



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2022-2023

Madison Waldorf School, 6510 Schroeder Road, Madison, WI 53711

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www.madisonwaldorf.org

MADISON WALDORF SCHOOL

Our Mission

Education that honors every
child's enthusiasm for
initiative, creativity, and
social responsibility

Madison Waldorf School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin or sexual preference to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin or sexual preference in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Welcome

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but rather the lighting of a fire." ~ W.B. Yeats

Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year at Madison Waldorf School!

We look forward to working in partnership with you on behalf of your children. Strong parent-teacher partnerships are essential to students' educational success and to the ongoing vitality of our school community. The successful educational experience for our students is greatly enhanced when home life and school life work in a harmonious fashion to provide a solid base from which they can venture into the world. Recent studies indicate that the key to improving student achievement is the involvement of parents or the student's family members in the educational process. With the goal of understanding the child's experience, either at school (for the parents) or at home (for the teacher), regular communication is essential.

By contributing to the healthy functioning of our school, whether through volunteer time, specific skills, or imagination, our parent body can support our school with its cooperative effort. Parent involvement in our school is important because we are building a community and demonstrating this community-building spirit to our children. The value of our community-at-large is the sum total of all its parts. So, we welcome you and encourage you to become a valuable integral part of our school and truly experience Waldorf education at its finest!

Thank you,

Madison Waldorf School Faculty

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Part 1: Overview

A Brief Overview of Waldorf Education

Over one hundred years ago, on September 19, 1919, the first independent Waldorf School (*Die Freie Waldorfschule*) opened its doors. Waldorf Education has its roots in the spiritual-scientific research of the Austrian scientist and thinker Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). According to Steiner's philosophy, the human being is a threefold being of spirit, soul, and body whose capacities unfold in three developmental stages on the path to adulthood: early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence.

In April of 1919, Rudolf Steiner visited the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory in Stuttgart, Germany. The German nation, defeated in war, was teetering on the brink of economic, social, and political chaos. Steiner spoke to the workers about the need for social renewal and for a new way of organizing society and its political and cultural life.

Emil Molt, the owner of the factory, asked Steiner if he would establish and lead a school for the children of the company's employees. Steiner agreed but set four conditions, each of which went against common practice of the day: 1) that the school be open to all children; 2) that it be coeducational; 3) that it be a unified twelve-year school; and 4) that the teachers, those individuals actually in contact with the children, have primary control of the school, with minimum interference from the state or from economic sources. Steiner's conditions were radical for the day, but Molt gladly agreed to them.

Today, there are more than 1,100 Waldorf schools in 66 countries, and 1,900 Waldorf kindergartens in more than 70 countries, plus Waldorf associations and teacher-training centers for Waldorf educators and Waldorf teachers around the world. Waldorf education is the fastest-growing independent educational movement in the world. In North America, Waldorf Education has been available since 1928, and there are now more than 160 schools and 14 teacher training centers. These schools exist in large cities and small towns, suburbs and rural enclaves. No two schools are identical; each is administratively independent. Nevertheless, a visitor would recognize many characteristics common to them all. At every level, Waldorf Education seeks to build community. In the classroom, it accomplishes this by replacing competition with collaboration, by setting the stage for deep and lasting relationships among students and between students and their teachers. Community is also built through school festivals, which are often shared with friends from outside the immediate school family, as well as through parent participation in school committees, in the classroom, within the Parent Circle, and even at the Board level. Evening classes, lectures and study groups, as well as crafting circles and parent educational evenings, draw eager adult learners from every sector, thus widening the embrace of Waldorf education.

Waldorf Principles

There are a number of principles behind Waldorf education that may be new to you. This is an extensive topic that is explained in more detail throughout this handbook, but we'd like to give you a running start with a very brief introduction.

Our classes and activities are structured specifically around healthy childhood development and learning. There are many ways this manifests itself in the daily life of the school and classroom. For example, in our Early Childhood classes, children play with open-ended toys to foster their creativity. The class schedule allows room to breathe, and we create structure with daily, weekly and monthly rhythms. Movement, self-guided study and outdoor exploration are incorporated into our lessons - in all seasons! In grade school and middle school, this same care is taken to provide 'the right lesson at the right time.'

A Different School Culture

Some aspects of Waldorf education may be different from what you experienced growing up, or different from what you see in other schools or what your child experienced in other schools. There are several such differences to note: Electronic devices are used in a limited and conscious way as appropriate (i.e., no one-to-one laptops/ipads for early childhood and grade school children's school use, no use of videos, smartboards, or unsupervised internet). In terms of media images, we specifically ask that your kindergarten children not wear images like logos or characters on their clothing. We also have a philosophy of not taking pictures or video of children during school performances, to allow them to be in the moment without expectations from the outside. These policies don't stem from a desire to be restrictive or overly protective, but rather are seen as a way to allow children's imagination to flourish and let their lessons be more thoughtful.

Tips for Early Childhood

- Classes eat together with the teacher
- Bring a blanket or mat and a pillow for napping
- Keep a pair of 'inside shoes' at school
- Leave toys at home (or ask a teacher first)
- Bring a complete change of clothes

Tips for Grade School/Middle School

- Lessons are taught in blocks of 2-4 weeks
- Each morning begins with a two-hour main lesson that goes until 10:30am (so if you need to schedule a doctor's appointment, try not to miss the morning lesson)
- Your child will create a main lesson book, which you can look at to see what they've been working on

Community

Community is a major aspect of Madison Waldorf School. There are many ways to connect with other parents, deepen your relationships, and even provide extra support to the school. We celebrate a number of festivals throughout the year, which are shared traditions for both children and parents. Join the monthly Parent Coffees, to connect with what's going on, and consider volunteering to help plan events or improve the school grounds. You will find warm and welcoming families connected to all areas of our community.

More...

The rest of this *Handbook* will go into more depth on everything mentioned so far. In addition, we have parent resources on our website, and we host ongoing parent education nights throughout the year as well.

If you are new to the Madison Waldorf School, welcome! We believe your children will thrive here, and we hope you will grow in connection to the school community

Contacts

Madison Waldorf School	Phone	608-270-9005
6510 Schroeder Road	Fax	608-270-9337
Madison, WI 53711	Website	www.madisonwaldorf.org

Hours

Early Childhood, half-day	8:30-12:30pm	
Early Childhood, full-day	8:30-3:30pm	(Thursdays, 8:30-2:00pm)
Grades School	8:30am-3:30pm	(Thursdays, 8:30-2:00pm)

Administration Team

Administrator	Ginny Buhr	admin@madisonwaldorf.org
Enrollment Director	Alison Resch	enrollment@madisonwaldorf.org
Bookkeeper	Kara Melka	business@madisonwaldorf.org
Office Assistant	Nicole Rugg	nrugg@madisonwaldorf.org

Faculty

Kindergarten (Sugar Maples)	Itzel Butcher	ibutcher@madisonwaldorf.org
Pre-School (Moonbirds)	Jennifer Keeley Yonda	jkeeleyyonda@madisonwaldorf.org
	Aleksandra Martinka	amartinka@madisonwaldorf.org
Grade 1 Class Teacher	Ray Eckenstein	reckenstein@madisonwaldorf.org
Grade 2 Class Teacher	Lindsay Mason	lmason@madisonwaldorf.org
Grade 3/4 Class Teacher	Linnea Tippett	ltippett@madisonwaldorf.org
Grade 5/6 Class Teacher	Allison Wall	awall@madisonwaldorf.org
Grade 7/8 Class Teacher	Sophie Scheller	sscheller92@madisonwaldorf.org

Specialty Teachers

German	Jo Drury	jdrury@madisonwaldorf.org
Spanish	Lizette Becerra	l.becerra@madisonwaldorf.org
Handwork	Lindsay Mason	lmason@madisonwaldorf.org

Assistants

Sugar Maples Assistant
Moonbirds Assistant
Nap Assistants

Carolyn Emery
Sam Peterson
Zosia Martinka
Selda Dursun Yesilkoy
JoEllen Klein

Grades Assistant

Eleni Mussared
Chris Locher

Board of Trustees

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary
Trustees

Adam Melka (Interim)

Dan Lynch

Ginny Buhr
Ray Eckenstein
Cherity Foat
Donald Todd
Savitri Tsering

School Organization

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of Madison Waldorf School is composed of current parents, faculty, the school's Administrator and friends of the school from the Madison community. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the legal and financial affairs of the school and seeks to make tangible the vision of the school expressed by the faculty and parents. The Board meets monthly, generally on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm. Board meetings are listed in the school calendar and are open to all Madison Waldorf School parents.

