

GRADES 1 - 8 HANDBOOK



2024-
2025



Halton
Waldorf
School
*Inspired Learning*SM

Updated
September
2024

Parent Handbook

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OUR MISSION

Our mission is to enrich and strengthen each child’s potential to become a knowledgeable, reflective, and compassionate citizen of the world.

We support a maturing sense of self and relationships to others and the world, and cultivate a lifelong love of learning.

Based on the insights of anthroposophy and the understanding that human beings have a body, soul, and spirit, both pedagogy and curriculum aim to develop capacities of thinking, feeling, and willing in each stage of childhood.

OUR VISION

Halton Waldorf School is a school community in which students become thoughtful, resourceful, confident young people who are prepared to navigate the world with resilience and a sense of purpose and belonging.

We provide a holistic educational program of humanities, math, sciences, world languages, music, and movement, as well as fine, practical, and performing arts, in a vibrant experiential learning environment that is connected to nature and community.

OUR VALUES

We are committed to being an inclusive community rich in diversity of spiritual, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds.

Parents, teachers, board, and administration work together to support the mission, vision, and values of the Halton Waldorf School.

We cultivate gratitude, reverence for the earth, and appreciation of beauty. We are stewards of our social and natural environment.

We strive to listen actively and to bring courage and humility to our interactions, working out of consensus wherever appropriate.

We are committed to innovation and continual improvement to best serve our students and community.

See [Vision Statement](#) in full on the school website.

This statement of the Mission, Vision, and Values of Halton Waldorf School was developed with participation from parents, administration, faculty, and board members and was approved November 3, 2016.

INTRODUCTION

History of the Halton Waldorf School

The Halton Waldorf School was founded in 1983 by a group of parents from Halton, Peel and Hamilton, with the support from the Toronto Waldorf School and the Waldorf School Association of Ontario. It was the second Waldorf School in the Greater Toronto Area.

The Halton Waldorf School opened its doors in September 1984 with a Kindergarten. The school was located in an old schoolhouse in Campbellville. A grade was added each year, and in 1992 the first Grade Eight class graduated.

In 1988, a Waldorf Kindergarten was started in Oakville, initially under the auspices of the HWS, later becoming an independent entity, the Lakeshore Waldorf Kindergarten. In 1999, the Lakeshore Waldorf Kindergarten and the Halton Waldorf School joined to become one school.

The school moved to Burlington in January 2000 and is located on a wooded piece of property, close to the urban areas and the rural lands of Halton. The purchase of the property and the building of the school were supported through fundraising events and donations.

In 1999, the Halton Waldorf School became a full member of the Association of Waldorf Schools in North America (AWSNA). In 2011 the school became a fully accredited member of AWSNA.

School Organization

The Halton Waldorf School is an independent, non-profit organization that is unique in its form of governance and administration. Waldorf schools are 'self-administered', with teaching staff involved in the administration and governance of the school. Waldorf schools model collaborative leadership and explore forms of governance that meet current and future needs of society. Our organizational form includes a cooperative structure, committee involvement, decision-making based on consensus or dialogue, and regular review. The participation of faculty and/or staff on the Board supports our ability to fulfill our educational mission and strengthens the health of our organization.

Waldorf Education and Anthroposophy

Founded in Germany in the early 20th century, Waldorf education is an independent and inclusive form of education based on the insights and teaching of renowned anthroposophist, artist and scientist Rudolf Steiner. Evolving from a profound understanding of the human spirit and human development, Waldorf education is regionally adaptive and has grown to include hundreds of schools worldwide.

The term 'Anthroposophy' comes from the Greek anthropos-sophia or 'wisdom of man'. Rudolf Steiner

used this term to describe a path of study, meditation and practiced observation that is accessible to all human beings and that can awaken them to their own inner nature and to the spiritual realities of nature and the cosmos. Anthroposophy is not taught in a Waldorf school but is a guide for the work of the adults in service of the children.

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

I. Schedule

Class Hours

Grade 1-8 8:25am - 3:25pm

Early Dismissal

Grade 1 Tuesday & Thursday @ 1pm

Grade 2 Thursday @ 1pm

The Faculty recommends that students in Grade One and Two go home on these afternoons to ease the transition from kindergarten to the grade school. An Afternoon Care program is available for students who need to stay. Please provide the Class Teacher with a note from a parent or guardian each time you need your child to stay, unless your child stays on a regular basis.

Daily Schedule – Grade 1-8

8:00am	Playground supervision begins
8:25am	Bell rings
8:30am -10:25am	Main Lesson
10:30am-11:15am	Period 1 - Snack & Recess
11:20am-12:05pm	Period 2
12:10pm-12:55pm	Period 3
1:00pm-1:45pm	Period 4 – Lunch & Recess
1:50pm-2:35pm	Period 5
2:40pm-3:25pm	Period 6
3:25pm	Dismissal
3:45pm	Playground supervision ends
3:45pm-6:00pm	Aftercare

Arrival and Drop-off

Grade 1-8 8:00 - 8:25am

- Students should arrive at school between 8:00 and 8:25am
- Students can wait at the east door of the building within sight of the supervising teacher.
- Bus students are dropped off at the circular driveway west of the school. Students walk along the path to the supervised area east of the school.

End of Day – Dismissal Procedure for Grades Students

In an effort to emphasize safety and to accommodate space constraints, we follow an efficient dismissal procedure.

Dismissal (pick-up)

- Students line-up in grades
- A teacher is at the curb to usher your child(ren) to your car

Car-Pool Line

- The car-pool line traffic will be directed by a staff member
- Parents are asked to remain in their cars and respond to staff directions

- Once your child(ren) have been ushered into your car, the staff member will assist with any buckling
- Please leave the parking lot once your child(ren) are in your car, making way for the next car

Please note:

- If you need to come into the school at dismissal time to make contact with someone, you will need to park your car in any available spots remaining, or on the street. Please first pick-up your child(ren) and keep them with you while doing your business.
- We ask that you respect that the teachers on duty are performing an important job and that you **refrain from having conversations with them.**
- Buses leave from the west end (circular driveway) of the school building at 3:35pm.

Travel To/From School Unaccompanied

Please provide a letter to the class teacher and office giving permission for your child to walk to/from school unaccompanied. Students must inform a duty teacher before leaving the school property.

Car Pooling

Please inform class teachers and the office of regular carpool arrangements. Please provide a written note if there is a change in carpool arrangements. It is not possible for the office to make last minute changes regarding carpools and social arrangements. Please make these the night before and inform your child.

Bus Service

Bus service is currently available serving Oakville and Burlington. Please contact the office for details of the routes, times & fees. The student [Code of Behavior](#) is applicable on the bus.

Delays in Pick-Up

On occasions when parents are unavoidably detained (traffic jams, bad weather) students will be brought to aftercare at 3:45pm. Fees will apply for this service.

Absences and Late Arrivals

Regular and timely attendance is essential for the academic and social life of the child. Students who arrive late miss an important part of the school day and disrupt the class. We ask parents to support their children in understanding the importance of punctuality and good attendance.

Please call the office before 8:30am if your child is going to be late or absent. Students arriving after 8:30am are required to check in at the office so we are assured of their safe arrival. Office staff will contact the parents if their child has not been noted as absent or late and has not arrived. The attendance data is part of the Ontario Student Record (OSR).

Schedule Changes

Please communicate schedule changes to the office in writing or by phone. These include picking up your child early, having someone else pick up your child, and absences.

Your child's education should not be interrupted by absence, except in cases of illness. Family vacations should be planned to coincide with the regular holiday schedule of the school. If it is necessary to take children away from school during class time, consult with the class teacher prior to the event. It is not the school's procedure to provide work for vacationing students during regular school times.

School Closure due to Inclement Weather

Due to inclement weather, we may cancel school buses or call a snow day. Our parents, students and teachers commute from a wide geographic area which will impact the decision to close the school. If the school closes parents will be notified by email and an announcement will be posted on our website homepage by 6:30 am.

II. Additional Programs & Activities

After School Care

The After School program runs each day, Monday to Friday from 3:45pm - 6:00pm. Parents may enroll their children in the program for regular or occasional attendance. Regular users register at the beginning of the school year and receive one invoice for the year. Occasional users are invoiced monthly. Please contact the office for the fee schedule.

String Program

We have begun to build a new Strings Program starting with grades 4 & 5 for the 2023-2024 school year.

Art Therapy and Therapeutic Eurythmy

We offer Art Therapy and Therapeutic Eurythmy to support students in their academic work, social skills or personal development. Requests for educational support come from the class teacher, subject teachers and parents. Parents are asked to complete a consent form and provide payment before the session begins.

