



Parent Guidelines

Early Childhood Program

2019-2020

Creekside Kinderclass Preschool, located at 1366 East Murray Holladay Road in Holladay, Utah, offers private preschool guided by the principles of public Waldorf education.

"Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility—these three forces are the very nerve of education."

Rudolf Steiner

(Revised 08/2019)

Dear Early Childhood Family,

Welcome to the Creekside Kinderclass Early Childhood Program. We are so happy to have you with us.

This handbook has been written to serve as a bridge between the home and the classroom, as we work side by side with you to create healthy environments in which children can thrive. Please read this guide and keep it to refer back to during the year. Feel free to communicate your questions and concerns as they arise.

With Warmth,

The Creekside Kinderclass Early Childhood Program Staff

wasatchfamilyfoundation.org

Philosophy and Program Description

The Creekside Kinderclass Early Childhood Program develops the growing child's senses, imagination, and awareness of self and others in a nurturing, rhythmic, and homelike environment. Our Waldorf Early Childhood Program is designed 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. The name *Kinderclass* is borrowed from the German word *Kindergarten*, which literally translates to "children's garden." A garden for children is the image 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 Kinderclass, 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

We consider your child's birthday to be a most intimate personal festival. Each teacher has a slightly different way of honoring your child and your family, including things like stories, verses, poems, songs, birthday cakes, cards made by the children, and special gifts given by the teachers to the child. Parents are asked to participate in this special celebration. Your teacher will contact you close to your child's birthday to choose the date and discuss all of the necessary preparations.

Here's a verse you can consider singing to your child on the eve of his or her birthday:

When I have said my evening prayer
And my clothes are folded on the chair
When mother (father) 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 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—and 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.

Crafts 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 each day 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 of 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 at home to create his or her own nature table with treasures from walks and outings.

Your teacher will bring a better understanding of the festivals to you at parent meetings or in emails, 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 of class 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 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 also 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 Preschool 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

At snack time, children eat together family-style with their teachers. 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 rhythm 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. Families can enhance the educational experience of their children by understanding the rhythms of the day. Children flourish in environments that are loving, orderly, and predictable. With an external sense of order and routine, they can comfortably live in the moment. Simply knowing what is expected at different intervals throughout the day can help children feel secure in the world.

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. Bedtime rituals can help to calm and soothe children and prepare them for restful sleep. Often, parents find that establishing a bedtime routine creates treasured time with their children.

Below are some recommendations we make for how to create rhythm in the home that will mirror the rhythm your child experiences in Kinderclass. Please feel free to contact your teacher if you would like more ideas for making this transition a happy one for parent and child.

- A regular bedtime that enables 10-12 hours of sleep
- A healthy, protein-rich breakfast consisting of whole foods and minimal sugar, every day
- It's important that children are bathed and groomed daily. Honoring their bodies in this way makes them feel well cared-for and loved.
- Reading to your child daily
- Household or yard chores
- Outdoor play
- Gardening
- Indoor creative play
- Hobbies
- Artistic and musical endeavors
- Cooking
- Nature hikes and walks
- Picnics
- Community or religious activities
- Volunteer or community projects

Verses and Blessings

During the school year, we will learn many verses and blessings. Here are two that are often spoken:

Verse 1

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

The following lines are sometimes added:

Our hearts open wide.
The lights streams deep inside.
Stars, moon, and sun
Shine on everyone.
Upon the earth we stand.
And give each one our hand.

The following blessings are said or sung at mealtimes, while holding hands:

Blessing 1

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.

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 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 to make a connection with a teacher.

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 hang up your coat, and then you can show me one thing in your classroom. Then I need my three hugs and three kisses to last me through the day. I will pick you up after school, and we will...” Then give three hugs and three kisses, and leave with confidence, knowing that your child is in good hands. If he or she cries 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.

Illness

The best place for your child to be properly nursed through a sickness is at home. School is a busy place and not the right environment for a sick child. A child may not attend our school if he/she has:

- Had a fever of 100.4 or higher within the last 24 hours
- Had diarrhea or vomited within the last 24 hours
- Been on prescribed medication for less than 24 hours (for contagious condition)
- Any unexplained rash or pink eye
- Head lice or remaining eggs
- Severe cough or evidence of pain from ears or throat
- A contagious illness

If a child arrives ill, the teacher will remind the parent of our sick policy and regretfully decide that a child must go home. This is awkward for the teacher and confusing and disappointing for the child, so please adhere to our sick policy because we are very consistent about it.

