please note that more than one group may be involved in complex issues and that resolutions of questions or concerns sometimes require patience and a basic understanding of the roles of the school's governing bodies.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Preschool teachers, Supervisors, Early Childhood Coordinators, and the Pedagogical Director and will be addressed in a timely manner.

Parents/guardians will receive an initial response to an issue or concern within 2 business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be informed throughout the resolution process.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, teachers, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g., to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct:

Our school strives to maintain positive interactions, communication, and role-modeling for children. Any party will not tolerate harassment and discrimination.

Expectations for Adult Communication

All adult interactions, large and small, should build a healthy environment for students learning and serve as role models for adult behaviour.

- Speak directly with the party involved when you have a question or concern.
- Focus on issues, not individuals. Keep an open mind. Ask questions first.
- E-mail, voice mail and a fast-paced lifestyle present new challenges to effective and civil communication. We ask that email be used to organize or confirm meetings or other practicalities. It should not be used to discuss pedagogical questions or concerns.
- Be mindful of the amount of time an individual concern may take.
- Demonstrate public support and respect for each other.
- Schedule appointments if a discussion is needed instead of dropping by or raising concerns in public settings.
- Respect that teachers must focus on the children before and at the end of the school day.
- Understand that conversations may be documented and that a third person may be present.
- Verbal, Physical, or sexual harassment will not be condoned or tolerated.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) (905) 333-4441 1445 Norjohn Court, Units 1 & 2, Burlington, ON L7L 0E6.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Pedagogical Director in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Preschool Room-Related</p> <p>E.g., schedule, sleep arrangements, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The preschool teacher directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Early Childhood Coordinator or Pedagogical Director. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange a meeting with the parent/guardian within 1-2 business days. <p>The Teacher may request that both child’s parents be present during these conversations. The teacher or parents may also request that the Pedagogical Director or another Faculty Member join the conversation to add a broader perspective. These conversations will be documented in detail.</p>
<p>School Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g.: Tuition, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Administrator or Pedagogical Director. 	<p>The Administrator or Pedagogical Director will ensure the appropriate party initiates the investigation of the issue/concern within 1-2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Reasons for delays will also be documented.</p>
<p>Teachers, Staff, Supervisor, and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly or - the Administrator and Pedagogical Director. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of teachers, staff, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Pedagogical Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>The Teacher or Pedagogical Director will provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p> <p>The Teacher, Administrator and Pedagogical Director will work with the parent(s) to establish an action plan and ensure its implementation.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Administrator or Pedagogical Director. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that put a child’s health, safety, and</p>	

	<p>well-being at risk should be reported to the Pedagogical Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	
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Escalation of Issues or Concerns:

When parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, the Pedagogical Director will take the concerns to the Collaborative Circle, which will review the situation. If need be, it might also be brought up for further input at the pedagogical meeting. Recommendations might be brought to the teachers and parents involved. Written follow-up will be provided.

If the parent(s) or the teacher do not accept these recommendations for a solution, the Collaborative Circle will review the situation and make the final determination as to a solution.

The matter could be referred to the Ombuds Committee if there is still no resolution.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers, etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts:

Ani Gereb Pedagogical Director	Aniko.gereb@haltonwaldorf.com	905.331.4387 Ext.12
Cait Mizzi Administrator & Licensee:	cait.mizzi@haltonwaldorf.com	905.331.4387 Ext.11
Sam Peris Early Childhood Coordinator	samantha.peris@haltonwaldorf.com	905.331.4387 Ext 18
Rihana M. Rutledge, RECE Preschool Supervisor	rihana.rutledge@haltonwaldorf.com	905.331.4387
Halton Children's Aid Services (CAS)	1445 Norjohn Court, Units 1 & 2, Burlington, ON L7L 0E6	905-333-4441
Public Health-Halton Region		905-825-6000. Toll free: 1-866-442-5866

Halton Regional Police Services	1151 Bronte Rd, Oakville, ON L6M	905-825-4777
Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk:	childcare_ontario@ontario.ca	1-877-510-5333
Ministry of Environment and Climate Change		1-800-565-4923
Fire Department -Burlington Fire Station #8		905-637-8207

14) Exclusion Policy-Sick Children

POLICY

Children who appear ill and/or display the outlined signs and/or symptoms will be excluded from the Halton Waldorf School Preschool program.

PROCEDURE

1. If educators/staff observe a child with the following signs or symptoms, she/he will bring the matter to the Supervisor's attention.

Signs and Symptoms	
Fever	Temperature of 38.5 degrees Celsius.
Respiratory Symptoms	Difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing
Vomiting	Two or more episodes of vomiting within the previous 24 hours
Diarrhea	An increased number of abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hours or three or more loose stools per day without obvious dietary, drug or medical cause
Eye/Nose Drainage	Thick mucus or pus draining from an eye or nose
Sore Throat	Sore throat, especially when other symptoms such as fever or visibly swollen glands in the neck are present
Skin Problems	Rashes which are undiagnosed or contagious sores
Itching	Persistent itching or scratching of the body or scalp.
Appearance/Behaviour	The child looks or acts differently: unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, or difficult to awaken.
Unusual Colour	Eyes or Skin – yellow Stool – grey or white Urine – dark, tea coloured

2. Educators inform the parents of the child's signs and/or symptoms of illness. The parents are to collect the child and arrange a medical assessment as soon as possible. Children will be asked to go home when they have a fever of 38.5 degrees Celsius or higher if they are vomiting or diarrhea. Children must be kept at home if they cannot participate in the program activities or require more care than a caregiver can provide without affecting the health and safety of other children.

