



The Denver Waldorf School Program Handbook

Nursery/Kindergarten 2013-2014

Founded on Rudolf Steiner's humanitarian curriculum,
The Denver Waldorf School awakens and inspires students' critical thinking,
emotional intelligence and artistic expression,
preparing them to bring relevant contributions to the world.

Dear Nursery/Kindergarten Family,

This handbook has been written to serve as a bridge between the home and the classroom, as we work side by side creating healthy environments in which the children can thrive. Please read it and keep it as a reference during the year. As always, feel free to communicate your questions and concerns as they arise.

With Warmth,

The Early Childhood Faculty, (303) 777-0531:

Buttercup Nursery:

Rachel Ladasky, ext. 133

Cell: (970) 420-9537

Mary Ray, ext. 126

Cell: (303) 921-0687

Please note that this program is located at:

Unity on the Avenue

4670 E 17th Ave Pkwy

Denver, CO 80220

Starflower Nursery:

Jennifer Palmer, ext. 135

Cell: (970) 556-2035

Kimberly Rickards, ext. 137

Cell: (720) 236-8626

Please note that this program is located at:

Sixth Avenue United Church of Christ

3250 6th Ave.

Denver, CO 80206

Larkspur Kindergarten:

Alice Jordan, ext.184

Cassie Wilkinson, ext.153

Morning Glory Kindergarten:

Laurie Clark, ext. 166

Brittney Gaillot, ext. 154

Woodrose Kindergarten:

Krisztina van't Veer, ext.156

Cyndi Ross-Smith, ext. 173

Philosophy and Program Description

The Denver Waldorf Early Childhood Program develops the growing child's senses, imagination, and awareness of self and others, in a nurturing, rhythmical, and homelike environment. The Denver Waldorf School is a full member of and accredited by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), the Association of Colorado Independent Schools (ACIS), the Council of American Private Education (CAPE), and the Waldorf Early Childhood Association (WECAN) and is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS).

Our Waldorf Early Childhood Program is structured to provide a gradual transition from the life of the home to the structure of an elementary school. It is based upon the simple yet profound concepts of imitation, repetition, and creative play. We use the name "Kindergarten" because in the literal interpretation it means "children's garden". This is the image that we choose to carry on behalf of the young child: a place where childhood is considered a valid and honorable experience, not a time to be rushed toward adulthood.

In the Nursery/Kindergarten, a child will gradually become accustomed to working within a group, listening to stories, interacting with a teacher, and following a daily routine, while at the same time being aided in his or her development as an individual through the encouragement of creative play, practical life skills, and artistic opportunities. The teacher deeply understands the young child and the need for movement, as well as the child's devotion to learning about the world through imitating everything he or she experiences.

Here are some of the core activities of the Waldorf Early Childhood Program and the significance of each in relationship to lifelong learning:

Birthdays

Your child's birthday is a most intimate personal festival. Each teacher has a slightly different way of honoring your child and your family. Some of the different components include a story, verse/poem, singing, birthday cake, cards made by the children, and a special gift given by the teachers to the child. Parents are asked to participate in this special celebration. Your teacher will contact you, close to the birthday, to choose the date and discuss all of the necessary preparations. This verse can be recited to the child the evening before the birthday:

When I have said my evening prayer
And my clothes are folded on the chair
When mother switches off the light
I'll still be ____ years old tonight.
But from the very break of day
Before the children rise and play
Before the darkness turns to gold
Tomorrow I'll be ____ years old.
____ kisses when I wake!
____ candles on my cake!

Circle Time

The class is brought together to sing songs and recite verses with the teacher. These may be connected with the seasons, a particular fairy tale or story, or just part of the general lore of childhood. Circle time also includes developmental movement activities with the songs and verses.

Repeating and remembering verses sets the stage for the more intense memory work that will be required in elementary school. Repetition is lauded as a foundation for healthy brain development. Rhyming sounds and alliteration found in poems and songs educate the ear, forming the beginnings of spelling and phonics. Directed movement is a basis for healthy brain development.