If a child becomes ill during the school day, the teacher will notify the parent to pick up their child as soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes from the time of notification. The child needs to be free of the condition that caused him/her to be sent home for 24 hours before returning.

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. At the same time, 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 school. Please allow your child at least one full day of rest after an illness before returning to class.

If a child is diagnosed with a serious communicable illness, please let the school know as soon as possible.

Accidents/First Aid

Homeopathic remedies (with a parent's written permission) and/or basic first aid are administered for common injuries. Should a child sustain an injury that warrants treatment at school or needs further attention, the parent will be notified by phone and/or in writing, based on the severity and nature of the injury as determined by staff.

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 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. 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.

If an illness or injury is serious, we will immediately contact the child's parent(s).

Protocol for Disenrollment

The Early Childhood Program reserves the right to dismiss and remove the Student from the Early Childhood Program at any time if, in the judgment of the Program Administrator, the Student's progress or conduct in or out of the Early Childhood Program, is not in keeping with the said rules. The goal of Creekside Kinderclass is to act quickly, thoughtfully, and thoroughly to communicate, address, and resolve concerns relating to students. Teachers and administration will attempt to work in a constructive manner to resolve problems before disenrollment.

The Early Childhood Programs teachers, volunteers, instructors, assistants and staff are expected to respect the dignity of the children and conduct themselves as adult role models. The children are expected to respect the staff and each other. In correcting a child's behavior, the staff says and shows the child what he or she should be doing rather than focusing on the unwanted behavior. The staff also explains the reasons for the rules

the children are asked to follow.

When a child's behavior poses an injury or threat of injury to self, other children, teachers, or staff members, parents may be called to pick up their child immediately.

When behaviors disrupt the classroom safety and/or productivity over time, teachers will provide data to administration. Examples of behaviors that warrant data include but are not limited to excessive and injurious biting; uncontrollable outbursts; excessive difficulty in adjusting to the classroom structure after a reasonable period of time, which may include an inability to independently work with materials and participate in circle times; leaving the classroom unattended; physical or verbal abuse inflicted on peers, teachers, or staff; ongoing refusal to comply with teacher directives.

Three incidents warrant an observation by an administrator, which will be followed by ideas for interventions. Parents will be consulted about the intervention plan. If the problem cannot be resolved, the Program Administrator will give the parents a notice of the child's dismissal from the program.

Enrollment may also be terminated if in our sole judgment a parent or guardian fails to support Creekside Kinderclass' programmatic goals and services, generates negativity in the Creekside Kinderclass or Wasatch Charter School community, behaves in a manner that is uncooperative, or is in any way abusive to staff or administration.

If your child is dismissed from the program due to disciplinary problems, you will forfeit the entire \$300 commitment fee and \$250 supplies fee.

Potty Training

Children enrolled in Creekside Kinderclass must be potty trained before attending preschool. A child having accidents daily would not be considered potty trained. Children must be wearing underwear. Please note that wearing pull ups isn't considered being potty trained.

Why do children have to be potty trained before they begin preschool?

- There are strict standards for changing and disposing of wet or soiled diapers.
- The classrooms are not equipped for diaper changing.
- When an adult is busy changing a child's diaper or soiled clothing, it is taking away from learning time for all students and it removes one adult from the direct supervision of and interaction with the rest of the class.

We do understand that even potty trained children will occasionally have toileting accidents. By definition, "accidents" are unusual incidents and should happen infrequently. Missing the toilet and/or making a mess in the restroom would be

considered an accident. In these instances, the teachers will help children to change their clothes, encouraging independence as much as possible.

A potty trained child is a child who can do the following:

1. Communicate to the teachers that he/she needs to go to the restroom before they need to go.
2. Alert him/herself to stop what he/she is doing, to go and use the bathroom.
3. Pull down his/her clothes and get them back up without assistance.
4. Wipe him/herself after using the toilet.
5. Get on/off the toilet by him/herself.
6. Wash and dry hands.
7. Postpone going if they must wait for someone who is in the bathroom or if we are away from the classroom.
8. Awaken during nap time should they need to use the bathroom.