Leadership Circle

The Leadership Circle supports the Administrator in fostering constructive relationships and maintaining a healthy flow of communication between faculty, board, administration, and parents. It helps to ensure that the business of the school is aligned with the school's strategic plan and the collective priorities established for a given school year.

Through its active engagement and review of relevant issues, the Leadership Circle helps clarify and strengthen the school's governance structure.

Administrator

The Administrator is responsible for the overall operation and well-being of the school. The Administrator coordinates and communicates practical and pedagogical needs of the various school bodies – faculty, board and parents.

Administration

The Administrative Team, guided by the Administrator, helps form a communication link between major groups of the school and with agencies outside the school. They have day-to-day responsibility for the business, development, facility management, enrollment and outreach activities of the school.

Faculty

The Faculty is composed of individuals working in the school who have chosen a destiny linked to the growth and development of Madison Waldorf School. The faculty is dedicated to the creation and implementation of a developmentally appropriate curriculum based on Rudolf Steiner's research as well as their own body of research. The faculty is primarily responsible for pedagogical and program development. The work of the faculty is carried out in cooperation with, and with support from the Administration, the Board and the Parent Circle. Full-time faculty members meet weekly, learning and working together, to provide each student with the highest quality educational experience we can offer. In its work, the faculty strives to reach consensus in its decisions as a way to bring unity and cohesion to the educational experience of each child.

Class Parents

Each class at Madison Waldorf School has a designated Class Parent who supports the Class Teacher. The Class Parent helps mobilize other parents in the class to offer help where needed. The Class Parent can also help socially integrate all families in the class so everyone feels welcomed and has a role to play. The Class Parent from each of the classes meet together to assess how things are going in the classes and how best they can support each other, the Parent Circle and the School..

Parent Circle

The Parent Circle, which includes all Madison Waldorf School parents, is a vital link between the parents, relatives and friends of the school and the rest of the school community. The group's primary goal is to grow a vibrant, connected and committed community at Madison Waldorf School. The group focuses on building personal connections and helping every family feel a part of the life of the school. Related goals include providing parents and friends with volunteer opportunities; and supporting the faculty, administration and Board.

Part 3: School Community

Festivals

One of the most joyous and vital elements of Waldorf education is the celebration of a number of festivals throughout the year. Their purpose is to provide nourishment for the soul of each individual as well as bring the community together. Each festival is a celebration of life and the turning of the seasons. We acknowledge our shared human experience that brings to the school community a richness of story, song, light, and food.

The major cycle of festivals begins in the fall with the harvesting of the fruits of the field and the decaying of the leaves. Our first festival of the school year, as the light diminishes, is Michaelmas. In October, instead of Halloween we have an Enchanted Forest Walk for the younger children. We celebrate Martinmas with the Lantern Walk at dusk.

In December we have a community-wide Winterfest. Later in the month there is a Winter Spiral, which leads into the deep winter holidays of many traditions, such as Christmas, Hanukkah and Winter Solstice. Throughout this season, a variety of other gatherings and events provide opportunities to share friendship and build community, celebrate the children and our school, and help welcome new families to explore what is special about MWS.

Mid-winter brings the gradual return of the light with Candlemas and the spring bursts forth with May Festival.

Throughout the year, other holidays and festivals, such as Sukkot, Thanksgiving, St. Nicholas Day, St. Lucia Day, Valentine's Day, Day of the Dead, Lunar New Year and Passover are often observed in the classrooms, through songs, poems, stories, and crafts. These contribute to the recognition of the seasons and all of humanity through celebration. Other cultural holidays that would be meaningful to the students in each class are celebrated by individual classes.

Parents assist with festival celebrations, particularly school-wide events.

Parent Volunteerism

In 2007, a small group of parents and teachers joined together with powerful intentions, open hearts, and strong hands to create Madison Waldorf School. The school that began with a handful of parents and teachers is now an Associate Waldorf School. Since our earliest days, volunteers have been crucial to ensuring the smooth functioning and beautiful environment of Madison Waldorf School.

There are many ways for parents to be involved. These include Board and committee membership, fundraising, work days, special projects and festivals. Teachers may ask for parent assistance at various times throughout the year, e.g., organizing or chaperoning field trips.

Since we are a small school and do not have a maintenance staff, we rely on parent volunteers to help maintain and beautify our building and playgrounds. And last, but not least, your enthusiasm and willingness to share with others about Madison Waldorf School helps attract new students and families to our community.

We use an online platform, iVolunteer (which we call iVol), to facilitate sign-up for volunteer opportunities that require a large number of volunteers. Calls for signing up for upcoming volunteer opportunities are sent via email. For a summary of volunteer opportunities or to sign up, visit our volunteer site: <https://madisonwaldorf.ivolunteer.com/>

Classroom Parent Meetings

Three or more class parent evenings will be held throughout the year. Your teachers will inform you of the dates. It is important to be present at these meetings. The evenings provide an opportunity for the teacher to present an overview of what the children are learning, what they are doing and will be doing.

In addition to these whole-class meetings, your child's teacher will schedule at least two meetings during the school year for one-on-one communication directly about your child. These are the ways MWS formally communicates with you on your child's academic and developmental progress. In addition, after the close of the school year, all Grade School and Middle School parents receive a written progress report summing up the year's work and achievements for each child.

Class Parents

Class parents, chosen by the teacher, support the teacher by helping organize class events, recruit chaperones for class trips, etc., communicate with parents, plan social events, provide special needs and help for the classroom. Class parents can also be the point person between the class and Parent Circle Chair to help with school-wide events.

Parent Drivers

From time to time, parents will be called upon to drive students to and from field trips. If you are a driver, you must have proper car seats, and provide a copy of your current driver's license and car insurance to the Administrator.

Parent Education

Madison Waldorf School organizes several school-wide parent education evenings each year. These events are typically open to families and the community and are advertised in advance. These evenings are usually organized around a topic of specific interest to parents. Topics may include discipline, storytelling, media exposure, kindergarten and first-grade readiness, literacy, math and science curriculum, social inclusion, promoting resilience in children, service learning, conflict resolution, etc. Finally, these gatherings offer parents an opportunity to get to know one another, ask questions and share ideas.

Part 4: Early Childhood

Early Childhood Principles

We believe that early childhood, from birth to age seven, is a unique period of life that deserves respect, guidance, nurturing and protection.

We strive to work primarily out of Rudolf Steiner's pedagogy, which stresses that children have not only a physical nature, but a soul and spiritual nature as well.

Meaningful work and creative play in a structured environment are the pillars upon which a healthy life can be built.

The gradual development of the young child's social skills is of utmost importance for their educational and interpersonal success.

Madison Waldorf School Early Childhood Tenets

Young children have a drive and a desire to master the physical world.

Young children are gradually "moving into" their physical bodies and need plenty of opportunities and space to move, work and play. They are also building up their physical bodies in the early years, requiring warmth and movement. Their education at this time takes place primarily through active participation in the life around them.