Craft and Artistic Activity

Wet-on-wet watercolor painting, beeswax modeling, crayon drawing, as well as various forms of handwork such as finger knitting, simple sewing, and woodworking are done as group activities or at the individual initiative of a child. High quality, organic materials are used for these activities.

These activities encourage the child's natural sense of beauty, color, and form, as well as laying the groundwork for artistic techniques that will be needed later. They also aid in the development of fine motor skills.

Creative Play Time

The children have a long period of time during which they are encouraged to imagine and play with a wide variety of natural materials and playthings, following their own initiative. During this time, the teacher is involved in preparing the snack, sewing, cleaning, making toys or any of a number of practical activities in which the children are welcome to participate. An atmosphere of work and play permeates the room. Within the activities of play, children integrate the world and practice their life skills such as movement and balance, sensory integration, speech and language capacity, social and emotional interactions, and imaginative and cognitive development.

Festivals

We mark the rhythms of the year through the changing seasons and the coming and going of festivals. As the year weaves from one festival to another, we are provided with a true reason for preparation and celebration. For the young child, the preparation is half the joy. They love decorating the room, creating handcrafts, baking special treats, and learning songs and verses chosen just for that particular festival. The stories that are told give the children a pictorial understanding of the festivals, and speak deeply to them, so that we do not need to make explanations.

Each room has a nature table which changes with the seasons, bringing into the room a way for the children to celebrate these changes. You might like to let your child have a small table, shelf, or windowsill to create his or her own nature table at home with treasures from walks and outings.

Your teacher will bring a better understanding of the festivals to you at parent meetings or in newsletters, for the celebration of festivals in our community is one of the most deeply fulfilling experiences for both young and old.

Life Arts

Part of the daily experience is tending to the domestic life (cleaning, gardening, cooking, repairing) and self care (toileting, hair brushing, hand washing). It is a process-oriented approach. For example, the children may grind the grains that they will later mix into their flour for bread making. Involving the children in practical activities and care of their materials, their environment, and themselves lays the groundwork for organizational skills needed in adult life.

Music

Singing is woven throughout the day and is often used for transitioning from one activity to another. Sometimes simple instruments, such as chimes and kinder-harps, are also available for the children's use. Simple singing games provide songs and rhymes for parents and children alike to enjoy. The children learn to mark the seasons, develop their sense of rhythm, and enhance their memory skills through the singing of specifically chosen songs.

Music lays the foundation for future math and engineering skills and can be a soothing influence throughout life.

Outdoor Play

The nurturing of a child's senses through outdoor experiences and activities is cherished in the early years. Children deeply experience sunlight and darkness, sparkling frosts, muddy puddles, and clear blue skies. You will find our Kindergarten class outside in all but the most formidable weather.

A child's experience of outdoor play lays the foundation for later studies of plants and animals, the weather, geology, astronomy, and other natural sciences. Extensive outdoor experiences also hone the child's observation skills.

Snack Time

This is another group activity where the children eat together family-style with their teachers. It is likely that they have also helped to prepare the food and set the table. Afterwards, they clear the table and wash their dishes.

An emphasis on gratitude for the food and on table manners sets the stage for lifelong social skills. Expression of gratitude for the simple gifts of everyday life builds a foundation of appreciation and respect for our environment.

Story Time

Children hear a special story each day told directly by the teacher.

The ability to sit and listen to an adult for a sustained period of time is a skill that is gradually developed. The oral tradition of language arts development in the Waldorf school and the content of the stories expose the children to the beauty of language and literacy.

Rhythms

Children are carried along by the rhythms of the world they live in, from the rhythms of breathing in their bodies, to the daily rhythms of sleeping and waking. The yearly cycle of the seasons, and the rhythmic procession of stars across the heavens, are both part of life's experience for adults and children. The Waldorf view is that children flourish when their daily activities reflect the natural order of life with a rhythmic arrangement of the day. Just as children are carried along by the regular rhythms of the school day, they are also nourished by the regular routine at home.

As difficult as it is in modern life to establish regular mealtimes and bedtimes, we strongly encourage you to do so. It is very important for young children to have an early supper and go to bed at the same time every night. We recommend that bedtime be as early as 7 pm, and no later than 8 pm. Please feel free to contact your teacher if you would like some ideas for making this transition a happy one for parent and child.