We certainly will ask your child many times throughout the day and always before nap time if they need to use the bathroom. A teacher will assist children as needed, but children should be able to complete toileting activities independently. This is an issue which protects all concerned.

It is not uncommon for a child who is fully toilet trained to have a setback when he/she is in a new environment. Preschool staff are aware of this and will assist the children when necessary. Please dress your child in clothing that can be undone and changed easily. Please send a complete change of clothes appropriate for the season. These will be left at school in case of accidents, and returned at the end of the school year. Parents will be notified if a child has a toileting accident. We ask that parents please work with their children to independently use the bathroom and to clean up after any messes they make.

If your child is not completely potty trained as described above when preschool starts, you may withdraw your child from preschool and place their name at the top of our waiting list. Registration, commitment, and supply fees are non-refundable; however, if your child is re-enrolled in our program at a later date during the same school year, you will not need to pay these fees again. If you choose this option, we cannot guarantee that a space will be available when your child is ready.

A child will not be considered toilet trained for our preschool program if the child continues to consistently have toileting accidents after the first 4 weeks of school. After the first 4 weeks of school, the following policies will be in place for children who have accidents.

1. If one or two accidents occur in one week, the parent will be notified with the understanding that the issue needs to be addressed and corrected.
2. If three or more accidents occur in one week, the parent will be notified with the understanding that if the issue isn't corrected by the end of the second week, the child will have to stay home at least one week or longer until he/she is completely potty-trained. Tuition cannot be pro-rated during this time. Parents should contact the director to facilitate the child's return to school.
3. If multiple accidents occur in one day, the parent will be notified on that day; and if not corrected by day three, the child will have to stay home at least one week or longer until he/she is completely potty- trained. Tuition cannot be pro-rated during this time. Parents should contact the director to facilitate the child's return to school.

If the situation is not corrected permanently, we will discuss the issue with the parents and reserve the right to suspend attendance of the child at such time.

Food

Our food philosophy and policy is dedicated to the students, parents, staff, and surrounding community. We are all here because we care about each and every student. Our approach to food consumption and education is holistic in nature. In other words, our food philosophy considers the nutritional content of the food, how the food is produced, and its impact on our environment and economy.

Aside from our philosophical stance, scientific research shows that students focus, perform, and feel better physically and mentally when they eat nutritious whole foods. We recognize that food can be very personal and can take the perspective of right and wrong, so it is essential to remain non-judgmental. While we encourage and require certain food behaviors at Creekside Kinderclass, we are open to discussion and will be patient with all who are new to these food philosophies and standards. We believe food is a tool that connects us; it is not about judgment or discrimination.

We provide a warm snack each day for children. Whenever possible, we serve organic food. If your child has an allergy or you are following specific dietary guidelines, please tell your child's teacher and/or the director. You are free to bring a snack that is similar in nature for your child.

We encourage a lot of water drinking here in Utah, and it is available throughout the day for the children.

Clothing

Creekside Kinderclass strives to be a model of quality and beauty in the educational process and to bring an atmosphere of care and respect to everything that concerns the children at school. Physical warmth is vital to the healthy development of children. Children need to be dressed in layers for ease of movement and comfort. Their clothes should allow them to run, jump, raise arms above their heads, and bend over to touch their toes with complete freedom of movement—and without embarrassment to themselves or others.

We recognize that all students are valued individually for who they are and not what they wear. Clothing, however, can be distracting to students and teachers and can undermine the school environment. Therefore, the following dress code has been adopted to help create a positive environment for all, where the focus is on learning:

- All clothes must be neat and clean and cannot be torn, tattered, or suggestive.
- Weather-appropriate clothing is important. In winter, warm coats, snow pants, gloves, and hats are required. In the warmth of the sun, hats are required to protect students from harmful rays. Our students can be outside for up to one hour on some days, so protective clothing is very important.
- Please dress your child in layers. Bare legs and short dresses and shorts can be very cold during cooler times of day and cooler seasons. Undershirts, tights, and leggings make great layers under clothing. Warmth safeguards health.
- Long hair needs to be clean and brushed and tied back out of their faces so it doesn't distract from their play.

