

Parent Handbook 2017-2018



ASHWOOD
Waldorf School

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Ashwood Waldorf School Song

A. C. Harwood

1 2 3 4

The sun is in my heart. It warms me with its

Detailed description: This block contains the first four measures of the song. The music is written on a single treble clef staff in 4/4 time. Measure 1 starts with a whole rest. Measures 2-4 contain the melody for the lyrics 'The sun is in my heart. It warms me with its'. There are slurs under the phrases 'in my heart' and 'me with its'.

5 6 7 8 9

power and wa• kens life and love in bird and beast and flow er. The

Detailed description: This block contains measures 5-9. The melody continues with the lyrics 'power and wa• kens life and love in bird and beast and flow er. The'. There are slurs under 'bird and beast' and 'and flow er'.

10 11 12 13 14

stars a• bove my head are shin• ing in my mind as spir• its of the

Detailed description: This block contains measures 10-14. The melody continues with the lyrics 'stars a• bove my head are shin• ing in my mind as spir• its of the'. There are slurs under 'shin• ing in my mind' and 'spir• its of the'.

15 16 17 18 19

world that in my thoughts I find. The earth where on I tread lets

Detailed description: This block contains measures 15-19. The melody continues with the lyrics 'world that in my thoughts I find. The earth where on I tread lets'. There are slurs under 'my thoughts I find' and 'on I tread'.

20 21 22 23

not my feet go through but strong• ly doth up hold the

Detailed description: This block contains measures 20-23. The melody continues with the lyrics 'not my feet go through but strong• ly doth up hold the'. There are slurs under 'my feet go through' and 'doth up hold'.

24 25 26 27

weight of deeds I do. Then must I thank• ful be that

Detailed description: This block contains measures 24-27. The melody continues with the lyrics 'weight of deeds I do. Then must I thank• ful be that'. There are slurs under 'weight of deeds' and 'I do'.

28 29 30 31

here on earth I dwell to know and love the world and treat all

Detailed description: This block contains measures 28-31. The melody continues with the lyrics 'here on earth I dwell to know and love the world and treat all'. There is a slur under 'treat all'.

32 33

crea• tures well.

Detailed description: This block contains the final two measures of the song. The melody concludes with the lyrics 'crea• tures well.'.

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Welcome

Receive the children with reverence
Educate them with love
Let them go forth in freedom

– Rudolf Steiner

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the entire faculty and board of trustees I extend a warm welcome to you and your family as we start the school year. We are happy that you have chosen Ashwood Waldorf School, and we want to work closely with you to make this time rich and rewarding for you and your child. We sincerely hope that this handbook will answer many of your questions about the school. Our purpose is to present our history, describe the curriculum, outline the everyday workings of the school, and offer guidelines for functioning well within the Ashwood community. Please keep this handbook in a secure place for future reference.

– Jody Spanglet
School Director



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Office Hours

8 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
8 a.m. – 1:15 p.m. Thursday (Early Dismissal – Faculty Meeting)

Handbook artwork by Toki Oshima

Ashwood Waldorf School Mission Statement

Ashwood Waldorf School is an early-childhood through eighth-grade learning community based on the insights of Rudolf Steiner and imbued with a deep reverence for the spiritual nature of the human being.

We provide a balanced and rigorous education, integrating academics with the arts, nature, and social values. In an atmosphere that encourages respect for oneself, others, and the environment, we build a foundation for lifelong learning and adaptability, fostering inner strength and preparing children to thrive in a changing world.

We are a school that values responsible decision-making, diversity, meaningful relationships with our community, and stewardship of the environment. A dedicated parent body supports our work. Surrounded by the natural beauty of mid-coast Maine, Ashwood students learn and play, both inside the classroom and out-of-doors, growing each year in their appreciation for seasonal rhythms and the world around them.