Verses and Blessings

If you are interested in learning more songs, verses or blessings, or if you would like to find out the words to a tune your little one comes home singing, the teachers will be happy to help you. The following verses are often spoken in the Kindergartens:

Verse 1

Down is the earth, up is the sky,
Here are my friends, and here am I.

The following lines are sometimes added:

When the sun sends down its glow
Children, animals and flowers know
That the sun happily gives
Light and warmth to all that lives.
My own heart is like the sun
Bringing light to everyone.
Lovingly my heart unfolds
Opening out its shining gold.

Verse 2

To be said for the child at bedtime:

From my head to my feet, I am the image of God.
From my heart to my hands, I feel the breath of God.
When I speak with my mouth I follow God's will.
When I behold God everywhere,
In Mother, Father, in all dear people,
In animal and flower, in tree and stone,
Nothing brings fear,
But Love to all around me here.

The following blessings are said at mealtimes:

Blessing 1

To be said or sung:

Earth who gives to us this food,
Sun who makes it ripe and good,
Dear Sun, dear Earth, by you we live,
Our loving thanks to you we give.

Hold hands

Blessings on the meal and
Peace on the earth.

Blessing 2
Song:

For the golden corn, for the apples on the tree,
For the golden butter and the honey for our tea,
For fruits and nuts and berries that grow beside the way,
For birds and beasts and flowers,
We thank thee every day.
And we hold our hands this way-
Blessings on our meal and
Peace on the earth.

Policies and Procedures

Morning Arrival

Children are the most sensitive in the mornings. Coming out of the world of sleep and dreamland makes them very open to influences around them. It is especially important to awaken little children slowly and gently. We have a short outside playtime at the beginning of the day. This allows the children an opportunity to make a transition between home and school, to find an activity or a friend, or make a connection with a teacher.

The official time for the day to begin in all the classrooms is 8:30 am. There is morning care available at the Main Campus, which begins at 7:30 am with Laurie Clark in the Morning Glory classroom. You can arrive at 8:00 am at either nursery location.

Drop-Off Time

It helps children to know how drop-off time will go. For example, you may inform them ahead of time, something like this: "When we get to school we will put your lunch box away, and then you can show me the playground. Then I need my 3 hugs and 3 kisses to last me through the day. I will pick you up after school, and we will..." Then give 3 hugs and 3 kisses, and leave with confidence, knowing that your children are in good hands. If they cry for long, we promise to call, but that is a rare event. Usually the anticipation of you leaving is the worst part. Soon your child will be happily playing or helping the teacher.

Sign-in and Sign-Out

In compliance with our licensing requirements by CDHS, all children must be signed-in and signed-out on a daily basis. For security purposes, a sign in/out sheet must be maintained daily by the center. It must include, for each child in care, the date, the child's name, the time when the child arrived and left the center, and the parent or guardian's signature.

You will find the appropriate notebook near the classroom door. Please enter the time and your signature. **Please remember to sign-in on arrival and sign-out upon departure each day.** The teachers use this book as a valuable tool to keep track of the children, checking it each day against the head count, and taking it with them during fire/tornado drills to make sure all are present.

Attendance

For the kindergarten children, please call your child's teacher by 8:00 am each day that your child will not be at school. For either nursery, please text your child's teacher before 8:00 am if your child will be absent. Starflower: (970) 556-2035, Buttercup: (970) 420-9537.

Afternoon Program

The children attending only for the morning session will be dismissed at 12:30 pm. The children attending for full days will stay for the afternoon program that includes lunch and a nap period when the children will rest or sleep on a mat for a period of time. During the nap period, the teachers may sing, play the lyre, or tell a story. Upon awaking, the children play quietly indoors or go out to the playground to play. All children who stay for nap are asked to bring a small pillow, cotton crib sheet, and small breathable blanket or quilt from home (each well labeled). Please place these items in a plastic/vinyl reusable grocery bag your child's name on it. These items must be small as storage is limited. The afternoon program ends at 3:00 pm.

If you are expecting to be late for afternoon pickup at either Nursery, please text Kimberly Rickards at 720-236-8626 for Starflower, and for Buttercup, text Mary Ray at 303-921-0687, to let them know.