In addition, clothes **may not** feature media images or inappropriate or distracting logos, symbols, or pictures. The school environment is one where we wish to encourage and nurture reverence for what is noble, true, and beautiful. In order to create a suitable environment for learning, we try to surround the students with living images rather than movie or cartoon characters. In an effort to create a working and learning environment that is as free as possible from such distracting influences, we encourage clothes and personal items such as bags, backpacks, lunch boxes, and shoes to also be free of media characters.

We strongly suggest you bring a ziploc bag containing extra clothes to place 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.

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

Shoes

The children play heartily and go on frequent walks outside, so they must have sturdy outdoor play shoes. Please do not send them to school in high-heeled shoes, slippery bottomed shoes, sandals, 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.

In addition, all children need lightweight indoor shoes to wear in the classroom. To protect our classroom floors, and carpeting, students must change into these shoes when they come into the building. These shoes must have a rubber/waterproof sole in case we must go outside quickly due to an emergency (due to the fire code). Plain, well-fitted ones with no ties are best.

Rain/Snow Clothes/Boots

All children need rain pants, jacket, and boots for rainy days. They will also 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.

Television and Media

The educational philosophy of Creekside Kinderclass is based upon a deep understanding of child development. Waldorf education is known for its holistic approach, instilling a love of learning, creativity, independent problem-solving, and healthy social skills through a balance of academics, art, and direct experience. We believe that children need to move, run, and use their bodies to learn. They need to interact with others and their environments, exploring and discovering things for themselves firsthand. Playing helps them learn how to handle aggression, to share and be friends, to work out differences. Children also need time to be alone and discover that quietude is sometimes a necessary condition for imaginative play and creativity to blossom.

We request that you do not allow television and other media screen-viewing (including video games, iPad, etc.) from Sunday afternoon through Friday after school. We realize that significantly limiting or eliminating media from your child's life might feel like a tall order. However, with support and reassurance, we are confident that families will find that more free time means more quality time together, and more time for your child to develop and use inner resources to create games and creative play. We understand that while television and other screen media/activities can serve as a source of information and entertainment for adults, children do not operate in the same developmental stage as adults. Studies show that excessive screen media time can be harmful to a child's developing mind and body, and can significantly shorten their attention span.

For more information, talk with your child's teacher, attend parent nights, and read the latest research on the effects of television and other technologies on brain function and imagination. The following sources provide additional information about the philosophy behind our media policy:

- *Endangered Minds: Why Our Children Don't Think* by Jane Healy
- *The Plug-In Drug* and *Unplugging the Plug-In Drug*, both by Marie Winn
- *What To Do After You Turn Off the TV* by Francis Moore Lapp
- *Who's Bringing them Up or How to Break the TV Habit* by Martin Large

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. Better to keep them safe at home or in the car.

Symbols

Each child will be given a beautiful symbol (nature picture such as a tree, flower, or butterfly). They will use their little picture of a flower, a ladybug, or a bird to identify their cubby, cup, and chair. Your child's teacher will ask you to select a symbol for your child at the parent orientation meeting.

Parent Expectations

Parent Participation

A minimum of ten (10) hours of service per preschool child are requested each year. In addition to the sign-up sheets available at your child's classroom orientation, we invite you to share your hobbies or skills, your ethnic customs and celebrations, travels in different countries. Participation hours can also include cleaning, helping with laundry, working in the gardens, chaperoning on walks, etc. Additionally, parents are strongly encouraged to allocate at least five (5) hours attending various parent education events throughout the year.

Courtesy and Respect

We strive to teach the children to be courteous and respectful to all people. Children learn from example. All members of the community are expected to abide by the following guidelines, so that we can serve as proper role models for the children:

- Speak in a respectful manner to all staff, families and children.
- When discussing sensitive topics, speak privately with the individual concerned. Refrain from discussing matters in front of any children.
- Please turn your cell phone off or to vibrate while you are in the school. If you must use the phone please step outside.
- Keep child issues confidential.

Healthy Communication Guidelines

At Creekside Kinderclass and Wasatch Charter School, we seek to create an authentic and nurturing community of students, faculty, staff, parents, neighbors, and friends. We hope that each “single soul reflects the total community, and the community itself is reflected in the single soul” (Rudolf Steiner). As adults in this community, we are obliged to provide models worthy of imitation for the children. If we are to foster respect, we must model respect in our interactions with each other. Our school is committed to positive adult communication, based on mutual respect. We are committed to an atmosphere where different perspectives are heard and valued, and confidentiality is respected.