Class Trips

As part of the curriculum students participate in off-campus activities. These may include, but are not restricted to skiing, community work, concerts, day trips and extended class trips. These activities are part of the academic and pedagogical work, strengthen the social life of the class and often provide an opportunity for personal growth. Attendance is not optional. Parents are required to sign an annual travel authorization form in order for the child to participate. In addition, they will be asked to sign forms for overnight trips or trips that need special considerations. Parents may be asked to assist with driving. Notice of field trips will be given by the class and/or subject teacher. Only students enrolled at HWS and in that class may attend the field trip unless previously arranged by a teacher. The student Code of Behavior applies to all field trips. Police checks are required for any adult accompanying overnight trips.

Ski Days

We are in the process of rebuilding our Ski program after the unusual circumstances of the past few years. Once the program is underway, students in Grades Five to Eight will participate in ski-days that offer instructions and practice of skiing and snow-boarding at Glen Eden. This is part of the curriculum and all students are expected to attend.

III. Health and Safety

Illness

A parent will be called if a child develops a fever or is too sick to participate in school activities. Please **do not** send your child to school if he/she is not feeling well or has an infectious condition. When returning to school after an illness, please ensure your child is well enough to participate in all school activities, including outdoor play.

Waldorf teachers are concerned with the whole child and welcome observations you wish to share about your child's health, sleeping habits, stresses and home life.

Contagious Diseases

If a student contracts a contagious disease (chicken pox, strep throat, lice, pinworms etc.) please notify the school immediately so that other parents and staff can be informed. A student must stay home until the illness is no longer contagious and they are well enough to participate in all school activities.

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. Any student who contracts lice or pinworms must be under 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.

Medication

Students taking medication during school hours must have written permission. In case of an accident, staff will not administer any medication unless written permission is on file. A consent form for prescription medication can be found at the reception desk.

Allergies

If your child suffers from life threatening allergies (anaphylaxis) let the office know immediately and inform yourself of our [Anaphylaxis Policy](#). The school will take reasonable measures to adapt the school environment to accommodate anaphylactic students. The Halton Waldorf School is a nut-free school.

Emergency & Permission Forms

A completed Emergency and Permission Form must be filed with the office each year. If a student has special dietary or health concerns, these should be stated clearly in writing on the emergency form. The information on this form is used to contact parents and/or initiate medical care in the event of an emergency. If there are changes throughout the year, please notify the office immediately with updated information.

Lost and Found

Lost clothing is located at the office. Unclaimed items are donated to charity at the end of each month. Labeling is essential to ensure against losing valuable items. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

SCHOOL POLICIES & GUIDELINES

These policies and guidelines are applicable to all students and are written with grade level students in mind.

Absence Policy & Procedures

Regular attendance is essential for a child's academic well-being and social life.

The School requires parents to support their children in understanding the importance of punctuality and good attendance. Early intervention benefits the School and the student when irregular attendance is identified.

The School is responsible for identifying and implementing strategies to achieve a desirable outcome. These strategies include oral communications, written communications, and meetings with parents/caregivers. Waldorf education is an accumulative education. When attendance is inconsistent or irregular, or if absences are prolonged, the student's advancement and continued enrollment may be in jeopardy.

Parents have a legal obligation to ensure that their children attend a public school or receive satisfactory instruction elsewhere, such as at the School. For students enrolled with the School, the School must be made aware if a student will be absent and the reason for the absence. In the case of unreported absences, the School will contact parents/caregivers and/or emergency contacts, including at work and/or emergency contact numbers provided.

Attendance Requirement

Unless the School approves a student's absence, students are required to be at School during school hours. Examples of legitimate reasons for which the School may approve an absence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- occasional short-term illness of the student;
- illness-related absences of longer duration or of a repeated nature that are supported by a doctor's letter/certificate;
- the need for the student to attend at a medical appointment;
- bereavement-related absences (e.g. absence due to a death in the student's family);
- religious holidays/observances; or
- for the purposes of observing a special event/occasion, provided that the parent/caregiver submits a written request for the student to be excused in advance and the absence is of short duration.

The School may require an explanation for an absence and/or documentation to support the absence that is reasonable in the circumstances.

If a student must leave during the school day for an appointment, parents or caregivers must notify the class teacher and the office by phone (905-331-4387) or email (reception@haltonwaldorf.com).

If a student arrives late or returns from an absence during the school day, they must sign in at the front desk before proceeding to class.

Family Vacations

When family vacations are planned, they should coincide with the School's regular holiday schedule.

When taking a student out of school is necessary, parents should consult with the class teacher before making travel arrangements. Teachers do not provide work for students who miss school for family vacation purposes.

Problematic Attendance

School teachers and administrative faculty are responsible for identifying attendance issues and implementing early strategies to enhance the potential to achieve a positive outcome. Where absenteeism creates a concern for a child's safety, the School may have a duty to report the matter to the children's aid society.

The School considers a student's attendance to be problematic when any of the following develop:

- absences are frequent and/or prolonged (without legitimate explanation);
- absences follow a pattern (without legitimate explanation);

- absences begin to affect the student’s progress;
- the School has difficulties establishing contact with the parent, caregiver, or emergency contacts regarding absences; or
- explanations for the student’s absence(s) are inadequate, concerning, or inconsistent.

The School will take steps to address attendance issues that it considers appropriate in the circumstances. Without limiting the steps that the School may take in any particular circumstances, the following thresholds and steps will generally apply:

Absenteeism Rate	Step
10% 18 school days per academic year	An official letter from the School will be sent to the parents/caregivers identifying the attendance issue and a meeting will be required between the class teacher and the parents/caregivers to address the issue.
15% 27 school days per academic year	A further meeting will be required between the class teacher and the parents/caregivers to address the attendance issue and notify the parents of potential next steps if absenteeism persists. The student may be placed on probation for up to three (3) months.
20% 36 days per academic year	A meeting will be required between the Pedagogical Director, the class teacher, and the parents/caregivers. At this stage, or if there are further absences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may be required to withdraw from the School • The Ministry of Education/Provincial School Attendance Counselor may be notified
Consecutive Unapproved Absences (School Days)	Step
3	The class teacher will telephone the parents/caregivers.
7	The class teacher will send a letter to the parents/caregivers.
14	The Pedagogical Director will send a letter to the parents/caregivers.
21	A meeting will be required between the Pedagogical Director, class teacher, and the parents/caregivers.
28	The student may be required to withdraw from the School. The Ministry of Education/Provincial School Attendance Counselor may be notified. Without a legitimate explanation for the absence, the School will make a report to the children’s aid society.

All absences will be recorded by the School and will appear on the student's report card and the Ontario Student Record (OSR).

Food, Snacks & Lunches

Please help your child start the day with a wholesome breakfast and pack nutritious snacks and lunches for your grade school child. For students in the After School program please pack an extra snack.

In order to protect students who may have an anaphylactic reaction to nuts and/or peanuts we promote a nut-free environment. Please do not send your child to school with chocolate, candy, pop or any other food with high salt or sugar content. Chewing gum and bubble gum are not permitted on school premises. We encourage litter-free lunches by the use of refillable and recyclable containers. Please ensure to send your child(ren) with enough food for the school day.

Students are required to bring a reusable water bottle to school each day.

HWS Waste Management Policies

May 2014

To support our sustainability philosophy, HWS has a mandatory Waste Reduction/Sorting and Green Procurement policies.

- A. After Zero Waste-** reusable drink & food containers and **Reuse-** school dishes, we sort our waste 4 ways
1. **GreenCart** – Compostable paper- cardboard tubes, paper cups/plates, tissue/parchment/waxed papers, facial tissue, paper towels, wooden cutlery/toothpicks, popsicle sticks & all food waste.
 2. **Recyclables** – Bottles, cans, drink boxes (no straws), juice/milk cartons, cardboard, aluminum trays/foil, plastic coffee cup lids, yogurt/pudding/clamshell containers, margarine tubs, etc.
 3. **Garbage (Landfill)** – Straws, plastic wrap, bottle caps, plastic cutlery, diapers, stickers (from fruit), granola bar wrappers, gum, yogurt tubes, juice pouches.

Since some families live outside the Region of Halton, there are sorting posters & signage showing where waste items go. Please ask if you are unsure.

B. Green Purchasing for Events:

When buying for Mayfair, Winter Fair, bake sales, etc. please consider zero waste first.

1. **School dishes are available to loan for smaller events** - Birthdays, Grandparents Festival, Graduations, Class play parties, etc. They are stored in the PA room and there is a sign out sheet. Just wash and return for the next event.
2. If single-serve is used, **buy paper/waxed cups** as they can be composted.
3. **Do not purchase "Styrofoam" or PLA cups** as they are garbage.

Prior to your event: Set up a GreenCart, blue box & small garbage can side by side.

After the event: Empty into larger bins in hall closet. When closet bins are full, take them to the storage shed & bring back empty bins to hall closet.

Waste reduction: We promote **Waste Free Lunches daily** and because we have **clean drinking water from our water filling stations** children must bring a reusable water bottles that can be refilled at school. Please do not send single use water bottles.