Aftercare: Aftercare begins at 3:10 pm and ends at 6:00 pm at an additional charge at the Fillmore location. There is no aftercare available for either nursery class. If you are late picking up your child from the Afternoon Program, they will be signed into Aftercare and you will be billed appropriately.

If you need to reach After Care staff or get a message to your child between the hours of 2:30 – 6:30 p.m., you may call extension 113 or call or text Dawn at 720-837-4933 or Brooke at 303-718-1098. Please only use the cell phone numbers during After Care hours.

If you are expecting to be late for pickup from Aftercare, you need to call the school and let the After Care staff know. An aftercare teacher will wait with your child until your arrival. If your child is here after 6:00 pm, you will be billed \$1.00 per minute.

Releasing Children from the School

Your child will only be allowed to go home with you or persons listed on their Back to School forms as a Pickup Person. If someone else is needed to pick up your child, you need to add his or her name to the Back to School form and let your child's teacher know. In the event that your child has not been picked up at the time of closing of the center, the aftercare or afternoon teacher will wait for you, or someone designated to pick up your child on the Back to School form to arrive. If you are held up, please call the aftercare or afternoon program teacher to let her know that you will be late. If the teacher cannot contact you, the parent, they will call your emergency contacts. In the event that you, and all of your emergency contacts, cannot be reached, the aftercare teacher will contact Child Protective Services.

Illness

The best place for your child to be properly nursed through a sickness is at home. Kindergarten is a busy place and not the right environment for a sick child. Please do not send your child to school with colored discharges, a fever, deep cough, rash, diarrhea, or any infectious condition. Children can be adamant about wanting to come to school, but it is far better for them to remain at home until they are truly well. All working parents know the desperate feeling of needing to go to work when a little one is not feeling well. The teachers are very sympathetic to the situation, but we urge parents to arrange back-up childcare. After an illness, children often appear healthy in the morning, but are still not up to the vigorous activity of the Kindergarten. Please allow your child at least one full day of rest after an illness before returning to class.

A school nurse has been assigned to our school through the Colorado State Health Department. Our nurse this year is Marisa Beauchaine. Marisa will visit the school at least once a month to help us stay in compliance with regulations regarding the health and safety of your children. If your child has a chronic condition such as asthma, serious allergies, or some other health condition, or if you need the school to dispense any medication to your child on a regular basis, Christa Gustafson, our Main Office Manager, will be in touch with you regarding putting together a health care plan in conjunction with your physician so the school best knows how to take care of your child. If your child needs medications on a temporary basis, such as antibiotics for an infection or pain medication for an injury, you and your physician will need to fill out a Medication Administration Permission form allowing the school to dispense the medication. Please call Christa in the Main Office, extension 100, if such a situation occurs, and she will help you find the form on our website for immediate access. **Law prohibits The Denver Waldorf School faculty and staff from dispensing any medication, prescription or over-the-counter, to your child unless prescribed in writing by a physician and brought to school by the parent along with a Medication Administration Permission form signed by both parent and physician.** If you have any questions, again please call Christa.

Parking at School

At the main campus: Park your car in parking lot and walk through main entrance to classroom to sign in your child. Between 7:30-8:00am, enter through Before Care entrance, south side of building.

At Starflower Nursery, parking is available in front of the school on 6th Avenue and around the corner on Adams Street. Please do not park in the alleyway or behind the church. Behind the church, there are only spaces for the pastor, the office manager, and the person who does building maintenance.

At Buttercup Nursery, parking is available in front of the school on 17th Avenue Parkway as well as around the corner on Dahlia Street.

Symbols

Each child will be assigned a symbol. They may find a little picture of a flower, a ladybug, or a bird to identify their cubby, cup, and chair. Your child's teacher will tell you your child's symbol.