Young children are best supported by strong daily, weekly and yearly rhythms.

Consistency and predictability are the foundations for children's health, development, sense of self, confidence and learning. A breathing, unhurried unfolding of the day, the week and the year benefits both the children and the teachers.

Young children can learn best in a mixed-age environment with consistent caregivers.

Ongoing, nurturing relationships are essential to a child's sense of security and emotional well-being. A setting that includes children of diverse ages allows younger children to aspire to their future and the older ones to serve, lead and nurture the little ones.

Young children need support, loving guidance and practice to develop social skills.

Much of the young child's work is about learning healthy social skills: meeting new friends, sharing, waiting, asking, thanking, helping those in need, etc.

Young children need ample time for creative and social play.

Imaginative, uninterrupted play with open-ended toys and materials that can be continually transformed is the cornerstone of healthy early childhood education.

Young children need to experience meaningful, purposeful, practical life-skills.

Children benefit greatly when they have opportunities to join in, as they are able, with adults engaged in the daily tasks of life: cooking, cleaning, gardening, washing, woodworking, sewing, building, etc.

Young children need to have daily, extended contact with the natural world.

Indoors, the children's senses are deepened and developed when surrounded by playthings made of natural materials. And when they are outdoors, seasonal discoveries and transformations in nature are a healing balm to the young child. Children are able to form bonds with the earth which can later develop into a true attitude of stewardship.

Young children grow and develop through experiencing the nurturing arts, as practiced by the adults who care for them.

Children know they are loved when they are fed, washed, sung to, given a rest, bandaged, have their hair brushed or their back rubbed.

Young children experience health and well-being when they help prepare, serve, and eat nutritious and mind-and-body-building food.

When children know where their food comes from and participate in its preparation they develop skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

Young children grow and develop when they are exposed to and take part in artistic offerings.

Puppet plays, live music, song, verse and storytelling provide children with a language-rich environment. Such an environment stimulates the child's imagination, gives him pictures to inform his moral intelligence and provides soothing human connections. Drawing, watercolor painting and simple handwork projects allow her to connect her inner and outer worlds while developing important fine-motor skills and neural pathways necessary for later learning.

Early Childhood Classes

Madison Waldorf School has two Early Childhood classes: the Preschool class, Moonbirds, for children 2 ½ - 4; and the kindergarten, Sugar Maples, for children 4-6. We also have a Playgroup for babes-in-arms and toddlers with their parent or caregiver for two hours during one morning a week.

Home Visits

For the teacher to begin to form a connection to the children and create a broader picture of their lives, we encourage home visits. These visits help to create a feeling of security for the children and build a bridge between home and school. The children can become familiar with the teacher on their own 'turf', while the teacher can gain insights into the children's world after seeing their special hideouts, favorite toys, or their backyard. These visits usually last up to one hour, enough time to begin to create a special connection with your child that will continue to grow as the year progresses.

Transitioning from Home to School

Stepping over the threshold of the school building offers a unique opportunity to instill lifelong habits in children. To begin building a feeling that school is a special place with special rules, we ask that you help support our community as we work toward an environment that respects people as well as property. It is important that the adults reinforce the following behaviors among children until they are able to remember them on their own:

- Staying next to Mom, Dad or the carpooling adult's side until delivered to the class teacher at arrival time, or to the car at dismissal, is of utmost importance.
- 'Walking feet' (as opposed to running ones) are required inside.
- Stairway manners include holding on to railings as needed and stepping down stairs.
- 'Indoor voices' are requested unless or until the children are outside under the 'Big Blue Sky' which can hold their 'big' voices.
- Quiet feet and voices in the hallways and bathrooms help students working in their classrooms carry on without distractions.

- Caring for our shared spaces (hallways, movement room, kitchen, and playground) promotes both outer and inner order. It is especially important to help the children care for their cubby/storage space and hallway area.

Items to Keep at Home

Children should not bring any toys or other materials from home, unless your child's teacher has specifically requested them. We have found that toys or other precious things from home are often brought to school with the best of intentions, but inevitably cause conflicts and unhappiness in the class that can be avoided by leaving these things at home or in the car. The materials in the classrooms have been selected with care and attention. They are open-ended, natural items that promote the education and creativity of children in their early childhood years. If your child wants to share something with the class (something from nature or a hand-made creation), ask the teacher in advance. The following items should not come with your child into school:

- toys and stuffed animals
- jewelry and watches
- candy and gum
- money
- umbrellas
- sunglasses

The Nature Table

Each Early Childhood classroom has a special table or shelf with an evolving display that reflects the activity of nature throughout the year. You will notice that, as the seasons change, there is a continual transformation on the nature table, as the beauty and gesture of the natural world is expressed. The children may occasionally bring contributions – stones, leaves, flowers, nuts, etc. These can be something that they wish to give to the room, or something they would like to share for the day and then take home again.

Fresh flowers are always a welcome addition to the classroom, either for the nature table or as a centerpiece at our dining table and we would be most grateful if you can spare a few from your gardens from time to time.

Some things from nature make especially nice play materials for the classrooms. Bowls or baskets of acorns, chestnuts, seed-pods, etc. are always welcome. They are frequently used

by the children for 'cooking', counting, bartering, etc. If you happen to collect an abundance of such things on a hike or picnic, we would gratefully receive some for our classrooms.

Morning Snack and Lunch

Each day, teachers and children together share meal times together with their healthy mid-morning snacks and lunch, brought from home, accompanied by herbal tea and/or water to drink.

Rest for Children in the Full-Day Kindergarten

The full-day program provides strong rhythms and continuity of care for children from 8:30-3:30 each day (except Thursdays, when there is early dismissal at 2pm). After lunch there is a rest time of one hour for the children in the kindergartens followed by outdoor/indoor play, activities, and a light snack. Lead teachers and their assistants work together to provide individual attention, as needed, during the rest time and continuity of care throughout the afternoon. Many of the children nap during the resting time (even those who have given up their nap at home), providing children the necessary time to fully relax after spending a very active morning with a group of peers.

For the rest period, full-day students are required to keep the following items at school (taken home occasionally for laundering):

- a small blanket, sleeping bag, sheepskin, or resting mat to rest upon
- a small pillow
- a blanket to cover and snuggle with, appropriate for the season

Rest and Sleep

The school day is both exciting and tiring for children. Parents can help ease the transition by providing a nap or quiet time after lunch (if the children are not in the full-day program) and by using the time after dinner for calming activities leading into a bedtime ritual. We recommend that children take afternoon naps until they reach first grade. However, if your child no longer takes naps, we encourage you to provide quiet time every day after lunch. Pediatricians typically recommend 11-13 hours of sleep per night for children three to six years old. The hours before midnight provide the deepest and most rejuvenating sleep. It's ideal for children to awaken themselves in the morning feeling rested, refreshed, and ready for an active day.

Part 5: Grades & Middle School

Grades Program

Madison Waldorf School is committed to excellence in all foundational academic subjects. Our elementary school provides a strong introduction to the Classics, History, Geography, Mathematics, and the Sciences. Students receive instruction in two foreign languages - German and Spanish - beginning in first grade. Equally important, music and the arts - visual, dramatic, and practical - are integrated into all of the main lesson content and are also taught as special subjects throughout the day. In this way, students receive an education that engages not only their intellect, but their whole being, through their head, hands, and heart. Waldorf education fully integrates the artistic and creative with the scientific, and with intellectual study.

Each day begins with a two-hour Morning Lesson, during which the core academic work is presented. Morning Lesson subjects (language arts, math, science, social studies) are taught in three- or four-week blocks that rotate throughout the school year. This approach allows students to deeply explore and digest the material. Lessons in the first grade class are often a little shorter, especially at the beginning of the year, and movement is integrated into all grade school lessons to provide a healthy, breathing rhythm to the child's learning experience. Our students can sit at a desk when they need to because they don't sit at a desk all day. Outdoor education includes frequent hikes to nearby parks and nature areas, farm adventures, and expanded excursions and adventure challenges in the older grades.