These policies apply to all classrooms, offices and outdoor & indoor events.

Thank you for supporting and role-modeling responsible waste management for our students.

Dress Code for Students

To support an active and engaged learning environment, and the healthy development of all our students, we ask parents to be conscious of their children's clothing. In general, we ask that the students be able to move comfortably and safely without any worry. *A good example of this would be our gym uniforms used in grades 5-8 which consist of a t-shirt and medium length shorts, combined with running shoes.* The Waldorf curriculum involves movement and activity in all classes and throughout each day as well as outdoor play in all weather (severe storms excepted) so we ask that your child is ready for school each morning.

Please ensure the following guidelines are met for each school day (including field trips and school festivals).

- Indoor and outdoor shoes are ready at school and support jumping and running (they firmly fit the whole foot and have soles not thicker than one inch).
- All clothes are free of distracting images/logos/patterns.
- Shorts and skirts are mid-thigh length. Shorts are worn under skirts to allow for comfortable cartwheeling, running and climbing.
- Shirts have shoulder straps with material at least 5 cm wide.
- Undergarments fit comfortably and are fully covered.
- All appropriate outdoor clothing needed for the day is available at school (ie: hats for each season, splash pants, snow pants, warm mittens etc.)
- Long hair is tied back (or a hair tie or hairband is available at school when needed) to keep hair out of their eyes for working
- With temperature and weather changes, all layers of clothing still meet the guidelines.
- Student is free of make-up, hair dye and nail polish (**grade 7 and 8 students are excepted**).
- Student is free of strong scents or perfume.
- Student's change of clothing bag is regularly updated for the seasons and size changes.

Whenever there is a situation where these guidelines are not met, the class teacher may provide support such as alternative/additional clothing. It is much more supportive and comfortable for the students, however, if they are well-prepared each day to prevent any need for such adjustments. Thank you for your attention to creating a shared learning environment filled with the celebrations of learning without worrying about clothing!

Homework

Homework is given in the upper grades. It is designed to be meaningful, to strengthen the student's work habits, and to develop their ability to work independently. Parents can support this aspect of their child's learning by providing a quiet space, a healthy rhythm in the home life, and by ensuring their child meets deadlines.

HWS Student Assessment

As a Waldorf school we give consideration to the individual student's quest for wholeness and knowledge through the development of the faculties of thinking, feeling and willing. Teachers create learning opportunities through imitation, explicit instruction, repetition, storytelling, deliberate observations and discovery, self-directed learning and independent working. Each teacher at HWS makes daily observations of children's interest level, skills level, work ethic, learning style and social interaction. Academic assessment is an on-going process for class and subject teachers who meet regularly to discuss student progress and share both successes and concerns. In addition to this rigorous daily observation of

HWS students' progress, we have certain checkpoints to assess the development of each child as they move through the grades. Formal assessment gradually increases as students progress through the grades.

Developmental Readiness

Kindergarten children are assessed using an anthroposophical view of the child, to determine the degree of readiness for the grade school curriculum and structure. These assessments are done collaboratively with kindergarten teachers and a Waldorf Educational Support specialist. Results go to parents and the rising grade one teacher.

Developmental Progress

During the grade two year, our Educational Support specialist meets individually with each child to assess and identify any physiological barriers to learning that might be overcome by strategies given to the class teachers, educational support, therapeutic support through Art or Eurythmy, or referrals to outside support (ie: Developmental Optometrist, Hearing Specialist, Psychological Educational Assessment, etc).

Academic Proficiency Checkpoints

All students from grade 1-8 receive an end of year report from their class teacher as well as from each subject teacher, which in narrative form gives a description of each student's progress in every subject. In the upper grades (6, 7 and 8) we also give parents a mid-term report assessing the student's progress in all lessons in the winter term before the February interviews.

In grade four the class teacher assesses each child's reading ability together with any other reading teachers of the class. During parent-teacher interviews parents are informed of discoveries, especially if it is deemed necessary that extra measures need to be taken such as additional help from home or outside tutoring.

In the early spring term of grade 5 the students are assessed to determine their readiness for the upper grades. These tests include components in reading comprehension, creative writing, spelling and numeracy. Another component involves specific observations from the class teacher.

Marking, Grading and Testing

In the early grades, teachers guide students in correcting their work as they create it. From about grade four on, regular take-home assignments are given as well as spelling tests, both of which will be marked, with corrections expected from the children. In the upper grades (6, 7, 8) expectations increase for students to stay up to date with their main lesson books, homework assignments, independent projects and book reports. These are now assessed more overtly by teachers using letter or number grading with helpful comments and reflections. Evaluations are made of main lesson books, assessing content, completion and quality. More formal testing begins and the students write tests from their main lesson blocks as well as from some subject lessons.

Probation Policy

All new students and all students entering grade one at Halton Waldorf School are subject to a probationary period of three months. This policy is included in the contract signed by the parents.

During the probation period on-going communication between the class teacher and the parents will take place to bring a shared clarity on any difficulties, either behavioural or social, and every reasonable attempt will be made to work with the student and the family.

At any time during or at the end of the probationary period the faculty decides and will inform the parents if the decision is one of acceptance. This will be followed up with a letter on school letterhead. If the decision is one of further provisional enrollment or dismissal, a meeting is scheduled with the teacher, the parents and the faculty chair and the reasons for the decision are given. The decision is followed up by a letter sent to the parents outlining the new provisional enrollment period or the reasons for dismissal.

Electronic Devices

We choose to restrict the use of electronic devices in order to maintain and promote an environment that supports the pedagogical and social goals of Waldorf education. We do not allow the use of electronic devices by the students while at the school. This includes, but is not restricted to iPods, electronic games, cameras and cell phones.

Any exception for lengthy car drives or train rides in the upper grades, or for projects, will be at the discretion of the teacher.

Television, Internet & Other Media

The Halton Waldorf School full faculty encourages parents to limit their children's exposure to electronic media (television, computer, tablets, and phones) as much as possible. Waldorf schools work with developmentally appropriate curriculum and activities to help children thrive and blossom as they grow. We believe the well-being of the child is increased when their open imaginations are guided by human interaction with caring adults and peers rather than electronic media impressions. It is the view of the Halton Waldorf School faculty that school-aged children learn and grow with greater health when access to electronic media is kept to the barest possible minimum. We appreciate every endeavor by parents to support this limited exposure to electronic media in their daily home lives.

Recording at Events

Throughout the school year, students participate in many assemblies and plays. Preparation for these events and student performances are part of the curriculum and highlight some of the work of the students. Relatives and friends are welcome to enjoy these performances as they occur, but we ask that they not be filmed or photographed without clear instruction from the teacher arranging the performance. Student performances are to be enjoyed in the moment and a video rendering changes their intention and meaning. If a performance is to be photographed, it should be arranged in advance by the teacher involved.

Money at School

We discourage the students from bringing money to school except when specifically requested to do so. The school is not responsible for money or valuables that are lost on the school premises.

Pets

Pets are not allowed in the school building. Pets on school property must be on a leash and in the care of a responsible adult.

STUDENT DRESS CODE FOR STUDENTS

At HWS we want our students to be prepared for learning in all aspects of a Waldorf curriculum which is very often through movement and activity. To support this kind of learning environment and the healthy development of all our students, we ask parents to care attentively to their children's clothing choices. In general, we ask that the students be able to move comfortably and safely without any worry. *A good example of this would be our gym uniforms used in grades 5-8 which consist of t-shirt and medium length shorts, combined with running shoes.* A Waldorf curriculum involves movement and activity in all classes and throughout each day as well as outdoor play in all weather (severe storms excepted) so we ask that your child is ready for school each morning.

Please ensure the following *guidelines* are met for each school day (including field trips and school festivals).

- Indoor and outdoor shoes are ready at school and they support jumping and running (they firmly fit the whole foot and have soles not thicker than one inch).
- All clothes are free of distracting images/logos/patterns.
- Shorts and skirts are mid-thigh length (*when standing with their arms at their sides do the fingers touch the cloth of the long-enough shorts or skirts when held against their legs*). Shorts are worn under skirts to allow for comfortable cartwheeling and climbing.
- Shirts have shoulder straps with material at least 5 cm wide.
- Undergarments are out of sight
- All appropriate outdoor clothing needed for the day is available at school (I.e. hats for each season, splash pants, snow pants, warm mittens etc.) as we play outside in all kinds of weather!
- Long hair is tied back (or a hair tie or hairband is available at school when needed) to keep hair out of their eyes for working.
- With temperature and weather changes, all layers of clothing still meet the guidelines.
- Student is free of make-up, hair dye and nail polish (***grade 7 and 8 students are excepted***).
- Student is free of strong scents or perfume.
- Student's change of clothing bag is regularly updated for the seasons and size changes.