Food

In the nursery/kindergartens, parents may be asked to buy groceries for the classroom snack on a rotating basis. If your class does this, your teacher would provide you with a list of needed items. You would pick up a grocery card in the business office to purchase the groceries. If your purchases exceed the card's amount, keep your receipts and bring them to the business office for reimbursement. (At the Nurseries, Kimberly at Starflower and Rachel at Buttercup will provide the grocery list and grocery card and will collect receipts for reimbursement.) In keeping with the wholesome atmosphere, environment, and activities for the children, we also ask that the groceries provided be of the highest quality. Whenever possible, organic food is served. Each child's special needs are considered. If your child has allergies, please speak to your teacher. Because of peanut allergies in the school, no peanut butter or peanut products are allowed in any classroom.

If your child stays for the afternoon, we ask that they bring their homemade lunch in a lunchbox or basket. It is very nice for the child to have a cloth napkin. Please avoid packaged snacks and all gum and other sweets. Also be sure to pack plenty of protein-rich foods (cheese, nuts, meat, yogurt) to help children sustain high energy levels throughout the day. We ask that only water,

milk (rice or other) or 100% fruit juice be sent for lunch. We encourage a lot of water drinking here in Colorado, and it is available throughout the day for the children.

Clothing

We strongly suggest you bring a cloth bag containing extra clothes to hang in your child's cubby. Don't forget plenty of socks and underwear. **All clothing must be labeled with your child's name.** It can be distressing to fall in a puddle or arrive late to the toilet, and it helps if an upset child is able to put on his or her own clothing. The clothes need to be replenished with clean ones as they are used and updated seasonally. In cold weather, include extra hats and mittens. **Note:** Starflower has a dresser-full of extra clothes in the office and very little storage space in cubbies, so Starflower parents only bring in what is needed for the day.

The clothes your child wears to school need to be sturdy. We would prefer no fancy or faddish clothes, but rather standard play clothes. **Please, no media-inspired clothing.** Natural fiber clothing is recommended for your child's health, the breathe-ability of the skin, and for warmth.

Please dress your child in LAYERS. Everyone living in Colorado knows to dress in layers as the weather is ever changing. Bare legs and short dresses or shorts can be very cold for children. In cooler weather, undershirts, tights and leggings are nice under the clothing. Warmth safeguards health on many levels.

HATS are required for the children year-round. The children go outside every day, so sun hats in warm weather, and warm hats and gloves in cold weather are important to protect your child and allow them to play comfortably outdoors.

Diapers

Both nurseries have a shelf to store diapers, and we will keep a supply of diapers on hand. If your child is still in diapers, please supply 3 or 4 to keep in their cubby and replenish it as needed. We wear gloves and the changing table is cleaned with antiseptic spray. We wash the children's hands and our own. They are encouraged to try the potty when they show interest after seeing their peers using the big potty. If you wish for us to use special cream for your child, it must be clearly marked with the child's name and we must have a signed permission from the parents.

Potty

In both Nursery classes, for the children new to potty training, we take regular potty breaks, but occasionally accidents happen, even with children who have been potty trained for a while. Sometimes the excitement of being in a new place can be a distraction for a while. No worries.

At the main campus, all children entering the kindergarten program must be **completely** potty trained upon entry in the fall.

Shoes and Slippers

All the children need sturdy play shoes. The children play heartily and go on frequent walks. Please do not send them in high-heeled shoes, slippery bottomed shoes, or shoes with no backs. Also be sure the shoes match the weather: lighter shoes in warmer weather, rain boots or hiking boots on rainy days, snow boots on snowy days.

All children need slippers to wear in the classroom. Plain, well-fitted ones with no ties are best. Families are often happy with ballet, knitted or felted slippers, or water, or cloth shoes. Slippers of these kinds can often be found at REI or Target.

Snow Clothes/Boots

All children need **snow pants, coats, hats, mittens and boots** on snowy days. Please write your last name on each boot, as the children do not always recognize their own things alongside the others’.

Snow Days

Our snow policy calls for a designated faculty or staff person to monitor the weather during times of heavy snow. We will be looking at how the weather affects the safety of our families traveling to school and if the quality of education would be minimized by inclement weather. If it is felt that a snow day is necessary, a decision will be made by 6:30 am and local TV and radio stations will be contacted. We recognize that different areas of the city will be affected uniquely during our winter storms - we encourage our families to use their own good judgment as to whether or not they bring their children to school on inclement weather days.