Background

History and Philosophy

Now beginning its 31st year, Ashwood was founded as an initiative of several families in midcoast Maine interested in Waldorf education. The first kindergarten was launched in 1986 in Lincolnville Center with the expansion of a small cabin near the Silverio residence on Proctor Road. A second kindergarten class opened in Rockport in 1990. This became the site for the main Ashwood campus in 1991 when a multi-aged first-and-second grade class ushered in the grade school program.

Ashwood is a fully accredited member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA), is incorporated under the laws of the State of Maine, and is also accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The early childhood program is licensed by the Maine Department of Human Services and is an accredited member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America.

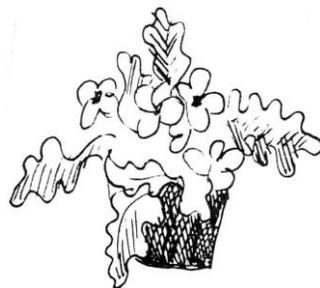
The international Waldorf movement began in Germany in 1919 when Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner founded the first Waldorf school. There are currently more than 1,000 Waldorf schools in approximately 60 countries, including 160 schools in the United States. Waldorf education is not only a pedagogical system, but also an art – the art of awakening the inherent potential within the human being. Waldorf students are educated in recognition of their spiritual nature out of an understanding of their physical, mental, and emotional development.

Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy

Waldorf education is based on the work of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian-born philosopher, artist, scientist, and teacher. Steiner offered penetrating insights into a broad spectrum of human endeavors based on a spiritual vision. Steiner called his work anthroposophy (Greek for “wisdom of the human being”) or spiritual science. He emphasized that faculties lie dormant in the human soul, which, if properly nurtured, can lead to knowledge of spiritual reality, to self-knowledge, and to a new understanding of the world. He described a path of self-development using clear thinking, acute observation, refinement of feeling, and transformation of the will.

Waldorf education strives to educate children “toward freedom” in classrooms that are, perhaps paradoxically, highly structured and intentionally organized. What freedom means in the Waldorf context is that when we carefully teach children to exercise their thinking, feelings, and actions, they will mature with the capacities to purposefully shape their own destiny. As adults, they will be able to make meaningful choices based on clear and heart-warmed thinking; have the capacity to imagine new ideas and then implement initiatives; and possess the endurance, patience, habits, and inner balance to actively form their own lives instead of merely responding to outer circumstances.

Students are not taught anthroposophy. Rudolf Steiner stated, “It is not our intention to teach growing human beings our ideas, the contents of our world conception. We are not aiming at education for the sake of any special dogma.” Anthroposophy does, however, inspire the content, timing, and methods of Waldorf teaching. At Ashwood, the faculty regularly study Steiner's work, both individually and in the weekly faculty meetings.



AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools

1. The image of the human being as a spiritual being informs every aspect of the school.

Waldorf schools work actively with insights from Rudolf Steiner about the incarnating human being. One core insight is that the human being is a threefold being of body, soul, and spirit. Waldorf Education enlivens the physical, emotional, intellectual, social, artistic, and spiritual capacities of the human being as the individual moves through the phases of this life.

2. Waldorf schools foster social renewal by cultivating human capacities in service to the individual and society.

Waldorf schools foster development so that, throughout life, individuals are motivated to serve humanity with strength of will, depth of feeling, clarity of thought, and the ability to work with others. The educational program is designed to strengthen these fundamental human capacities in our students.

3. Anthroposophical understanding of child development guides the educational program.

Waldorf schools work with the gradual development of the human being from child to adult. This development follows an archetypal sequence of three seven-year phases. During this time, the soul and spirit progressively take hold of the physical body. Each child's development is a unique expression of the human archetype. Each phase has characteristic physical, emotional, and intellectual dimensions.

The educational program is developed out of this understanding. Core components of the educational program include the student-teacher relationship; the artistic approach; working from experience to concept; working from whole to parts; use of rhythm and repetition; and observation as the foundation for assessment. Each approach is tailored to meet the students in each phase of child development.

Thus it is essential that teachers have formal preparation in Waldorf pedagogy or are engaged in such preparation.