Whenever there is a situation where these *checks* are not met, the teachers may provide support such as alternative/additional clothing when possible. It is much more supportive and comfortable for the students, however, if they are well-prepared by you each day to prevent any need of such adjustments. Thank you for your attention to creating a shared learning environment filled with the celebrations of learning without worrying about clothing!

STUDENT CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Reverence, Respect and Responsibility

Throughout all of the artistic, social, and academic work at HWS, the students are encouraged to develop reverence and respect for the world around them. The cultivation of wonder and gratitude begins in early childhood through imitation and is fostered throughout the grades. The curriculum and pedagogy of the grades continues to promote respect and reverence for the living world. Opportunities to develop and strengthen the will of each student lead to a healthy growth of responsibility and accountability. At a Waldorf school, discipline finds its place first and foremost with the class teacher who develops his/her knowledge of each student through observation and meditative practices. This connection with each student enables the teacher to find the right approach to the individual situation and builds healthy

relationships based on trust and respect. The faculty work collaboratively during weekly meetings to support all of the students in the school.

Expected Behavior & Attitudes

While allowing for differences between classes and individuals, there remains some basic school wide agreement on what is acceptable behavior. The familiarity of understood rules creates a sense of security within which the freedom of the individual student is fostered. If boundaries and form are clearly understood by all, a breathing space is created in which mutual respect and understanding can arise, and the authentic needs of the students can be met. The following rules and expectations apply to school sponsored events and class trips.

General Expectations

- Everyone's personal safety and well-being is foremost.
- Treat teachers, staff, parents, and students with courtesy and respect.
- Find peaceful ways to resolve disagreements and request the help of teachers/staff when necessary.
- Listen to a faculty/staff member who finds reason to speak with you and follow directions given.
- Verbal abuse, profanity and/or aggressive physical behavior, including physical fights, are never acceptable.
- Malicious practical jokes and teasing are not acceptable.
- No throwing of snow or ice on school property.
- No matches, lighters, fireworks or caps.
- Pen knives or other tools brought to school for class purposes must be handed to class teachers upon arrival at school.
- Remain on school property during school hours.
- Walk, do not run in the school.
- Treat school property and the belongings of others with care and respect.
- Help to keep the classrooms, washrooms and the school grounds clean and tidy.
- Use of the photocopier and phone are available to the students with permission from the class teacher.

In the Classroom

- Be at school and in the classroom on time for every lesson.
- Conduct yourself during the lessons in such a way that the teacher can teach the whole class.
- Complete class work to the best of your ability.
- Respect the rules and expectations that a teacher sets for the class.
- Keep schoolbooks in good order, up to date, and in good condition.

Playground Rules

- Students go outside every recess unless given permission to stay inside by the teacher.
- Students must be within sight of the supervising teachers and the boundaries of the play area.
- Branches must not be broken off trees.
- Students are not to climb trees.
- Toys of any sort from home are not permitted unless the class teacher gives permission.
- Play and games involving physical contact are allowed when permission has been given and the activity is supervised. These following basic rules apply:
 - Students must be the same physical size.

- They may not come from behind one another.
- They may not touch the neck area.
- Each participant must agree to the activity.
- No playing on the front lawn and street side of the school at any time.

Before and After School

- Bikes and scooters must be walked in the parking lot.
- Skateboards and rollerblades are not to be used on school property.

Discipline & Consequences

When students cross the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, the teacher involved will manage the situation and support the student and the group as a whole.

Students may lose privileges or be removed from the class for a period of time if these procedures seem to be useful in helping the student regain self-control. The main point of any disciplinary measure is to help awaken the child to the error of his/her behaviour, to help them return to appropriate behaviour and to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment for the class.

In case of on-going problems, the teacher will seek the cooperation of the child's parents and work together with them to find a satisfactory solution. The teacher may enlist the support of a mentor or another faculty member.

Suspension & Dismissal

1. Suspension:

If students are involved in behaviour that presents a consistent breaking of school rules, bullying, profound misbehaviour, and especially in cases of physical fighting or violence that result in injury to another or damage to school property, the following steps will be taken. Each step must be documented by a member of faculty involved and class teacher:

- A conversation between the student(s) and teacher is held and appropriate consequences determined by the teacher. If physical fighting or violence is involved, a warning is given and the student is informed that subsequent incidences will result in a suspension.
- A meeting will be arranged with the parents and followed up with a letter confirming the results of the conversation and consequences.
- A report is written up and given to the full faculty at the next pedagogical meeting.
- Should a second violent incident occur, parents will be immediately informed, and a meeting arranged. The student(s) will be given an at home suspension for 1-3 days. A work assignment of some kind is given and must be completed.
- A report is written up and given to the full faculty at the next meeting.

2. Dismissal:

The School reserves the right to dismiss a student where the continued attendance of that student would not be in the best interests of that student or the School. The School also reserves the right to dismiss a student where his or her behaviour seriously jeopardizes the ability of the School to guarantee the well-being and safety of its students, or interferes with learning.

2.1. Dismissal in response to violence, fighting or profound misconduct

The teacher or staff member who observed violence, fighting or profound misconduct writes a detailed report and informs the class teacher and the faculty Collaborative Circle. Parents will be informed immediately of the incident and the possible consequence of dismissal, preferably in a face to face meeting, otherwise by phone, and in writing. The decision of dismissal is made by the Pedagogical Circle. The school reserves the right to suspend the student immediately until the final decision has been made.

2.2 Dismissal because the school can't meet a student's needs

In certain circumstances the school is unable to meet student's educational needs. After a number of meetings with parents and colleagues and having tried various approaches to support the student, the class teacher will inform the Collaborative Circle who will bring the proposed decision to dismiss the student to the Pedagogical Circle.

GOVERNANCE & SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Our self-administered school depends on the participation of many different bodies to inform the overall governance of the school:

Faculty

The teachers as a group carry responsibility for the life of the school.

The *Collaborative Circle* is the decision-making body. It is comprised of faculty and staff who are willing to take on this key role in the life of the school. The Collaborative Circle oversees and coordinates the work of the focus groups It is responsible for human resource decisions, programs, policies and procedures. The Collaborative Circle meets weekly.

The *Pedagogical Meetings* of the Early Childhood, Grades and High School Faculty are a weekly meeting for all faculty members and staff to focus on study and pedagogical work. The pedagogical meeting includes curriculum study, child study and attention to daily details of classroom work in the grade school.

Board of Directors

Board members are parents and friends of the school, plus two to three faculty members and the administrator. They do not represent any "interest groups" but work for the well-being of the school as a whole. They bring a commitment to Waldorf education and often specific expertise and knowledge that is needed to address the tasks of the Board. New Board members are chosen by the Board, with Faculty input, from a list compiled by the Board Development Committee. The Board Handbook provides more information on how the Board works.

The Board of Directors is the decision-making body for the financial and legal realm. The Board has several committees that support their work.

Committees of the Board:

- Finance
- Fundraising
- Tuition Adjustment
- Site Development
- Marketing

Parent Association

The Parent Association represents all parents in the school. It seeks to promote a sense of community within the school while supporting one another and our children. The Parent Association encourages families to take an active role in our school and the education of our children.

Class Representatives form the governing committee of the Parent Association. They meet once a month and all parents are welcome to attend. A faculty member joins these meetings as advisor and provides a connection to the faculty. The class representatives work closely with the Class Teachers and take an active role in strengthening the connection between the parents of the class and in supporting the teachers.

An Executive Group comprised of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer facilitates the work of the Parent Association with input from the Class Reps. Parent Association Committees take on responsibility for certain community events. The Chair of the Parent Association is a member of the Board.

CLASS TREASURER RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved (by Leadership) Dec 1, 2014

Day-to-Day Responsibilities

1. Hand/Computer Ledger - this is where the Treasurer enters Debit/Credit entries that they are aware of e.g. Seed Money/ Invoices paid/ Parent fees etc.
2. Notes/Worksheets - Information about upcoming events/ trips e.g. Where, When, Cost, Who's Paid etc.
3. Receipts/Invoices/Communications – Keep a copy of all receipts, invoices and communications organized and documented for recourse and clarification if ever requested by teachers/parents/administration.
4. Seed Money - In Sept. each class will receive money from the school for class incidentals (amount depends on the Grade). Add this to the Treasurers Ledger and watch for the amount you receive.