We do not have “late starts” -- we will be here for regular school hours for those that need to be here, but parents should take their time and come in at their own pace.

Discipline

As teachers of the early childhood program, we see our task to be removers of hindrances, allowing the children’s gifts to unfold. We try to harmonize the children’s development by providing opportunities for physical activity, creating feelings of security (which involves the teachers being kind but strong individuals), providing warmth (both outer to protect their organs and inner warmth to make them feel acknowledged, accepted, and cared for), serving good, nutritious whole foods for optimal growth, providing behavioral boundaries (rules), presenting calm activities that interest but do not overwhelm, allowing children to do things for themselves, and providing predictable and rhythmic days, full of time for imaginative play. Fundamental is to see and affirm the children for who they are, and to redirect them when they are having social difficulties. “No” is saved for the occasions when children may hurt themselves, others, or the classroom things.

Field Trips and Transportation

Every teacher has a checklist of items as a support tool to promote safety, communication, and planning for outings. A Class Field Trip Form is filled out and returned to the office listing the names of the children in attendance, the destination, destination phone number, and directions to the destination. The date/time leaving the school is listed, along with the return time. A Field Trip Driver/Chaperone Information Sheet lists every driver, their cell phone and their passengers. Each driver will carry directions and a complete set of Back to School forms for the class with permission from the parents and emergency contacts. Copies of drivers’ licenses, registration and insurance are required from each driver who drives children who are not their own and are filed in the Main Office. The teacher talks to the parents concerning seating (proper seat belts and restraints) and emergency procedures on the road. Each car carries some first aid items with them.

Late For Field Trip

If you arrive with your child late for a field trip, at the Nursery locations, a note will be taped to the front door with directions to the field trip and the time we will return. At the Main Campus, Christa Gustafson, our Main Office Manager, will have all the information.

Emergency Contact

It is essential that we always have a current phone number so we can reach you should a medical emergency arise. Please keep the office and your teacher up-to-date as to your whereabouts and any changes in your address, e-mail, or home, office, and cell numbers. Parents will be called immediately to pick up a sick child. It is imperative that all health and emergency forms sent to you in your enrollment packet are completely filled out.

Notification for Illnesses, Accidents, Injuries

In the case of minor illnesses, accidents, or injuries that require a parent or guardian to come pick up your child, we will call the emergency numbers and persons that you have identified on your Back to School form. In case of serious life-threatening illness, accident, or injury, we will call 911 and perform CPR as necessary until an ambulance arrives. You will also be notified immediately.

Emergency Procedures in Case of Lost Child, Fire, or Tornado

If a child is lost, the police will be called immediately, then the parents. In case of a tornado, the sign-in book will be taken along as all of the children are escorted to a safe place in the basement until it is safe to return to the classroom. In case of a fire, 911 will be called. Each classroom has an emergency procedure of which door to go out and where to wait for fire trucks to arrive. The teachers will check the sign-in book to make sure all children are present. The children will not be returned to the classroom until the firefighters say that it is safe. We perform monthly drills so children are well accustomed to emergency procedures.

Health and Medication Information

Because your child spends such a large portion of the day with us at school, it is imperative that we partner with you, the parents, regarding the health and well-being of your child. We need to know about any special health concerns your child might have such as asthma or allergies. A list of food allergies will be posted in the kitchen area of the classroom. Please list your child(ren)'s allergies on the Back to School form. If your child will need medication for an allergic reaction (i.e., Benadryl or an Epi-pen), we will need a Health Care Plan, signed by the parent(s) and the child's physician. We will also need the medication to be in the original container with the pharmacy label, or with the child's name if it is over-the-counter. Please check expiration dates on the medication and keep them current. Please see "School Nurse" in the Parent Handbook for more information.

If an illness or injury is serious, we will immediately contact the child's parent(s). The school will err on the side of caution, so if calling an ambulance is necessary, please know that the school insurance covers any cost over and beyond what your insurance would cover for these services. We want you to know that the staff is trained and certified in CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions, and Medication Administration.

Physician Statement

Within 30 days of the first day of school, The Denver Waldorf School needs to have a Physician Statement on file for every new child in the Nursery-Kindergarten. These Physician Statements must reflect an exam date within the last 12 months. A new Physician's Statement will be needed when the old one expires.