Guided by their teachers, students create their own Morning Lesson pages for each subject taught. This allows them to integrate and assimilate the material, discovering a personal relationship to it. These pages are bound together at the end of the year and form the student's Morning Lesson book for that school year. (Review of the student's Morning Lesson work is one component of assessment and part of parent-teacher conferences.) Extra lessons and skills promote application and practice of foundational skills on a daily basis. Homework is generally not assigned until the fourth grade and is kept to a minimum so that children have time and space in their day to relax, play, spend time outdoors and participate in extracurricular activities that bring balance to their lives and help them develop into well-rounded human beings.

The development of a close and often lasting teacher-student relationship is a unique and essential component of Waldorf education. The class teacher guides their class (typically for several years) as guardians and mentors, fostering a strong sense of classroom community and often life-long friendships. The trust, mutual respect and regard for each person's uniqueness and dignity is consciously fostered by the class teacher, with the goal of forming the class into a dynamic and supportive learning environment.

Children's growth occurs in predictable developmental phases, and Waldorf education works with these phases to maximize the learning process at every step. The brilliance of Waldorf's rich and varied curriculum is its wisdom to "bring the right lesson at the right time". The MWS curriculum values challenging academic work, as well as engaging artistic and practical experiences, all of which are age-appropriate and grounded in child development. Our experiential and integrated approach to learning engages the intellectual, physical, and emotional development of every child.

Middle School Program

The coming of adolescence marks another important milestone in child development. In every realm of the child's being – physical, emotional, and intellectual – new developments and new opportunities come into view as the child enters Grade 6 and moves ahead into Grades 7 and 8. The Middle School program at Madison Waldorf School keeps pace with these advances by providing a curriculum that is both academically rigorous and emotionally rich. Students in the Middle School continue to experience the full complement of Waldorf Morning Lesson content and special subjects. In addition, they engage in the following:

- Differentiated math curriculum
- Compatibility of Waldorf Math and Common Core standards, for ease of transfer to local High Schools
- Intensive study in one foreign language (either Spanish or German), chosen by the student
- Integrated Arts coursework, including blocks in perspective drawing, work in pastels, charcoal, and clay, as well as a progression of the handwork and woodworking curriculum taught throughout the school
- Optional Overture Band program (the band program begins in Grade 4)
- Service work at school and in the community
- Coming of age coursework
- Grade 8 class trip

Part 6: Guidelines and Policies

Communication

Madison Waldorf School faculty and staff are committed to fostering communications based on mutual regard and reverence. We strive to create a climate in which all perspectives are heard and valued and contribute to the strength and vitality of our school community.

When practiced with an awareness of and sensitivity towards the other, our adult interactions model for students how they may cultivate healthy, constructive, and respectful relationships. We expect all adult communications, in person and electronically, to be respectful, kind and honest. We expect that members of our community will not speak negatively about other members.

As parents and teachers, our highest priority is the children. We all care deeply that each child's educational and social/emotional needs are recognized and addressed, to the best of our ability. **In order to do so effectively, we must work in respectful partnership with one another through open and direct communication, having courage and fortitude to listen deeply, speak candidly and always with respect.** Through our mutual striving in this regard, the children experience a circle of support and care that enriches their educational experience, while building the foundations for the healthy school community we seek for ourselves.

Communication will be most effective when issues are brought to the attention of the appropriate person for discussion and resolution. Below are guidelines for where to take questions and concerns that arise in the classroom and in the larger school community.

Where should I take my question or concern about my child or about situations that arise within the class?

1. To the **Class Teacher**. Teachers will return calls and reply to email correspondence as soon as possible, during breaks in the school day, before/after school, and sometimes in the evening, when necessary. In general, during drop-off and pick-up times, teachers are paying attention to the children and this is **not** a good time for parent/teacher discussion other than relaying critical information for the day. Each class teacher provides parents with their specific availability and preferred method of communication at the beginning of the school year. Other opportunities for engaging your child's teacher(s) include:
 - Parent-teacher conferences scheduled twice a year (see the school calendar for specific dates).

- Additional conferences may be scheduled as needed by arrangement with the teacher.

In most cases, your first point of contact should be your child's teacher. Faculty members have the most knowledge of their individual classes, as well as an understanding of the organizational structure within the school. The teacher may not be able to answer all of your questions but will direct you to the most appropriate person within the school to get your question answered promptly.

If requested by the teacher or the parent, the Administrator is available to attend any meeting between the teacher and parents.

2. If a concern has not been successfully resolved, you may contact the **Administrator**, who will work with you to help resolve the problem. Contact Ginny Buhr, at admin@madisonwaldorf.org or call the main office at (608) 270-9005.

Where should I take my concerns about administration or community relations?

1. Questions or concerns regarding school policies, administration, employment, safety, and other general school issues should be brought to the **Administrator**, Ginny Buhr, at admin@madisonwaldorf.org.
2. For all financial/billing matters, contact the school's **Bookkeeper**, Kara Melka, at business@madisonwaldorf.org.
3. For enrollment/class placement questions, contact the **Enrollment Director**, Alison Resch, at enrollment@madisonwaldorf.org.
4. For volunteering, buildings and grounds questions, or general day-to-day questions, contact our Office Assistant, Nicole Rugg, nrugg@madisonwaldorf.org

Media

Teachers and staff at Madison Waldorf School know that most children are exposed to at least some media/electronic experiences. These include TV, films, video, computer games, Internet (including social media). We also know that, typically, parents at our school expect and assume their child's classmates' exposure to media is monitored and regulated. The following statements reflect the school's position on this important topic in our community. We encourage an ongoing conversation among parents and teachers for broad agreement on media at Madison Waldorf School.

We believe that:

Children are affected by electronic exposure in various ways.

Their behavior in play and social situations, the learning environment of the classroom, and children's integration of content from their lessons are affected by such exposure. Daily experiences and images are integrated during sleep. With electronic stimulation and the strong visual and sensory experiences of electronic media, the benefits of Waldorf Education can be undermined.

Children are imitative. It is common to see children acting out characters and actions from movies and video games. Consider how your child's exposure to media might affect the kind and quality of their play. Children's free imagination is valuable; the media interferes with it by substituting commercial or adult images for the child's own imagination about a story or scene. Exposure to the media, in order to occupy your child while you prepare dinner or do other household chores or take a break, comes into the classroom. If the children in a classroom have had media exposure between the end of school and the start of the next day, we can see the impact on them, in their play and learning, the next day. The teacher's ability to bring reverence, respect, and other human values, along with the goals of learning academic content, is influenced by that exposure.

Restricting media exposure allows the images the children experience during the day in stories, artistic work, movement, speech and poetry to continue to work in them for the next day's review and/or development. In our school, we deliberately open children to the world through their senses. When children get exposure to ugly, parodied, and mechanical sense experiences, they become vulnerable. Consider the contradiction of exposing children to media in this way and then bringing those same children to a Waldorf school.

Our policies are:

Families should restrict media exposure, especially on school nights. Visual images (TV, computer, YouTube, movies) should be particularly avoided after school and before sleep. (See below regarding the pedagogical issue related to sleep.) Restricting media exposure means that no media exposure on school days and nights is the goal.

Tolerance for our children's media exposure varies considerably. Before allowing your own child to share movies, YouTube, or video games with classmates and friends, it is considerate to get permission from the parents of those children.

Teachers may request that a student be picked up by a parent during the school day if media exposure has interfered with the child's ability to participate actively in the school day or if their behavior interferes with other students' learning.