September Meeting between Teacher and Class Rep & Treasurer

Discussion should take place about parent budgeting & the collection of money;

1. Trips - How Many? / Where? / Costs? / Affordable to Parents? Trips are decided by the teacher in consultation with the Parent Reps and Class Treasurer
2. Expenses - Materials / Supplies
3. How to deal with "Parent Financial Difficulties"
4. Discussion setting up parameters around how to help families in need of financial assistance
5. How will money be collected?
6. Encourage families to set up account on the **Cashless system** ([School-Day](#)) or cheque

Procedure for Recovering Class Expense

1. Give receipt/invoice to class treasurer
2. Treasurer will e-mail Finance Administrator (and cc the parent being paid) requesting a cheque for the amount owing and the reason for payment – must be followed up with invoice/receipt
3. Print a copy of the email & file in communications

Ledgering / Balancing of the Account by the Treasurer

1. All entries must be added to the Treasurers Ledger i.e. expenses, money from fundraisers etc.

2. Once a month (end of month) the Finance Administrator will email a ledger print out and a cashless print out for the treasurer to balance/reconcile it to the Treasurers ledger. If there are any questions or discrepancies, they should speak to the Finance Administrator to clarify and balance the account.
3. Follow up with a friendly e-mail reminder to parents who have not paid yet
4. Fundraisers: The treasurer is responsible for transferring 40% of the profits to the Parent Association. An email must be sent to the Finance Administrator and copied to the PA Chair and the PA Treasurer requesting a transfer to the PA Account with the amount and which fundraiser it pertains to.

Administrative Staff

The administrative staff includes the Administrative Director, Pedagogical Director, Finance Administrator, Admissions Manager, Advancement and Communications Officer, Human Resources and Operations Manager, Office Manager and Front Desk Coordinator. Our administrative staff manages the day-to day operations of the school and supports the governing bodies.

Collaborative Circle

The Collaborative Circle consists of the Faculty Chair, a Grades school faculty member, the EC Pedagogical Chair, and the Administrator. This group meets weekly to identify key issues, set agendas for the various meetings, direct questions or concerns to the appropriate governing body, and makes decisions as mandated.

COMMUNICATION

Calendar

The school calendar provides an overview of the year, supplemented by regular updates through the school newsletter and class emails. The calendar includes professional development days, holidays, meetings dates for the board and PA, class parent evenings, and class plays.

Parent Mailing

Mail is sent home regularly with the oldest child in the family. The school newsletter regularly provides information on upcoming events.

Annual General Meeting

These meetings are designed to familiarize parents with our school and the education we provide. We require attendance of at least one parent at each meeting. There are at least two evening meetings per year. They provide an opportunity for the Faculty and the Board to address financial, pedagogical and organizational questions.

Parent Evenings

There are three to four annual parent evenings for each class. The teacher offers insights into child development and the class curriculum and often includes an artistic activity. Class meetings are an opportunity to discuss specific pedagogical questions as well as practical issues, e.g. class trips or support to the class. We request attendance of at least one parent and strongly recommend attendance of both parents at all class meetings.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Individual parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year, at the end of October and in mid-February. These interviews are important for maintaining open communication about each child's progress and development. Parents are expected to attend and meet with the class teachers and subject teachers. Additional parent-teacher meetings can be requested by the teacher or parent if needed.

Reports

A written report on the grade students' progress is provided at the completion of each academic year. This report includes a detailed description of the student's progress by the class teacher and written comments from each of the specialty teachers. A mid-term progress report is sent home in February for the students in Grades Six to Eight.

Letter and number grades are gradually introduced in Grades Six, Seven and Eight and are used to indicate achievement on main lesson work and assigned projects.

The school maintains an Ontario Student Record (OSR) for each student according to the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and Training.

Communication with Teachers

At the beginning of the school year the teacher will inform parents of when and where they can be reached. In addition to the class meetings held three times per year, teachers provide written communications via letter or e-mail to inform parents of what is happening in the classroom.

Any concerns that require longer conversations should be addressed in pre-arranged meetings. Please refrain from lengthy conversations before and after school or when a teacher is on recess duty.

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 in a productive and constructive manner.

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

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

Parent/Teacher Concerns:

Procedure for Concerns about a Specific Student or Class

It is hoped that most questions and concerns will be resolved in the first step, the parent-teacher meeting.

1. If a parent or teacher has a question or concern, they can address these in a phone call or a meeting. Parents contact their child's class teacher directly. If the concern relates to a subject class, parents contact the subject teacher directly. The class teacher, the subject teacher or the parents may ask for a meeting. The teacher may request that both of the child's parents be present during these conversations.

2. If the concern cannot be resolved with the individual teacher, parents may bring their concern to the Section Chair (Early Childhood, Grades, or High School). The Section Chair will work with the parents and any teacher(s) involved to help facilitate a resolution.
3. Should concerns still remain unresolved, the concern may be brought by the teacher or the parents to the Pedagogical Director. The Pedagogical Director will work with all parties to come to a resolution. The Pedagogical Director or the Section Chair may bring the concern to the Collaborative Circle or the Pedagogical Meeting for their section.
4. Steps taken and discussions had will be documented. Written follow-up will be provided. An additional faculty member may be asked to sit in on meetings and take notes.
5. Recommendations will be brought to the teacher and parents involved. Written follow-up will be provided.
6. If these recommendations for a solution are not accepted by the parent(s) or the teacher, the Collaborative Circle will review the situation and make the final determination as to a solution.

Parent/School Concerns:

Procedures for Concerns About the School as a Whole

The following procedure is applicable when a parent has a concern about the school as a whole, usually regarding non-pedagogical matters. It is hoped that most issues concerning the whole school will be resolved by meeting with the Administrative Director or Faculty Chair.

1. The first step a parent should take is to initiate a meeting with the Administrative Director or Pedagogical Director to share concerns. The Administrative Director or Pedagogical Director will listen and gain clarity about the nature of concern and will work with the parent(s) to establish an action plan.
2. After the meeting, if either the parent, the Pedagogical Director, or Administrative Director, does not feel that the concern has been resolved, the parent or the Administrative or Pedagogical Director may request that another staff member or a member of the Board join a second meeting to add a broader perspective.
3. If either the parent or the governance representative (Pedagogical Director, Administrative Director, Board member) do not feel that the concern has been resolved, they agree that the governance representative will write a summary of the concerns and solutions that were reviewed.
4. The written summary will be reviewed by the Board of Directors and the Collaborative Circle who will review the situation and make the final determination as to a solution.

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, voicemail and a fast-paced lifestyle present new challenges to effective and civil communication. We ask that email be used for organizing or confirming 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 need to focus on the children before and at the end of the day and during recess duty.
- 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.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Tuition

Each year, the Finance Committee recommends a tuition level based on the needs of the coming year and the prospective enrolment. The Board of Directors sets the final figures and notifies current and new families of the new tuition fee, by the end of January. The school has an annual, bi-annual and monthly payment plan, with a slight reduction incorporated for the annual payment, if paid by June 1st.

Overdue payments are subject to a monthly interest charge of 1% on the outstanding balance.

If amounts are not paid after 60 days from the original date due, the student will not be allowed to attend school. Re-enrolment will be at the sole discretion of the school after payment in full has been made or an alternative payment plan has been arranged and honored by the parent.

In addition to tuition, there is a supply fee to cover incidental costs.

Tuition Adjustment

Families unable to afford full tuition may apply for tuition adjustment. Further information regarding tuition adjustment and application forms is available in the office.

Tuition adjustment will be decided by the Tuition Adjustment Committee, after review of the application form and a personal interview. Families who benefit from the tuition adjustment program are required to support the school, to the best of their abilities, beyond the usual involvement in community activities to either earn or save money for the operating budget.

Tuition adjustment is granted on a yearly basis and families need to re-apply in a timely manner.

All information is kept confidential.

Payments & Accounts Receivable Policy

Approved by Board – Feb 25-13

This policy is designed to ensure that the financial health of the school is maintained while working to meet the unexpected situations that may arise from time to time with families. It outlines the responsibilities that exist for families in the payment of their tuition and all other fees they may be responsible for at the school and the requirements if a payment is missed or their account becomes delinquent. This policy is overseen by the Board of Directors and reviewed annually.

Once a contract is signed it becomes a binding contract between the school and the family.

Expectations of HWS contract holders:

1. To honour the terms of their contract.
2. To notify the Finance Administrator of any changes to banking information. All direct-debit payments are submitted by electronic file during the last week of the previous month; therefore, we need to know immediately when changes occur. Each family can make one change per year to their information. After which a \$20 administration fee will be charged for additional changes to payment information.
3. To pay all outstanding fees prior to the start of any subsequent school year, including but not limited to tuition fees.
4. To pay therapy invoices, trip fees, aftercare charges and all other costs incurred at HWS **on receipt of the invoice.**
5. To bring to the attention of the Finance Administrator any concerns about their account in a timely manner.

In all cases, contract holders can expect that this policy will be applied to their circumstances with respect and fairness.

Missed/Returned Payments

If a tuition payment is missed or returned, we expect the contract holder to replace the payment within 15 days. A \$25 fee will be charged on all NSF/Returned payments.