Immunization Record

On the first day of school for new students, and then every 12 months, DWS will need an updated immunization record for every child in the Nursery-Kindergarten.

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)

The Denver Waldorf School partners with CDPHE in order to communicate in a timely and effective manner to the school community regarding health issues that may arise.

Student/Teacher Ratio

The ratio of teacher to student in the nurseries is one to seven, and one to ten in the three kindergarten classes. Each class has an experienced lead teacher, a lead assistant, and an afternoon assistant.

Back-To-School Open House

Your child's teacher will advise you of the date and time for Back-To-School Open Houses. This is a relaxing time for the parents, children, and teachers to meet and mingle, and watch the children play.

Parent Meetings

The Nurseries and Kindergartens will have parent meetings throughout the year, both as individual classes and as an Early Childhood Program as a whole. Your child's teacher will inform you of the meeting place and time for all of these events.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Individual parent-teacher conferences are held in the Fall and Spring of each year. It is advisable for both parents to attend when possible. You will hear about your child, and comments may include looking at social skills, personality at school, and anecdotes. It is a time when parents and the teacher can communicate and make sure that we are all "on the same page". You will be notified of the dates and times to sign up.

We frequently see and talk to you at drop-off and pick-up times, but any time you have concerns, or wish to have a more in-depth conversation, feel free to contact us. We may call you, or put a note in the lunch box if, for example, your child has a minor injury. If your child is experiencing an ongoing difficulty, we will call you to arrange a special conference at any point in time.

Toys

Please don't allow your child to bring toys to school. Be sure to check pockets as we often find little cars and toys hidden inside. We always find it necessary to put the toys away in cubbies because they can get lost (tears), are distracting, and/or the children fight over them. So please keep them safe at home or in the car.

Television and Media

We have found that media screen time is counterproductive to what we, in the Waldorf Nursery/Kindergarten, are trying to nurture in the young child. We ask that all families make a commitment to protect their growing children by eliminating these activities from their children's lives.

We encourage you to explore the many alternatives to media. Examples may be found in any domestic work (washing dishes, gardening, carpentry, polishing shoes or tables, spraying water on plants). Drawing or beeswax-modeling are good alternative activities. And, of course, play is the best possible work for children of this age. The Nursery/Kindergarten teachers would be happy to share ideas, or suggest other alternatives for your family. It isn't easy, but the rewards are great and last a lifetime!

For more information on the damaging effects of television watching, the following books have been found helpful: *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* by Jerry Mander, *The Plug-In Drug* by Marie Winn, and *What To Do After You Turn Off the TV* by Frances Moore Lappe and family. One of the parents in our own community, Maria Forrest, wrote a book entitled *Alternatives to TV*.

Moving from the Nursery to the Kindergarten

All five of our Early Childhood classes are made up of mixed-age groups. We offer three Kindergarten classes for children ages 3-1/2 to 6-1/2 (Larkspur, Morning Glory, and Woodrose) and two Nursery classes for children ages 2-1/2 to 4 (Starflower and Buttercup). Children must be two by February 25 for August enrollment in either Nursery. Nursery children who turn four by April 30 will, in most cases, move up to the kindergarten. In some cases, it may serve the child to be in the more protected space of the nursery through all of age four. This decision is made cooperatively with parents and teacher.

1st Grade Readiness

All children who turn six by April 30 will be considered for enrollment in the following year's 1st Grade. Readiness for 1st Grade is a multi-faceted consideration, of which chronological age is only one part. All children, and especially those with spring birthdays, deserve careful and sensitive individual consideration to assure that readiness is consolidated in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Visitors

Visitors at the Main Campus must check in with the main office and sign in, stating the time they arrived and what business they have at the school. Christa Gustafson, our Office Manager, will assist them. At both Nurseries, a guest book is on the table for guests to sign and a sign is also posted stating the procedure for guests at these sites.