Sleep

It is vital for children to have plenty of sleep. Their health and their educational success depend on it! Please speak with your child's teacher, and perhaps your child's pediatrician, if your child is experiencing sleep disturbance on a regular basis.

A deeper consideration of the connection between sleep and learning has been a pedagogical study among Waldorf educators and others for many years. Still, the value of "sleeping on one's lessons" can be an underappreciated aspect of learning. A basic premise of Waldorf education is that the class teacher presents lessons appealing to the students' imagination and feelings, and that the children will later integrate those lessons in their sleep, before being reviewed by the class in subsequent lessons. In this way, educational experiences and content work their way more deeply into the child's being and become their own. (Your child's teacher can recommend relevant resources if you wish to learn more about this connection.)

Attendance

Much of the learning at Madison Waldorf School is based upon experience, as it is in all Waldorf Schools. The content and skills lessons are arranged and taught with an intentional daily and weekly rhythm. The class teacher prepares with the goal of offering healthy, meaningful lessons, most of which are presented orally to the children.

For this style of teaching to work, the child must be in class to experience the lessons and the rhythm created. For it to work well, there must be close cooperation between home and school. Morning Lesson, from 8:30am until 10:30am in the Grade and Middle School is critically important for our students' educational experience. Because of how the curriculum is presented to the children in class, it is not feasible for a grades teacher to 'make up' what a child has missed. It is, however, the responsibility of the family to ensure that all assigned homework is completed.

For early childhood students, starting the school day on time cultivates their habit life and smooths their integration into the social fabric of the class.

If a child will be absent or late to school, a parent must call the office at (608) 270-9005 (leave a message on the answering machine at school), or email

admin@madisonwaldorfschool.org before school starts, so that the teacher can be informed before the start of school. Please state the reason for the absence.

If a child is unable to attend school for more than one day, please notify the office each day, unless it was a planned absence that is communicated in advance. Parents are strongly encouraged to schedule medical or dental appointments outside of school time, but if that is not possible, appointments should be scheduled after the Morning Lesson period (so, after 10:30am).

An excused absence is when a student misses school due to illness, family emergency or religious obligation.. An unexcused absence is when a student misses school for any reason other than illness, family emergency or religious obligation. Family trips or vacations during school days are not considered excused absences.

Tardiness: The beginning of the day at our school is especially important. Tardiness seriously interferes with the Morning Lesson. Children who are consistently late will miss a vital part of their education and disrupt the education of the other students. The best way to avoid tardiness and the consequent disruption is to ensure that the child arrives ten minutes early, giving the child a chance to transition between home, travel to school, and school. This aids in a smooth start to your child's day.

If your child is tardy, parents need to sign them in on the sign-in sheet on the table in the front hall. A staff member will accompany your child to the classroom.

Please note:

Timely, regular attendance in all classes during the entire day is crucial for your child's progress in school. If a student accumulates seven tardies and/or absences within a 30-day period an absent/tardy alert will be sent home and the parent will be required to arrange a meeting with the teacher to discuss the impact of tardies or absences on the student's learning, how to best support the student, and how to best minimize such tardies or absences in the future.

Drop-Off

The school day begins at 8:30am and ends at 3:30pm. Classroom doors open at 8:20am.

Parents are expected to accompany their child/children into school in preschool through Grade 3. We recommend parents accompany children to the classroom in Grade 4/ 5 during the first weeks of school, at least.

Parents of children in Grades 1 and 2 should park in the front. Early childhood families and Grades 3-8 should park in the back parking lot. Please do not drop your child off in the driveway.

Pick-Up

Early Childhood Students

Dismissal is at 12:30pm for half-day Early Childhood students. Parents may pick up their children in the School lobby. Dismissal for full-day Early Childhood students is at 3:10-3:30 Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, and at **2:00 pm on Thursdays**.

Grades and Middle School Students

Dismissal for students in Grades 1-8 is 3:30pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and **2:00pm on Thursdays**.

Children in Grades 1-2 are released to their parent or designated caregiver in the front playground. Children in Grade 3-8 and up are dismissed from the back playground.

For all children:

Students will not be released to any person other than the parents or designated caregivers unless prior authorization has been provided in writing or via telephone, to the office. In the interests of safety, teachers may hold a child until they can verify that the person picking them up has authorization to do so.

After dismissal, parents are in charge of their children. Parents need to remind children that school rules are in effect at all times, both in the building and on the grounds at all times.

Parking Lot Policies

Everyone must drive slowly into and out of the parking lot.

After dismissal to you, parents are responsible for supervising their children in the back playground and parking lot area. Children must be supervised at all times. Please pay special attention to supervision of your very young children in the back parking lot area.

The back parking lot closest to the school is cordoned off from 10:30-11:00 am and again from 12:35pm to 1:35 pm for recess.

Cell Phones

Students who bring cell phones to school must turn them into the office and retrieve them at the end of the day. Parents must sign a permission slip before students may bring cellphones or other electronic devices to school.

Adults should not use cell phones for texting or calling while in public spaces in the school, including the hallways and playground. Adults can go into an office or other quiet space (conference room, for instance) to use cell phones. Exceptions are made for teachers out in the playground who must communicate with other teachers or administrators should they need assistance.

Photography of Children at School Events

It is understandable and common for parents to want to record special moments. However, flashes and mechanical sounds distract children.

Parents are not permitted to take pictures or video of children in assemblies, plays or Early Childhood celebrations. Group or individual photos may be taken by school staff at some assemblies. Ask your child's teacher in advance before taking pictures at other school-sponsored events.

Food Guidelines

Good nutrition is the cornerstone of a healthy life and supports learning. We encourage parents to pack food that is fresh and high in nutrition. We discourage highly sugared or processed foods. Children require nutritious foods to properly develop. Healthy lunches include raw fruits and vegetables, yogurt, cheese, nuts, seeds, whole grains, dried fruit, hard-boiled eggs, soups, stews and salads. Good proteins include tuna, peanut butter, tofu, turkey, chicken, salmon, beans and legumes.

Water, milk, or herbal tea make the best drinks for children. Drinking water is always available to children from the drinking fountain.

In the event we have a child(ren) with peanut (or other) allergies, we will notify everyone to not send food with peanuts (or other food, as needed).

Children need to bring both a lunch and a snack to school daily. Please do not send lunch boxes portraying media or cartoon images. Microwaves are not available for Grades 1-6

Birthdays

Birthdays are often acknowledged at school. If you would like to bring a birthday snack to celebrate, please plan the details with your child's teacher, who can inform you of any food allergies or restrictions among children in the class.

Immunizations

Our vaccination practices are consistent with the State of Wisconsin law in that parents must fill out a Student Immunization Record or waiver before the first day of school. This is done upon enrollment or if your child is going into kindergarten, 6th grade, or if there is a change.

Illness at School

It is essential to try to prevent spreading contagious diseases to other children and their families. Therefore, we ask parents to keep sick children at home where they can be given

the extra care and attention they need. Please do not send your child to school if he/she is sick.

Signs and symptoms for keeping your child at home:

- Cough
- Feeling cold/shivering
- Fever (pale or flushed face, glazed eyes, warm forehead, and temperature above 99.6)
- Sore throat
- Unusual lethargy, grouchiness, or weepiness
- Unusual unwillingness to get up in the morning
- Diarrhea or vomiting, including the night before
- Inflamed/pink eyes (may be conjunctivitis)

Requirements for parents to follow to avoid exposing other children in the classroom to possibly contagious illness are as follows:

- Children must be fever-free (without medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.
- If a child vomits or has diarrhea the day before, during the night before or in the morning before school, that child should be kept at home for 24 hours from the last episode.
- If a child has a productive cough that cannot be controlled with medication, then that child should stay home.
- If a child has been diagnosed with a communicable illness such as measles, chicken pox, impetigo, or conjunctivitis, that child should be kept home until cleared by a doctor. If a child has eyes that are red, swollen, itchy, producing purulent drainage, or have a crusty appearance upon awakening, that child should be kept at home until cleared by a doctor and symptom-free.