4. Waldorf schools support freedom in teaching within the context of the school's shared agreements.

The educational program of each Waldorf school is founded on Rudolf Steiner's insights about the growing child, informed by the teachers' ongoing study of anthroposophy and their professional development in Waldorf Education.

The faculty of the school works collaboratively and cooperatively to develop, refine, and periodically review the educational program. Individual teachers work creatively with curricular, pedagogical, and assessment components of the program out of freedom and in a way that serves their individual students, the class as a whole, and the school community. This work reflects and respects the shared educational understandings and agreements of the faculty.

5. The conscious development of human relationships fosters individual and community health.

Enduring human relationships between students and their teachers and among the children themselves are at the heart of Waldorf Education. The teacher's task is to work with the developing individuality of each student and with each class as a whole within the context of the entire school. These relationships gain in depth and stability when they are cultivated over multiple years.

Healthy human relationships with and among parents and colleagues are essential to the well-being of the school. Members of the community are invited to join in developing meaningful, collaborative, transparent forms for working together. Each individual's self-development is encouraged since it is key to the well-being of the whole.

6. Spiritual development in support of professional growth is an ongoing activity for the faculty, staff, and board.

Members of the faculty, staff, and board work in an ongoing way to cultivate their spiritual development with the help of anthroposophical and other study. Waldorf schools create opportunities for shared educational study, artistic activity, mentoring, and research to further this growth and development in service to the students.

7. Collaboration and shared responsibility provide the foundations of school leadership and governance.

Waldorf schools are self-administered. This work is strengthened by cultivating a shared anthroposophical understanding of social interaction. Faculty, staff, and the board share responsibility for guiding and leading the school in the following manner:

- a) The educational program is developed by the faculty under the guidance of the pedagogical leadership of the school.
- b) Administrative activities further the educational program.
- c) The board works strategically to enable legal and financial health in order to realize the mission and vision of the school.

Governance of the school is structured and implemented in a manner that both cultivates collaboration and is effective.

School Administration

Faculty: Teachers and Administrators

Waldorf schools are administered by the faculty, who maintain the integrity of the school through the understanding of Waldorf education in the light of anthroposophy. Teachers are responsible for the school's pedagogical endeavors. Administrators are responsible for managing day-to-day operations, communication, enrollment, development, public relations, and finance. Faculty meetings take place after school every Tuesday and Thursday. Meetings include artistic and pedagogical study, committee meetings, reports, and discussion of the school's daily workings.

Faculty Leadership Structure and Responsibilities

Committees of the Faculty

Leadership Council

Chair: Jody Spanglet, School Director/Faculty Chair
Members: Marianne Bockli (Early Childhood)
Jeremy Clough (Grade School)

Administrative Committee

Chair: Jody Spanglet, School Director
Members: Betty Wyman, Business Manager
Sarah Ewing, Administrative Assistant; Director of Fundraising
Judith Soleil, Enrollment & Outreach Director

Early Childhood Administrative Committee (ECAC)

Chair: Marianne Bockli
Members: Marianne Bockli, Judith Soleil, Jody Spanglet

The Full Faculty works together to deepen their understanding of Waldorf education in general as well as therapeutic possibilities arising from an anthroposophical understanding of the human being. The faculty is responsible for all day-to-day curricular and pedagogical operations of the school. In addition, the faculty builds and nourishes community within the school by serving as the organizing body for the involvement of students, faculty, and parents in festivals, assemblies, and school service days.

The Leadership Council holds responsibility for:

- Personnel decisions regarding all teaching faculty including hiring, with input from the faculty, dismissals, evaluation, and mentoring.
- Programming decisions: making final decisions concerning the formation of new programs, what classes will be taught, and by whom.
- Steering and communication: responsible for facilitating clear communication

among the school's different committees, including the mandate committees and the board of trustees.

- Creating faculty agendas and meeting schedules.