Delinquent Accounts

An account will be deemed delinquent if an invoice is more than 90 days overdue. At this time a 1% per month interest charge (12% per annum) will be charged. Once an account is considered delinquent, the contract holder will be required to submit an Alternative Payment Plan. This plan may be established to cover the missed payments or may create a new payment schedule for the outstanding amount plus any remaining balance in the contract. Each plan requires approval by the Finance Office. Once an Alternative Payment Plan is established, it replaces the payment schedule in the original contract and becomes a new binding agreement between the school and the contract holder. If there has been no Alternative Payment Plan established after 90 days, immediate student withdrawal will be required.

Fundraising

As a non-profit organization and registered charity, a thriving community is vital to the health of our school. Gifts of all sizes enable us to grow our programs, reinforce our infrastructure, enhance our faculty, and reaffirm our commitment to build socioeconomic diversity. We believe that Waldorf education has a ripple effect – educating confident, compassionate students helps to strengthen families and create empathetic communities.

Annual Fund

Our Annual Fund helps bridge the gap between tuition revenue and the increasing costs of operating our school. This year we have set a goal of \$50,000 for our Annual Fund which will be dedicated to supporting our:

- Program Enhancements
- Infrastructure
- Faculty Development
- Teacher Training
- Tuition Assistance Program

100% Participation

We strive to have 100% family participation in our fundraising efforts. Regardless of the size of the donation, your contribution demonstrates your support of our core values and mission. Every gift, no matter the amount, is received with gratitude and appreciation. With your help, we can keep our school thriving. To learn more about how you can contribute to Halton Waldorf School, please [click here](#).

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY LIFE

Community Events

Parents play an important role in supporting the social fabric of our school. There are many opportunities throughout the year to gather in small groups, with individual classes, and with the entire school community to learn and deepen our understanding of Waldorf education and support the education of our children. Please refer to the [school calendar](#) for these events.

Participating in other aspects of the school's life, such as committees, class events, performances, and meetings, offers further opportunities to strengthen the community, your child's educational journey and meet your individual interests.

Parent Volunteers

Due to the independent, self-administered structure of our school, faculty and parents share the tasks and joys that comprise the on-going function of our school. Volunteers are an essential part of life at the Halton Waldorf School. We invite every family to consider how they might offer their gift of time and expertise to the school. It is a personally rewarding experience and allows everyone the opportunity to participate in the children's education and solidify our connections as a community. Your contribution as a volunteer is as vital to the school's well-being as tuition. For further information and volunteer opportunities please contact your class rep or the administrator. **Volunteers for overnight trips require a Criminal Record Check that includes a Vulnerable Sector Screening on file.**

School Committees

Important work would not take place without the many committees and the hard-working parents and friends of the school who contribute and take responsibility for aspects of the school's life. Our school as an organization and the education of our children is strengthened by the deeds of each individual making a contribution to the community.

If you are interested in serving on one or more of the committees, please speak to one of the chairs, or to our Administrative Director.

Festivals

The celebration of seasonal festivals forms an integral part of the Waldorf school year. Their purpose is to provide nourishment for each individual as well as to bring the community together. While sometimes similar in form to traditional festivals, it is the intention of festivals in a Waldorf school to contribute to the inner development of the children, transcending specific denominations or traditional religion. The festivals also offer an opportunity for the children to share a small piece of their classroom work. Students may be asked to wear special clothing for an event.

Most all-school festivals are celebrated by the grade school community.

In addition to all-school festivals, a class may celebrate festivals and events as they are related to the curriculum or to a particular tradition that is important for the teacher and/or a family of the class. If you wish to share some of your cultural or religious traditions with the class of your child, please contact the class teacher.

Parents are welcome to attend festivals. Please consider that space in the community room at all-school assemblies is limited. If you wish to join, we request that you arrive on time and not leave during the assemblies so as not to interrupt the mood created by students and teachers.

Young children are welcome, but please keep them seated and supervised.

Opening Day Assembly

We welcome the students back to school and honor the new Grade One students as they cross the threshold from kindergarten into Grade school. The children hear a story from the Grade One teacher and each Grade One student is welcomed by a Grade Eight student with a flower.

Michaelmas

Celebrated on or near September 29 Michaelmas takes place near the autumnal equinox when daylight grows shorter. The festival is named for St. Michael, known as the protector of humanity, who inspires universal human qualities of courage, initiative and steadfastness. The grades students engage in a St. Michael Play, community activities and co-operative games. In nursery and kindergarten, the emphasis is on celebrating the harvest and appreciating the gifts of the Earth.

Remembrance Day

During our assembly on November 11 we remember those that have contributed to a peaceful world and remind us of possibilities for hope and change.

Martinmas

This festival is celebrated on or near November 11 and recognizes the beginning of deep darkness and winter. St. Martin was a Roman soldier who sought to share his light with others. The children make lanterns as an effort to bring their inner light to this darkest time ahead. Kindergarten and Grade One and Two students celebrate this festival with a lantern walk and Grade Two offers a play about St. Martin.

Advent

Advent is a festival of preparation, quiet waiting and listening for what is to come. Throughout Advent there are four assemblies. During the first week, the mineral kingdom is the focus of our gratitude and the first candle is lit on the Advent wreath. The second week is the celebration of the plant kingdom, the realm of life and growth. The third candle is lit in recognition of the animal kingdom, finally the fourth candle is lit in recognition of the human spirit.

A special celebration of Advent in the early childhood is the Advent Spiral, presenting a visual picture of the inner journey of our soul. As each child journeys inward along the advent spiral, made out of green boughs, towards a central flame, so each of us is walking towards an inner light, turning within, to make it our own and bring it into the world.

Chanukah

This Jewish festival of light coincides with one of the Advent assemblies we will honour it by lighting the menorah and telling a story from the Jewish traditions.

Santa Lucia

Santa Lucia is a Swedish festival. It is sometimes celebrated at HWS, with the intention to bring light at the time of darkness.

Parent Festival

Students from all classes present seasonal and classroom work for the parents on stage.

New Year Assembly – Three Kings Day

When returning in the New Year we celebrate our coming together as a community and look forward to all that the New Year brings. We remember the Three Kings, or Three Wise Men, who overcame many hurdles to find their path and direction in life.

Easter Festival

This is celebrated when school resumes after Easter Monday. We share in the joy of spring, of rebirth and transformation.

Rose Ceremony

This ceremony honours the graduating students of Grade Eight. The Grade One students, who were welcomed by the Grade Eight students at the beginning of the year, now say farewell to them.

Last Day of School

On the last day of school students and faculty gather one last time to share some highlights of the classroom work and say goodbye to each other for the summer.

Sharing Assemblies

These assemblies are an opportunity for the grades to share aspects of their classroom work with each other. They happen several times throughout the school year.

Class Plays

Every class performs a play that is connected to the curriculum and reflects the social and developmental needs of the students.

Birthday Celebrations

Throughout the year, there are special celebrations and traditions in each grade and kindergarten class to honor a child's birthday. You may be asked to provide a special treat for your child to share with the class or join in the celebration.

Community Celebrations

In addition to the festivals that arise out of pedagogical work, there are some days when we celebrate together as a school community, inviting our neighbours and the wider community. The fairs are also fundraising events for the school.

Welcome Picnic

In September, the Welcome Picnic offers new and current families an opportunity to get to know each other, to share food and have fun.

Winter Fair

An event organized by the Parent Association for students, families and friends where you can enjoy activities for the children, vendors, good food, and magically transformed classrooms.

May Fair

A day to celebrate the arrival of Spring with good food, activities, vendors and a traditional maypole dance.

Halton Waldorf School Affiliations

The Halton Waldorf School is part of a national and international community of Waldorf schools and institutes.

It is a full member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America ([AWSNA](#)). The Association of Waldorf Schools of North America provides support to over 200 Waldorf schools and institutes in Canada, the US and Mexico. Members of the Association are committed to on-going learning and undergo a regular process of self-study and peer-review, such as accreditation.

Related Organizations and Initiatives

Anthroposophical Society (or Branch)
Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
Camphill, Angus, Ontario
Edgehill Country School
Hesperus Senior Citizens' Residence
The Everlasting Tree School – Waldorf Initiative, Six Nations Grand River Reserve
The Village Market - TWS
Waldorf Bookstore - RSC
Westdale Children's School

Neighbouring Waldorf Schools and Institutes

Waldorf Academy, Toronto
London Waldorf School, London
Rudolf Steiner Centre, Richmond Hill
Toronto Waldorf School, Richmond Hill
Trillium Waldorf School, Guelph

Policies and Forms available in the Office

Application for Tuition Adjustment
Support of Children's Aid Society Policy

Learning more about Waldorf Education

Our school and faculty try to provide various ways for interested parents and friends to learn about the Waldorf school curriculum and the thinking that lies behind it. These opportunities are valuable for families new to or interested in Waldorf education as well as for current families who want to gain further insights into the developmental stages of their growing children and how the Waldorf curriculum meets their

needs.

Open Houses are an excellent opportunity to look at the classroom work of students in all classes and to speak with class teachers, kindergarten teachers and subject teachers.