One of the 12 senses described by Rudolf Steiner is the sense of ego—meaning a sense not of oneself only, but a cultivation of sensitivity to others. Though it is natural for questions and concerns to arise within any community, sensitivity and respect allow such concerns to be communicated in a productive and constructive manner. An important starting point is recognizing that the first priority is serving the best interests of the students. All respectful adult interactions, large and small, lead to building a healthy environment for student learning. All respectful adult communication serves to model appropriate, constructive and adult behavior.

To accomplish this goal, we abide by certain principles:

- We demonstrate respect, in both what we say, and how we say it.
- We focus on issues, not individuals. We assume that others are acting out of their best intentions.
- We keep an open mind. We are positive and flexible. We ask questions first.
- We respect the confidentiality of information imparted in confidence, including that shared in group meetings. We honor the need of others to do the same.

General Guidelines

- When a question or issue arises concerning another person (a class teacher, a subject teacher, a staff member, or another parent), we take it up appropriately and, as soon as possible, we have a face-to-face conversation with that person. Asking a clarifying question is often all that is needed to solve an issue. We demonstrate respect by speaking to people directly, rather than taking the issue to others when the one with whom we have an issue is not present.
- We respect others’ time and priorities by arranging for an appropriate time and place for the conversation.

- Teachers will respond to a meeting request within one to two work days.
- We strive not to take things personally. We listen with an open heart and mind.
- We use email and texting thoughtfully, keeping in mind the four Principles above; conflicts are almost never resolved effectively using written communication.
- We familiarize ourselves with these communication principles and guidelines and encourage others to use them.
- We do not condone or tolerate verbal, physical or sexual harassment.

Electronic Communications and Social Media

Electronic communication has become an essential part of adult life. It is a tool that can be helpful in transmitting simple or large amounts of information, coordinating activities, and expediting plans and processes. However, electronic communication lacks the key visual cues, nuances and inflection of direct communication, which can cause misunderstandings; thus, problem-solving is best achieved face-to-face. Electronic communications present unique opportunities and challenges, some of which have the potential to create division within our community. The following guidelines will aid us in our work together as a community.

Email

Parents and families will receive periodic updates from class teachers by email. These may include requests for volunteers, class newsletters, and information on upcoming events. School email lists will not be used to promote private events, businesses or activities. Only school-sponsored or affiliated activities will be shared via school email lists. Parents and families should refrain from using school email lists for personal gain in any manner. Families may also connect using the Creekside Kinderclass Parents Facebook Group.

Email is not a venue for resolving problems or raising concerns. Individuals with concerns may use email to request a meeting to discuss an issue, but should plan to meet face to face to address any sensitive or highly charged topic. Staff receiving emails that raise concerns may ask for an in-person meeting with a facilitator to resolve the issues, rather than providing a written response

Text

Text messaging is never an approved means of school communication. It should be reserved for personal communications or emergency contacts, not for sharing concerns or resolving issues. Parents should recognize that teachers have lives outside of the classroom, and it is not appropriate to contact them by text message unless their child's teacher specifically requests such communication.

Cell Phone Usage

Wasatch Charter School and Creekside Kinderclass are cell-free zones. All adults are expected to put away phones while in the buildings, particularly in public areas. Phones are not to be used in the classroom or on the playground or in other spaces when with the children. Personal calls and messages can be placed in the offices, empty classrooms and break rooms.

Suggested Reading for Parents

Below is a list of books we suggest that you read as you parent your young child and pursue a Waldorf-inspired education.

- *Simplicity Parenting* by Kim John Payne
- *You Are Your Child's First Teacher* by Rahima Baldwin-Dancy
- *Beyond the Rainbow Bridge: Nurturing Our Children from Birth to Seven* by Pamela Bradley and Barbara Patterson
- *Lifeways: Working with Family Questions and More Lifeways* by Gundrun Davey and Vons Boors
- *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* by Richard Louv
- *Heaven on Earth: A Handbook for Parents of Young Children* by Sharifa Oppenheimer

“The healthy social life is found when in the mirror of each human soul the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community the virtue and strength of each one is living.”

Rudolf Steiner

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