Head Lice

We have a no-nit and no-lice policy at Madison Waldorf School. Children will be sent home if they exhibit symptoms of head lice (excessive head itching and/or found nits or lice). For the health of all students and faculty, treat your child's head and remove all nits and lice before they return to school. Your child will be checked by office staff when they return to school. The school reserves the right to check all children's heads in a classroom should a

lice outbreak occur. Families will be notified if we have a case of nits or lice in their child's class.

Pertussis/Whooping Cough

When we receive notification of a confirmed Pertussis case, the child in question will be allowed to return after 5 days of treatment. During a Pertussis outbreak, we ask that anyone with a child who has any kind of a cough or cold to call their doctor and ask to be tested. The symptoms may range from cold-like symptoms to a simple cough, to a raspy whooping cough. Even if your child's cough seems to get better, they are still contagious. Pertussis is a highly contagious illness. Similar to our flu policy, parents should make a plan for their child in the case that they must stay home.

Measles

In accordance with Public Health Madison and Dane County, a student who is not vaccinated and is exposed to measles will not be able to come to school for two weeks. If there should be a measles outbreak in our school, we will follow the recommendations of Public Health Madison.

Injury at School

A student who comes to the office with a medical emergency will be assessed by the faculty or staff member who will:

- Determine if 911 should be called
- Notify the child's parents or other emergency contact
- Provide emergency care until either a parent or advanced medical personnel assumes that responsibility

COVID-19

In light of recent updates (August, 2022) from CDC and DHS regarding mitigation practices for COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases, Madison Waldorf School supports the following guidelines:

- Stay home when sick. Anyone experiencing an illness or having respiratory symptoms should not come to school. People with COVID-19 symptoms should get tested. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:
 - Fever (temperature 100.4F or higher), chills, or shaking chills
 - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - Muscle aches or body aches
 - Sore throat, when in combination with other symptoms
 - New Loss of taste or smell
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Fatigue, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Headache, when in combination with other symptoms
 - Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies), when in combination with other symptoms
- Frequent and proper handwashing
 - At home and at school students can be taught and encouraged to use proper handwashing techniques
 - Handwashing supplies and hand sanitizers will be available throughout the school
- Respiratory Etiquette
 - Cover mouth when coughing or sneezing. Use tissues and dispose of them
 - Wash hands or use hand sanitizer after touching mouth or nose
 - If tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into elbow, not hands
- Cleaning and Disinfecting
 - Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned daily
 - In the event that someone in a classroom tests positive for COVID-19 in the last 24 hours, that classroom (and other appropriate spaces) will be disinfected.
- Maximize Ventilation
 - Our landlord maintains our ventilation system for optimal efficiency in providing good ventilation and airflow.
 - Air purifiers are available to be in classrooms
- Masks will be optional in all cases, except
 - Anyone who is on day 6-10 of isolation following a positive COVID-19 test
 - A student or adult showing signs of respiratory illness, regardless of a negative COVID-19 test
- Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 should isolate for at least 5 days.
 - If they are asymptomatic, they may end isolation after Day 5 (return day 6)
 - If they had symptoms, they may return to school after Day 5 if:

- they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication)
 - Their symptoms are improving
 - They wear a mask until Day 10
- In the event that a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the Administrator should be notified immediately.
- In the event that a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the Administrator will notify parents and other staff members in the school.

These COVID-19 guidelines are subject to change if there is a significant outbreak in our community.

Medication Policy

We will administer medication only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent via an official medication administration permission form and the medication is available in an original, labeled prescription or manufacturer's container.

- For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians must provide the school with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage and disposal instructions.
- For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians must provide the medication in its original packaging. The medication must be labeled with the child's first and last names; and specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer.
- Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the school staff in writing on the medication administration permission form.
- Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication.
- A medication log is maintained by staff to record the instructions for giving the (prescription or over-the-counter) medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of the medication.

Dress Codes

Dress Code for Early Childhood

“There is no such thing as bad weather, only poor clothing choices.” --Ulrike Schnaar, Kindergarten teacher

Mother Nature is said to be the archetypal teacher, and we encourage the children to explore her as fully as possible. The puddles, mud and snow call out to be played in, and as we have so few years to fully immerse ourselves in them, it is important that children take full advantage of these opportunities. At Madison Waldorf School, we want children to experience the joy of exploration, so it is important to dress them in sturdy clothes that are appropriate for the weather conditions. Dressing children in layers is usually the best way to ensure that they are ready for anything.

All growing things need warmth, so we ask that the children always have their back, stomach, legs and feet covered. On days when your child is dressed in shorts or a skirt/dress, make sure that they also have a pair of light-weight pants or leggings to put on when hiking in the woods or tall grasses. An outdoor hat is important no matter what the season: a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen for warm days, and a warm hat and scarf for chilly weather.

Media-influenced clothing, such as clothes with TV or movie characters, is not appropriate for kindergarten. Neither is clothing featuring sports teams, large product logos or brand names. These include underwear and undershirts.

All clothing that might be taken off should be clearly labeled with your child’s name. All students (Preschool - Grade 8) must have a complete change of clothing, all labeled with their names, available at all times. This includes pants, a shirt, two pairs of underwear and two pairs of socks for those days when the elements get the best of us. Send extra clothing items in a cloth, drawstring bag (preferable) or in a small knapsack (no media images).

Early Childhood children also need a pair of soft-soled shoes, slippers or moccasins to wear indoors. These ‘inside’ shoes should be kept at school because your child will need them each day. Shoes or slippers that are comfortable, practical to move in (no heels) and stay on your child’s feet when she/he is dancing, skipping, leaping, etc. will best serve your child’s needs at school.

Your child will also need a pair of shoes and/or boots for outdoors. These can come and go each day. Outdoor footwear should meet the same guidelines as stated above and be appropriate for the weather and the season.

Dress Code for Grades and Middle School

We do not want to interfere too much with individual expression, family standards, or sensitivity/sensory issues. The dress policy has to do primarily with:

- protection of children's senses
- protection of their ability to play freely
- protection of their ability to move safely and confidently
- protection of the learning environment from distractions
- protection from the sun

Grades children need footwear for inside the classroom as well as for Games Class. Do not send sandals, clogs, or backless footwear that prevent freedom of movement.

Wear clothing (e.g., leggings or tights) under skirts, so that play is not restricted. Dress in layers.

Shoes or appropriate footwear are required at all times for safety reasons. Heels, wedges, and clogs can restrict running and jumping and should not be worn for school. Shoes should have a closed heel and closed-toe, with straps or ties. Wood chips used on the playground are a hazard to feet in open-toe shoes. Shoes that are not closed at the heel are a hazard because they slip off easily and children run out of them. Indoor shoes should have rubber soles and stay on feet.

Some Dress Code specifics:

- No hats in the classroom. If there is a specific need, conversation between student's parent and the teacher is needed.
- Footwear required at all times
- Appropriate dress for weather (If it is 40° or below, students must wear jackets and warm pants. There is no longer a specific date for bringing on the shorts)
- Logos:
 - Kindergarten: None
 - Grades and middle school: No media, violence, culturally offensive images/wording
 - Sport team brand names are ok
- Hair dye and nail polish is allowed

Dress Code for Assemblies and Special Events: Dress your Best! (Pre-K-8)

Behavioral Expectations

At Madison Waldorf School, we expect the following behaviors from our community members:

Courtesy

We expect everyone to be courteous to each other. Communication is best when a polite tone of voice is used and we listen when others are speaking. We encourage everyone to say please and thank you.