School Tours are offered the first Tuesday of every month. Participants visit classes during Main Lesson and get a sense for classroom work 'in action'. They are followed by an opportunity to talk further about what was observed or any other questions.

Lectures and Workshops are offered throughout the year by HWS faculty or experienced teachers from the wider Waldorf school community.

Parent Evenings, organized by the class teacher, provide a more in-depth look at the curriculum, and the approach taken during that year to meet the needs of the developmental stages of the children.

A *Parent Lending Library* in the main lobby is available to all parents at the school. Please contact the office if you wish to borrow books.

HALTON WALDORF ANAPHYLAXIS PLAN 2012

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can lead to rapid death if left untreated. The Halton Waldorf School's allergy plan has three components:

- Information and awareness
- Avoidance
- Emergency Response

1. INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

Board

The Board of Directors will be made aware of the legal responsibilities towards the children with life-threatening allergies and the Halton Waldorf School's anaphylaxis plan will be reviewed annually by the Board.

Faculty

- Every faculty member and staff member in the school:
 - will be educated about the identification of children with life-threatening allergies and the need for absolute avoidance of the allergen
 - will be educated about the strategies required to minimize risk in the school environment;
 - will be educated to recognize the symptoms of exposure to the allergen and the absolute necessity of responding immediately to these symptoms;
 - will be educated about the action required in the event of an anaphylactic emergency.
- Volunteers, bus drivers and other people in contact with the anaphylactic child will be educated as outlined above.
- Faculty will ensure that students with anaphylactic allergies will be brought to the attention of the full faculty circle and to the classroom parents to increase the awareness of the student's needs

and to increase the willingness to support the student. All faculty and classroom parents are to be informed prior to a child with an anaphylactic allergy visiting the class as part of the application procedure.

Administration

- Administration will create and maintain a file of consent forms, waivers, physician's instructions and alert sheets for each child with a life-threatening allergy. Alert sheets will be posted in the child's classroom and in key locations throughout the school.
- Administration will provide the school's insurance broker with the consent forms, waivers and alert sheets for each anaphylactic child.
- Administration will develop and maintain the emergency plan in consultation with parents, teachers, family physicians and public health nurses.
- Administration will coordinate the strategies (eg: letters to parents, newsletter articles, etc.) to promote safety and compliance with the anaphylactic policy. If students continue to bring allergens into the classrooms, administration will follow up by reminding students and families of the dangers involved for the anaphylactic student. Administration will communicate the need for cooperation with the policy and will make reasonable efforts to ensure adherence to the policy.
- Administration will have responsibility for ensuring annual in-service training of faculty is completed, including education about the allergens hidden in non-food materials, education about the danger of cross-contamination and education about the need for schoolyard cleanliness.
- Administration will provide substitute teachers, parent volunteers and other people with occasional contact with a procedure so they are prepared to avoid the allergen and to deal with an anaphylactic emergency should it arise.
- Administration will monitor the procedure for use of the bus by an anaphylactic child.

Bus Driver

Each bus driver with an anaphylactic child registered on their bus route:

- will be educated about the identification of children with life-threatening allergies and the need for absolute avoidance of the allergen
- will be educated about the strategies required to minimize risk in the environment;
- will be educated to recognize the symptoms of exposure to the allergen and the absolute necessity of responding immediately to these symptoms;
- will be educated about the action required in the event of an anaphylactic emergency
- will carry a copy of the emergency alert form on the school bus, displayed in a prominent location
- inform the administrative staff and the parents when a trained bus driver is unavailable
- ensure that an EpiPen is stored in a safe and accessible place on the bus or that the child has an EpiPen while on the bus.
- Have a working cell phone available for use at all times

Anaphylactic child's parents

- The parents will inform the school of their child's allergy prior to the beginning of each school year and upon identification of any change in the condition of the child.
- It is the parent's choice to provide a MedicAlert bracelet for their child
- The parents will provide the school with current medical instructions from the child's physician.

- The parents will provide the school with up-to-date EpiPens. It is the responsibility of the parents to confirm expiry dates on the EpiPens and ensure that sufficient EpiPens are in the school for use by their child.
- The parents will provide their child with safe foods, containers and implements.
- The parents will teach their child to recognize the first symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction; to know where medication is kept and can get it; to communicate clearly when he or she feels a reaction starting; to carry his/her own EpiPen in a fanny pack; not to share food; the importance of handwashing.
- The parents will complete and sign the annual consent forms, waivers and alert sheet for their child, as well as provide the school with the physician's instructions.
- The parents will provide the school with additional support as needed.
- Parents will keep their contact information up to date and be reachable by phone.

Parents and children

- Information, identification and strategies will be shared with all parents and children (as appropriate), especially those in classes with a child with a life-threatening allergy.
- Educational articles will be published and talks will be held, including suggestions for alternate foods for lunches and information about food labeling.
- Letters asking for cooperation will be sent to all parents and faculty.

2. AVOIDANCE

In the School

The school will take reasonable measures to adapt the school environment to accommodate anaphylactic students. The school cannot assume responsibility for providing a completely allergen-free environment.

- The school will provide allergen-safe areas, using a cooperative approach with students and parents.
- Fund-raising activities that involve selling products from outside sources (e.g. muffin mixes, cookies) should avoid products containing allergens.
- Schoolyard cleanliness contributes to the safety of children with life-threatening allergies. Additional yard clean-ups may be advisable after Halloween, Easter or special events.
- Anaphylactic children should not be involved in garbage disposal, yard clean-ups or other activities that could bring them into contact with food wrappers, containers or debris.

In the classrooms in which there is a child with an anaphylactic allergy, the following extra steps need to be taken.

- Safe lunchroom and eating area procedures will be established, including cleaning and hand-washing procedures.
- Reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that anaphylactic students eat only food prepared at home or approved for consumption.
- The anaphylactic student will not be allowed to share food, utensils and containers.
- Lunchtime supervision of the anaphylactic child will be provided.
- The anaphylactic child will take precautions such as placing food on a napkin or waxed paper rather than the table or desk, will take one item at a time out of the lunch bag to prevent other children

from touching the food and packing up and leaving the lunch with the teacher if the child needs to leave the room during lunchtime.

- Education about the allergens hidden in non-food materials will be provided (e.g. play materials, play dough, soap, counting aids, science projects, special seasonal activities such as gardening).
- Education about the danger of cross-contamination through shared utensils, papers, towels etc. will be provided. Peanut butter is an especially difficult substance to clean completely, and cross-contamination can easily occur. Special emphasis will be placed on providing education about peanut butter, and everyone will be asked to take special precautionary measures to avoid cross-contamination of this substance (e.g. avoid serving it for breakfast on school mornings.)
- Anaphylactic children should not share musical instruments that go in their mouth.
- Food is often stored in desks. Allowing the anaphylactic child to keep the same desk all year may help prevent accidental contamination.

Procedures for holidays and special celebrations are:

- For special events, the parent of the anaphylactic child will provide safe food for the child. The anaphylactic child will be limited to these foods brought from his or her own home.
- If food is to come into the classroom or school from school homes, remind parents of the anaphylactic child's allergens and insist on ingredient lists.
- Suggest that the parents of the anaphylactic child provide the school with a supply of non-perishable treats for those times when other parents send food into the school.
- Focus on activities rather than exclusively on food for special occasions.

Procedures for field trips and extra-curricular are:

- Include a separate "serious medical conditions" section as part of the school's registration/permission forms for all field trips in which the details of the anaphylactic student's allergens, symptoms, and treatment can be recorded. A copy of this information should be available on site at any time during the field trip.
- Require all supervisors, both staff and parents, to be aware of the identity of the anaphylactic child, the allergens, symptoms, and treatment.
- Ensure that a supervisor with anaphylactic training and training in the use of the EpiPen is assigned responsibility for the anaphylactic child.
- Ensure access to a telephone or cell phone in case of emergency.
- Require the parent of the anaphylactic child to provide two to three EpiPens to be administered every 10 to 20 minutes on route to the nearest hospital in the event that symptoms persist or reoccur.
- If the risk factors are too great to control, the anaphylactic child may be unable to participate in the field trip. Parents should be involved in this decision.

3. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Recognition

An anaphylactic reaction can begin within seconds of exposure or after several hours. Any combination of the following symptoms may signal the onset of a reaction.

- Hives *
- Itching (on any part of the body)

- Swelling (of any body parts, especially eyes, lips, face, tongue)
- Red watery eyes
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach cramps
- Change of voice
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Throat tightness or closing
- Difficulty swallowing
- Difficult breathing
- Sense of doom
- Dizziness
- Fainting or loss of consciousness
- Change of colour

*Hives may be entirely absent, especially in severe or near fatal cases of anaphylaxis.

Symptoms do not always occur in the same order, even in the same individuals. Time from onset of first symptoms to death can be as little as a few minutes if reaction is not treated.