Filing a Complaint

If you have any concerns regarding your child's care, we ask that you first take it to the Lead Kindergarten Teacher. Many problems are easily resolved with clear, direct, and honest communication. If you would feel more comfortable discussing the issue with someone else, or if you do not feel the teacher has adequately heard or dealt with your concern, please know that you can speak to Rachel Ladasky, Chair of the Kindergarten Program at extension 133 or rachelladasky@denverwaldorf.org. Again, if you still feel a need to pursue your concern, you may contact any member of the College of Teachers. These names and their contact information are listed in the first pages of the school directory.

Filing a Complaint with Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS)

This is a child care program that is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services and by the Department of Excise and Licenses. These licenses indicate that at the time of inspection the provider has met standards to operate a licensed Family Child Care Home, Child Care Center or School-Age Child Care Program. These standards include:

- Written policies and procedures
- Communications, emergency and security procedures
- Personnel requirements for education, experience, training and supervision
- Requirements including procedures for admissions: health care, personal hygiene, physical care, food and nutrition, discipline, overnight care, field trips and transportation, and fee policies

- Activities
- Equipment and Materials
- Facility Requirements
- Fire and Other Safety
- Maintaining children's records
- Administrative reports and records

In addition to the above standards, all licensed child care providers are required to report suspected physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of any of the children in their care.

You may report any suspected abuse by calling: **Child Abuse Hotline: 720-944-3000.**

If you want to make a complaint or have a concern regarding your child care provider, call: **Colorado Division of Childcare: 303-866-5958.**

If you want to make a complaint regarding health and sanitation issues, call: **Denver Department of Environmental Health, Child Care/Health Facilities Inspections: 720-865-5394.**

The child care provider's State Child Care License and Denver Department of Excise and Licenses should be posted or available for review at your request. All inspection reports must be posted or available for review upon request.

Reporting Child Abuse

The teachers are required by law to report any suspected incidents of child abuse to the Colorado Department of Human Services. All licensed child care providers are required to report suspected physical, emotional, or sexual abuse of any of the children in their care.

You may report any suspected abuse by calling: Child Abuse Hotline: 720-944-3000.

Admissions Process

The first step is to attend a Visitors Morning or a Kindergarten Experiential Morning to become familiar with the Waldorf educational approach. Please see "Visit Our School" on www.denverwaldorf.org for the dates. Next you need to complete an application and submit a \$75 application fee. As space becomes available, your child's application will be passed to the appropriate teacher, who will call to schedule an interview with you and your child. The interview is the opportunity for both teacher and parents to determine whether this is the right educational fit for the child and family. Upon acceptance, you will be contacted by the school to complete the enrollment process. In order to enroll your child, we must receive the contract, the registration fee, your child's immunization record, and a statement from your child's physician. Also note that we offer openings to children primarily in order of when the application was received. However, we do give priority to siblings of already-enrolled children and to children transferring from other Waldorf Schools. In order to maintain a healthy class dynamic, we may need to give consideration to the gender or age of a child to fill a class opening.

Tuition Schedule

On our website, www.denverwaldorf.org please see "Admissions" and "Tuition Schedule" for the rates. Kindergarten Total Tuition rates are calculated based on a standard daily rate. That standard daily rate defines the number of school days in a program. The five-day program is defined as 170 days, the four-day program is 135 days, the three-day program is 105 days, and the two-day nursery program is 70 days. Families wishing to change their enrollment schedule

in Kindergarten must complete the change of enrollment form available in the enrollment office. The fee for decreasing enrollment in the Pre-School/ Kindergarten is \$250.

When a Child Leaves the Program

In the early childhood program, there is a possibility that we may not be able to meet the needs of a child. In this case, the teacher will have a conference with the parents to determine a plan of action. The teacher will also have a discussion with the kindergarten staff. If it is felt that the child cannot remain at the school for the well being of the class, and/or for the child in question, the teacher involved and the Administrative Director, Judy Lucas, will have a meeting, and then parents will be notified in writing by the Administrative Director. Unused tuition will be returned to the family.

If your family chooses to leave the school, you will need to check the contract that you signed to see what your financial obligation will be. We offer an exit interview with each family.

Non-Discrimination

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, it is the policy of The Denver Waldorf School to employ and/or to provide benefits and services to all persons without regard to age, race, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or any other applicable status protected by law.