We encourage cooperative play and the inclusion of others. Part of being courteous is knowing how and when to respond when frustrated. Teachers are available to help children work through these emotions. Children will be asked to think about how other people would want to be treated when learning how to treat others with courtesy.

Classroom interruptions are discourteous to the teacher and to the class as a whole. They distract others and make it hard to focus. The community will follow teacher guidelines for classroom courtesy.

Gratitude

At MWS, we have a lot to be grateful for. Gratitude deepens when we acknowledge the contributions of others.

Responsibility

Learning how to be responsible for yourself, your family and the world is an important aspect of Waldorf education. When we take care of something or other people, we know that we can make a difference in the world. Students will be asked or reminded to tend things in need of care, complete chores in the classroom, take care of classroom materials, put away balls and supplies outside, and to be thoughtful and responsive to the feelings of others.

Work Habits

Strong work habits are essential for success in any learning environment. Students are expected to be prepared for school and on time. They are expected to complete all assignments and tasks to the best of their abilities in a timely manner. If work is not up to a student's capabilities, teachers may ask students to improve it, change it, or start over.

Our behavioral Expectations are meant as a guide to build our community spirit at Madison Waldorf School. We understand that children make mistakes, as do adults. Our hope is that children can learn from their mistakes. Our goal is to help children become aware of and transform their behavior for the better. When behavioral expectations are compromised, the aim is to promote learning about the desired behavior. Discipline situations are all unique and the teacher involved uses his or her discretion in handling each circumstance appropriately. In every case, we aim to promote increased awareness and the ongoing self-development and social responsiveness of the students.

Discipline Policy

Our Behavioral Expectations are meant as a guide to build our community at Madison Waldorf School. We understand that children make mistakes, as do adults. Our hope is that children can learn from their mistakes. Our goal with our Discipline Policy is to help children become aware of and transform their behavior for the better. When behavioral expectations are compromised, our aim is to promote learning about the desired behavior. Discipline situations are all unique and the teacher involved uses his or her discretion in handling each circumstance appropriately, using the following guidelines. In every case, we aim to promote increased awareness and the ongoing self-development and social responsiveness of the students.

The faculty uses several different disciplinary procedures depending on the child's age, the specific infraction and a general pattern of behavior. The aim of disciplinary measures is to create a safe and harmonious environment for all children. Discipline actions are meant to be logical, non-shaming, and foster opportunities for restitution, learning and forgiveness. Effective discipline should encourage self-discipline.

These are our guidelines:

<p>Level 1 Behaviors: Teacher-managed behaviors; contact with parent/guardian will come from staff involved or class teacher</p>	<p>Level 1 Actions: Teachers may use an Observation Form to track behaviors. Observation Reports are usually kept by the teacher and shared with the parents and administrator when a pattern emerges.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disrespect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ talking back ○ mocking ○ note passing ○ inappropriate voice level ○ inappropriate language, comments) ● Disruption (talking or non-verbally communicating with classmates at inappropriate times; noisemaking; emotional dysregulation) ● Defiance (non compliance with classroom or playground rules or instructions; incomplete work or not working) ● Rough play involving pushing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remind student of playground, class agreements or rules ● Redirect ● Relocate to another space ('the bench', a space outside of classroom) ● Reflect (what changes could be made; what needs of the student could be met; role play) ● Restore/mend (are there actions the student can/should take to repair) ● Logical consequence(s) (Acts of service; practicing desired behaviors) ● Outline of supports and coping Strategies
<p>Level 2 Behaviors: Teacher and/or Administrator Managed behaviors</p>	<p>Level 2 Actions: Incident Report submitted; kept on file in Administrator's Office</p>
<p>Repeated Level 1 behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Disrespect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ chronic disruptive behaviors ○ put-downs/low level teasing, name calling ○ first offense of behavior that could become bullying or harassment ○ minor vandalism ● Disruption <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ chronic (multiple days) disruptive behaviors ● Defiance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ dishonesty ○ failing to follow rules/directions ● Physical contact (unintentional or 	<p>Parents/guardian are notified and given copy of Incident Report</p> <p>The following is not a sequential list. Action and sequence are based on the circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Additional supervision ("Would an adult standing next to you help?) ● Pre-panning (ex. Plan for recess) ● Letter writing with restorative mindset ● Social skills interventions ● Behavior Monitoring ● Removal from difficult setting/situations until ready to re-enter ● Provide time (Do you need a break?)

<p>begins as play)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ invading others personal space (bodies and belongings) ○ wrestling or horseplay with another student without consent ○ physical harm: pushing, shoving, kicking, grabbing, jumping on, butting in line, biting -with no mark(by a child under the age of 10) ● Emotional harm (i.e. repeated hurtful language, start of bullying, low-level harassment, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student meeting with teacher and/or Administrator ● Logical consequence(s) ● Meeting with parents to agree to and create an observable tracking system to inform student when expectations are or are not being met ● Additional classroom support ● Possible referral to ESG (Education Support Group)
<p>Level 3 Behaviors: Administrative Managed (teacher also involved)</p>	<p>Level 3 Actions: Administrator Led</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Repeated Level 2 Behaviors (must be documented) ● Chronic disrespectful, disruptive, or defiant behavior directed toward someone (adult or child) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Repeated talking out ○ Refusal to follow rules or redirection ○ Non-compliance ○ Disruptions ○ Inappropriate voice level ○ Arguing ○ Inappropriate or rude gestures ○ Disrespectful language ○ Threats ○ Abusive language ○ First time incidents of racial, ethnic, sexual, or religious harassment, slurs or intimidation ○ Leaving supervised area without permission/hiding from a teacher ○ Vandalism ○ Petty theft or theft (when 	<p>Note: This is not a sequential list; certain behaviors may result in more – or less – severe consequences than listed. First Administrative Referral (steps taken depend on circumstances. Some of these behaviors may move directly to removal from class and/or suspension if behavior warrants it)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meeting with Administrator ● Attempt to understand needs behind behavior and find ways to meet needs while also meeting needs of teacher and rest of class ● Review in-class steps/agreements, calm warning, clear instructions ● Temporary removal from class/activity ● Repair damage(s) ● Address harm to individuals ● Reiteration of supports and coping strategies ● Possible conflict mediation ● Possible ESG (Education Support Group) Referral ● Work with parents to inform and enlist support. Parent buy-in and

<p>child is over the age of 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Physical Contact or Aggression (with intent) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hitting, pushing, shoving, pinching, kicking, grabbing, tripping, slapping, punching, spitting, hair pulling, throwing objects, or biting (when a child is over the age of 10) etc. ○ Fighting/physically hurting another person ○ Verbal, relational or online aggression: 	<p>support is crucial and necessary in order to make any further progress. Children who do not receive help/support from parents must be evaluated for referral according to the mandatory reporting guidelines.</p> <p>Second Administrative Referral (steps taken depend on circumstances)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Includes above actions ● Possible team meeting with parents, student, teacher, other relevant staff, and administration ● Behavior contract specifying what student needs to do, and the consequences if agreement is not followed ● Possible student suspension (1-2 days) <p>Third Administrative Referral (steps taken depend on circumstances)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Includes above consequence ● Possible suspension (1-5 days) ● Possible meeting to discuss a different school placement. If all efforts fail and the student continues to present conditions that interfere with another’s rights to physical and emotional safety and an environment that allows others to learn, then expulsion may take place. <p>*Any time a student is suspended/sent home due to behavior, a meeting with parents must be held, and a behavior support plan created, before the student can return to school.</p>
<p>Level 4 Behaviors: Administrator Managed Behaviors</p>	<p>Level 4 Actions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Illegal activities: drugs/alcohol use or possession ● Assault, sexual assault or abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include above consequences from Level 3 ● Possible notification of law

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fighting/Physical Aggression (Intent) ● Severe physical acts; hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, grabbing, tripping, slapping, punching, spitting, hair pulling, biting, throwing objects with intent to do harm. ● Possession of weapons/dangerous items (Exceptions may be made for knives/pocket knives during school camping trips or special projects with prior permission of the teacher.) ● Theft of items of value ● Major damage to property ● Repeated incidents of racial, ethnic, sexual, or religious harassment, slurs or intimidation ● Possession of pornography or other sexually explicit materials 	<p>enforcement officials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parent/student Administrator/teacher Conference ● ESG Referral ● Possible suspension (1-5 days) ● Possible expulsion
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Addressing Teasing and Bullying

MWS emphasizes a positive approach to discipline, with a focus on helping students develop increasing levels of self-awareness, sensitivity, and respect toward others. Every situation is unique, and the teacher involved uses her or his discretion in handling each circumstance appropriately; however, the overarching aim is to promote respectful, compassionate interactions between individuals and for all students to feel safe and supported by their teachers and peers. Especially in the Early Childhood and Early Grades classes, self-discipline is recognized as a gradual process. It is most effectively learned through modeling, repetition, and practice, as well as the use of consequences and restorative justice, when appropriate.