Anaphylactic children usually know when a reaction is taking place. School personnel should be encouraged to listen to the child. If he or she complains of any symptoms that could signal the onset of a reaction, staff should not hesitate to implement an emergency response. There is no danger in reacting too quickly and grave danger in reacting too slowly.

Emergency Response Steps

1. Administer EpiPen® immediately if the child displays any of the symptoms. The EpiPen® buys you 15 minutes to seek medical attention. The location of the EpiPen is noted on the Anaphylaxis Alert sheet.
2. Pull off grey safety cap.
3. Grip with a tight fist and jab/press firmly black tip into outer thigh. Keep pressed against thigh and hold for a count of 10. Do not place thumb at end of EpiPen®. *
4. Keep the child calm.
5. Call 911.
6. Advise dispatcher that the child is having an anaphylactic reaction. Give location of the school, phone number and closest entrance to the school.
7. Call the child's parents.
8. Treat with second dose of epinephrine if necessary in 10 to 15 minutes if an ambulance has not arrived and the symptoms have reappeared.
9. Have the child transported to the hospital immediately even if symptoms subside. Bring anaphylaxis alert sheet, parental consent form and health information card.
10. Remain in Emergency Room for 4 to 6 hours for observation. A staff member remains with the child until the child's parent arrives.

***Note:** Used EpiPen® needs to be discarded in a needle-proof container to minimize any chance of injury.

Lockdown Procedure

Policy Statement

The Halton Waldorf School believes that the safety of students and staff in our school is vital and takes every precaution to ensure safety for all. The school needs to be secured in an appropriate manner when dealing with a perceived or actual threat to the school community.

Introduction

A lockdown of the school will be implemented anytime students need to be contained and protected inside school buildings. Examples of calling a lockdown:

- A chemical spill, which could put students and staff at risk of toxic inhalation, if allowed outside
- A person on the school property who could pose the risk of a hostage situation
- An armed, suspicious or hostile intruder inside the building

In all these cases police would request a lockdown of the school to prevent putting students and staff in danger.

When the lockdown signal is given, staff will go to their classroom doors, listening, and then looking for a sign of imminent danger. If it is safe to do so they will take any students not already in a classroom, then close and lock the door and turn off the lights.

General Emergency Lockdown Procedures

Communications

1. In the event of a critical incident requiring Lockdown, the person witnessing the incident must try to notify the school office so that the alarm can be raised. The office staff member receiving the incident will notify the Faculty Chair, the Administrative Director or the person-in-charge.
2. The person-in-charge at the time of the incident will determine the need for a Lockdown and sound the appropriate alarm.
3. An emergency Lockdown will be announced by intercom or other voice communication. The announcement will state the following:
 - This is a LOCKDOWN
 - This is not a Fire Drill
 - Everyone is to stay in their room and keep calm and quiet
4. The person in charge or delegated person will immediately call the Police and provide as much information as possible.
5. Fire evacuation alarms are not to be sounded.

Lockdown Procedure

1. If the 'Lockdown Alarm' is sounded before school, during morning or lunch recess time students are to move directly to their classroom as long as it is safe to do so.
 - a. Teaching staff are to stay in, or move to, their classrooms immediately.

- b. Support staff are to move promptly to the playground and direct students to their classrooms immediately.
 - c. The office staff is to lock all perimeter doors, if it is safe to do so.
 - d. The person in charge should stay in, or move to, the office area to facilitate the communication process.
2. If outside, students should proceed to the nearest classroom inside the main school through the east doors or the nearest entrance.
3. Faculty should be mindful that students from other classrooms may seek sanctuary in their classroom.
4. As soon as possible lock the classroom and cover the window.
5. Close and lock windows.
6. Turn off lights.
7. Staff and students should stay away from the windows and doors and remain low to the ground. A barrier should be set up with the desks if needed.
8. Everyone is to remain quiet.
9. Students should not be allowed to use a classroom telephone (if there is one available). It must be kept free for communication with the office
10. Staff with mobile phones should ensure they are turned on silent and should check them frequently for messages.
11. No one is to answer the door under any circumstances.
12. A head count should be taken of each individual in the room. When practical communicate this to the office naming any extra students or staff that may be in your room.
13. Should the fire alarm sound, do not evacuate the building unless:
 - a. you have firsthand knowledge that there is a fire in the building
 - b. you have been advised by police or the person in charge to evacuate the building
14. Students and staff should stay where they are until official notification is provided by the person in charge or an identified police officer that the lockdown is over.

During a lockdown parents should know:

1. Remain calm as school and local authorities manage the situation.
2. Where the lockdown lasts an extended period of time or extends beyond normal school hours, the person in charge, or designated person should notify parents via local media and with the assistance of the local police.
3. In conjunction with local police, the person in charge or designated person should arrange for parents to pick up students from school at a designated safe area.
4. Students and parents are reminded that during an emergency situation, cellular sites may be overwhelmed due to a high volume of calls. It is critical that text messaging and cell phone use be kept to a minimum so that emergency services have priority to assist the students and staff on the site.

Chaperone Policy & Guidelines for School Field Trips

This document was created with immense gratitude for all the parents and caregivers at HWS. Your time, generosity and dedication are an essential part of making the children's education, and our school community, so wonderful.

Field trips are an integral part of the Waldorf pedagogy and class curriculums. They provide meaningful, hands-on experiences for the students that enrich their lessons and lives. Like all things in Waldorf education, field trips are deeply connected to child development and are consciously designed to meet the children where they are and to help them thrive as they grow.

Two important things to note:

- if you are driving children who are not your own for a school trip, you must have an up-to-date **Driver Consent Form** filled out and with the office.
- if you are coming on an overnight trip, please note that you must have an up-to-date **Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC)** on-file at the school from your local police branch. VSC's are obtained through an online application process which takes up to 3 weeks to receive. VSC's must be renewed every two (2) years. Chaperones without an up-to-date VSC on file will not be permitted to attend an overnight field trip.

Role of Parent Chaperone

The main role of a parent chaperone on a field trip is to support the teachers and students. Parents are encouraged to embody the same love and warmth for the children that they do in any circumstance, however, on field trips, it is important to allow students to predominantly focus on each other, their learning, and their surroundings.

The specific support and engagement a chaperone brings will look different depending on the age of the students you are with. Spending time with the students (especially on overnight trips) is one of the natural bonuses of being in this supportive role. However, the main objective of field trips is to give children the space to play, to test boundaries in safe ways, and to stretch their independence.

Field trips are designed to be an immersive class experience. It is important that chaperones take a gentle step back from their primary role as parent of an individual student to support the class as a whole. As such, chaperones may be placed with a group of children that does not include their own. It is also important to be aware that, in the context of a school trip, adults should never be alone with a child away from the group unless it is necessary, and only when other adults know the circumstances. This protects both the adult and the child.

In addition to supporting the students, another essential part of being a chaperone is to support the class teacher(s). Chaperones are asked to relieve the class teacher(s) for moments of rest when needed, and to help ensure that all children are always supervised.

Communications

All communications about field trips (questions, details, etc.) must go through the class teacher(s). This includes the reporting of incidents that you may encounter on a trip.

If you help a student with a challenge, such as a mild injury or a social difficulty, please let the teacher know as soon as possible. This ensures that injuries and challenges are communicated back to a child's parent(s) in an effective and timely manner. It is important to address any concerns as they arise. The class teacher will know how to move forward with the issue in alignment with the child's needs and with HWS policies and procedures.

If you do not feel satisfied with the way a teacher has handled an incident, please reach out to the faculty chair, the pedagogical director, or the administrative director as soon as possible.

Photos & Videos

Chaperoning parents are free to take photos and videos while on a field trip, assuming that it is done discretely and does not take away from the experience of the student(s), teacher, guides, or other chaperones. Sharing pictures or videos taken on a field trip is encouraged and appreciated. Teachers kindly ask that photos and videos are not shared with the class parents until the field trip has concluded. Please note that sharing photos or videos on social media is not permitted without the explicit consent of the parents of the children in the photos or videos.

Trips Hosted Outside of the Organization

From time to time there are special events hosted by an outside organization, such as the annual Grade 7/8 Basketball Tournament, HAWI events, or the Grade 5 Olympiad. The event organizers may have specific expectations for parent helpers in addition to what you see here. We will always do our best to communicate all expectations upfront, and we must also remember to practice inner flexibility and understanding as circumstances evolve while we are guests in other schools and communities.

Volunteering as a chaperone on an HWS field trip is a great gift that you give to the class. Without parent chaperones, school field trips might not be possible. This contract is here so that mutual expectations are clear and to foster healthy, open communication and understanding. If a chaperone is unable to comply with the above guidelines, it will result in their not being invited to accompany the class on future trips. If you have any questions about anything in this document, please be sure to ask your class teacher or the faculty chair. HWS thanks you for your cooperation and support.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____