Waldorf teachers are concerned with the whole child and welcome observations the parents wish to share about their child’s health, sleeping habits, stress, and home life.

3. The Supervisor/Licensee or staff member reports incidents of communicable disease and infections to Public Health. If a student contracts a contagious disease (chicken pox, strep throat, lice, etc.), please notify the school immediately so that other parents and staff can be informed.

4. The child may return when the symptoms have been diagnosed and:

- the period of exclusion outlined by the Health Department is met.
- they are no longer contagious.
- symptoms have subsided.
- the illness no longer prevents the child from participating in the program.
- In cases where there is a conflicting opinion on the contagiousness of an illness, a doctor’s note explaining the reason for the symptoms may be necessary. Any expenses incurred in obtaining this note will be at the cost of the parents.

5. Periods of Exclusion observed – as listed by **Halton Region Health Department**:

Anyone with the following diseases should remain at home and away from others:

Disease	Exclusion Period
Diarrhea (non-outbreak situation)	Until 24 hours after cessation of diarrhea
E. coli	Until two consecutive negative stool specimens are taken 24 hours
Giardia	Until the diarrhea has stopped
Head lice	Until a child has been treated for head lice
Hepatitis A	One week after the onset of jaundice
Impetigo	Until 24 hours of antibiotics
Influenza	Until five days after symptoms began
Measles	Four days after the rash appeared
Meningitis (bacterial or viral)	Until the child is recovered, the decision to be made by a physician
Mumps	Five days after the swelling began
Pertussis (whooping cough)	Until five days after antibiotics are started, or until three weeks if not treated with
Pinkeye, bacterial	Until antibiotics one full day of antibiotic treatment
Pinworms	Until 24 hours after treatment is started
Ringworm	Until treatment has started, keep the child from swimming/wading in pools, and water play until treatment is completed
Rubella (German Measles)	Until seven days after the onset of the rash

Scabies	Until 24 hours after treatment
Scarlet fever	Until 24 hours after starting treatment
Strep Throat	Until 24 hours after antibiotics are started
Tuberculosis – active	Call Public Health 905-825-6000
Vomiting	Until the vomiting stops or it is determined that a non-infectious condition causes the vomiting

The following illnesses **DO NOT** require a person to be excluded unless the child is not well enough to participate in regular activities:

- Chickenpox
- Cold sores
- Colds
- Cytomegalovirus
- Ear infections
- Fifth Disease
- Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease
- Hepatitis B
- HIV
- Pinkeye without discharge from eye
- Roseola
- Shingles
- Thrush or diaper rash

Hair Lice

The school may inspect students for head lice from time to time. If it is discovered that a student has head lice, the parents will be called to pick up their child. Students who contract lice must undergo effective medical treatment before returning to school. The school may ask for a doctor's note. Students must be free of nits and lice before returning to school. Students must report to the office before returning to class.

Note: This policy is based on the “Halton Region: Child Care Health Resource 2016”

*As required by the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Early Years Act, this policy shall be reviewed by all new staff, student teachers, and volunteers before interacting with children, annually thereafter, and any time it is modified.

15) Preschool Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Purpose:

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care. This includes what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at Halton Waldorf Preschool as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy:

- Halton Waldorf School will ensure that any child receiving childcare is only released to the child's parent/guardian, or to an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the Halton Waldorf School may release the child to.
- Halton Waldorf School will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. Halton Waldorf School will not release any children from care without supervision.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Procedures:

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - o greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - o ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the Preschool Child's Emergency Contact Information or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - o document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
 - o sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the Halton Waldorf School and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:

- o inform Reception and absence is recorded in Classroom attendance book and Reception shall commence contacting the child's parent/guardian with an email in the morning.
 - o Should they not reach any of the above to confirm the child's absence, staff/supervisor will follow up with a phone call.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that Halton Waldorf School may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
- o confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - o where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before Halton Waldorf School closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up by 4 pm staff/supervisor shall proceed with contacting parent/guardian with a phone call and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
- o Where the staff/supervisor is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff/supervisor must call again and leave a message for the parent/guardian. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff/supervisor shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the Halton Waldorf School.
 - o Where the staff/supervisor has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual picking up the child, staff/supervisor will call the emergency contact.

Where a child has not been picked up and the Halton Waldorf is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from Halton Waldorf School and has not arrived by 4:30 pm, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff member shall stay with the child, while the second staff/supervisor proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff/supervisor shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff/supervisor is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff/supervisor shall be contacting authorized individuals listed on the child's file, etc.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file and emergency contacts by 6:15 pm, the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (**Halton Children's Aid Society 905-333-4441**, 1445 Norjohn Court, Units 1 & 2, Burlington, ON L7L 0E6. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to the next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures:

Option 1: Staff/supervisor will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

Glossary:

Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the Halton Waldorf School in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the license issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the childcare and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.