Distinguishing between Bullying and Teasing

Teasing is not ok when someone asks for it to stop and it doesn't, when it is meant to hurt or put down another person, or when it becomes a habit. Mindless teasing can also occur when someone does not have the intention to do harm; nonetheless it can still hurt, and it is

an opportunity for everyone to learn. All forms of teasing can become bullying when pushed too far.

Bullying can include the following acts, especially when they are persistent, prolonged and deliberate: exclusion and leaving someone out, physical aggression, verbal abuse and name calling, ignoring, disrespect of property or stealing, ganging up, malicious and hurtful rumors, active intolerance of differences, or incitement of others to do any of the previously identified actions.

Students who are the targets of teasing or bullying or those who witness such behavior are strongly encouraged to report incidents to their teachers, especially if efforts to stop it on their own have not worked. Parents whose children report incidents of teasing or bullying should strongly encourage them to get help from their teachers. Parents should also speak to the class teacher.

Teachers who witness teasing or bullying behavior – or suspect that it has occurred, or are told that it has occurred – will acknowledge the incident, assist and comfort the distressed student, address the feelings and effects of teasing or bullying, and have the student practice ‘right action’ and make amends as appropriate to the situation. Whenever possible, the children involved should be addressed together, so that they can be heard and cared for in the presence of the other.

Once the teacher is aware of an incident, there will be heightened supervision of the student. Since teasing and/or bullying behavior occurs more often during unsupervised or less-structured activities (in the hallway, in the restroom, on the playground), teachers will reduce recurrence of incidents by providing close supervision or alternative activities at these times. For example, the student who initiates the teasing or bullying may be required to accompany the teacher on the class hike, work with her/him during a recess period, or be accompanied to the restroom, as necessary, to ensure a safe and friendly environment for all.

When significant teasing or an incident of bullying occurs, the teacher will complete an Incident Report which will be shared with the parents and Administrator and appropriate steps in the Discipline Policy (see above) will take place.

At times, a teacher may discern that the student needs an immediate consequence after an egregious physical or emotional offense to another student. The student may be sent to the office and the Administrator or another teacher called to meet with them. The parents will be called and the student sent may be sent home for the remainder of the day. Appropriate steps in the Discipline Policy will take place.

Playground Supervision and Expectations

- There will be an appropriate level of teacher/staff supervision at all times.
- Respectful and cooperative behavior, language and play will be expected at all times.
- Teachers and staff will encourage and support social inclusion and creative problem solving.
- Rude or offensive language, name-calling or bullying will not be tolerated.
- Students will stay within the designated outdoor boundaries established by the teachers and staff on duty. The teachers/staff on duty may adjust the play area boundaries somewhat depending on the amount of adult supervision available, the time of day, traffic flow, and capabilities/needs of the students. Students are expected to comply with the boundaries set by the teacher or staff on duty at all times.
- When necessary, teachers and staff may stop, amend, or otherwise intervene in games or play that have become aggressive, unsafe, or disrespectful. Students will be redirected and supported through facilitated problem-solving and conflict resolution.
- Teachers and staff will direct students to safely, properly, and respectfully care for playground materials and equipment. Time towards the end of recess periods is built in for clean-up of all toys and equipment to be put away before students return to class. In the Grade School and Middle School, teachers may designate specific students or a specific class to routinely take responsibility for making sure the playground equipment is cleaned up and well cared for.
- Climbing on the school roof is not permitted.
- Climbing on the roofs of play structures in the front playground is not permitted.

Field Trips and Other Off-Campus Events

Our school is fortunate to be able to use a wide variety of nearby parks, and time spent at outdoor sites is considered part of the curriculum. During the enrollment process, permission was asked for students to walk to these destinations. Any field trip requiring driving requires a separate permission slip. Permission slips will be sent or given to you by your child's teacher prior to each such trip and must be signed and returned to school prior to the trip. Overnight trips require a permission slip and have a special set of expectations and preparations.

Severe Weather

We will close the school when the weather creates an unsafe environment for students and faculty.

Playgroups, Early Childhood, Grades and Middle School all follow the same calendar and snow policy. Playgroup snow closures follow school closings.

When school must close due to severe weather conditions, we will email our MWS school community, post it on our website and Facebook page and contact the following television stations: Channel 3, 15, and Channel 27.

Whenever possible, the MWS Administrator will notify parents directly by email no later than 6:30am if school is closed.

Safety Procedures

A more comprehensive Safety Plan is available in a separate document and will be available for distribution in mid-September. Elements are summarized below:

Medical Emergency

Life-Threatening Situations:

The Emergency Medical Response (via 911) will be called prior to parent/emergency contact being called. A member of the staff will remain with the student.

- The parent or emergency contact is notified *after* the Emergency Medical Response is summoned.
- If a student is transported to a hospital or other urgent care setting, a staff member will accompany the student in the rescue vehicle if no parent is present.

Illness Guidelines

Faculty and staff may administer first aid to students. Diagnostic work and medication may not be done.

In the event of a minor injury or illness, in which the student is ambulatory, the student may report to the Office for assistance. This assistance may include the application of ice or

a Band-Aid, a period of rest and/or a telephone call to parents or others designated by the parents.

If the injury is not an extreme emergency, then parents should be called and a determination made with them about the next step. (Note: minor “injuries” “fixed” by a Band-Aid do not need a phone call to parents, unless occurrence is excessive.)

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents or guardian unless 911 has been called. In the latter case, or if the parents or emergency contacts cannot be located, the appropriate faculty member will supply relevant information to the rescue squad and will accompany the child to the hospital.

General Evacuation Procedures

Fire Procedures

Fire drills will be held monthly. All individuals in the building must evacuate when the alarm is sounded according to the fire drill procedures. No one may re-enter the building until an all clear sign is given.

Tornado Procedures

Tornado drill will be held twice yearly preceding the tornado season.

Lockdown

In all situations involving armed intruders or threatening individuals, parents should not be allowed to come to school to pick up children until the Administrator or the Police have informed them that it is safe to do so. No student or employee should ever attempt to confront or subdue an armed intruder or menacing person.

If teachers receive the Lockdown text or verbal warning from the Administrator, all students and staff should remain in classrooms, crouched on the floor, preferably under desks and tables, and doors and windows should be locked and lights turned out. Everyone should remain in place until instructed otherwise.

Students and faculty who are outside should run to Lighthouse Christian School Administrators will send an email message to parents that is brief and to the point, as well as stating more information will be coming. Parents will be notified when it is safe to pick up their children.

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read the *Family Handbook*. From time to time we may find the need to add something or make changes to the *Family Handbook*. We will alert you if and when that should happen! It is our intention that this Handbook will help you to gain a better understanding of our commitment to your children.