The Administrative Committee meets regularly to facilitate good communication among all parts of the school; discusses, reviews, and improves upon daily routine functions as well as new initiatives within the school's administrative realm; and expedites administrative projects. The administration also works closely with the board of trustees by executing on its behalf contractual, financial, facilities, marketing, development, enrollment, and legal functions.

The Grade School Committee is responsible for all of the grade school's day-to-day curricular and pedagogical operations.

The Early Childhood Faculty is responsible for all day-to-day curricular and pedagogical operations of the early-childhood program.

Early Childhood Administrative Committee (ECAC) is responsible for all matters that involve both administrative as well as pedagogical aspects of the early-childhood program.



Board of Trustees

The board of trustees includes members drawn from the faculty, parent body, alumni, and community. The board oversees the legal and fiscal life of the school, with primary responsibility for fundraising and budget approval. Board meetings are held every month and are open by request, in advance, to the board president.

Board President: Betsy Morrell

Board Treasurer: Vera Roberts

Board Secretary: Annie Mahle

Additional Trustees: Marianne Bockli, Nancy Harris Frohlich, Caroline Ginsberg, Barney Hildreth, Tina Lipmanowicz, John Morin, Alden Robinson, Jody Spanglet.

Class Parents

Class Parents are selected, informally, by each class teacher. Outgoing class parents are asked to mentor incoming ones. A class parent helps to connect parents and class teachers and provide support for both by:

- Communicating with the class teacher at least once a month;
- Acting as a resource for the class teacher. For example, by helping with scheduling and planning class events;

- Activating the class phone tree as needed;
- Coordinating class participation in school work days, festivals, and other events;
- Helping to coordinate parent drivers for class field trips.

Parent Communication with Faculty: Teachers and Administrators

Ashwood's faculty governs the school. At its core, Waldorf education is committed to maintaining teachers' pedagogical freedom within the classroom to every possible extent. This is why there is no principal or head of school at Ashwood. Running a school collegially requires that faculty members communicate directly with one another. Open and honest communication between and among colleagues is a fundamental social responsibility of our system, and we require all who work here to voice any issues or concerns to the school director and/or the leadership council

Direct communication between parents and the faculty is equally important for the school to run smoothly. This requires effort from the entire community. It is important that parents familiarize themselves with the school's administrative structure, as well as with the procedure for handling any communication difficulties. The following list shows the areas of responsibility for general inquiries and the contact person for each area. If you are unsure about who might handle your specific question, please feel free to contact the school director, Jody Spanglet.

- Policy and Procedure: Jody Spanglet, school director
- Enrollment Questions: Judith Soleil, enrollment and outreach
- Outreach and Community Events: Judith Soleil, enrollment and outreach
- Financial Inquiries: Betty Wyman, business manager
- Classroom/Pedagogical Inquiries: Class Teacher
- Building & Grounds: Betty Wyman, business manager
- Development and Fundraising: Annie Mahle, board development chair
- All Other Board-Related Inquiries: Betsy Morrell, board president

Note: Pedagogical inquiries should be taken directly to the teacher involved. In addition, class teachers should be kept informed of any issue that impacts any child under his or her care.

In accordance with the Family Education Records Protection Act, parents have access to their children's records at any time during regular school office hours.

Conflict Resolution

The mood of the community is as important as the mood of the classroom. Positive, cooperative attitudes will enable the Ashwood community to meet and transform challenges in ways that honor and benefit all. If we consistently seek what is positive, problems that arise will become opportunities for growth and change. Conversely, negative, critical attitudes build barriers and divisions that can weaken the school and harm individuals.

When a conflict arises, we encourage direct communication among the individuals involved. Our entire staff wants to work through any issues that may arise and is

committed to helping find positive solutions to problems. If individuals reach an impasse and need help keeping the process moving, they should refer to the procedure outlined below.

Procedures for Addressing Parent Concerns

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of their child's school experience are asked to voice those concerns in a timely way directly to the child's teacher. Parent(s) and teacher should schedule a meeting to discuss the matter at a time when they can devote their full attention to the concern. Parent(s) are asked to clearly express the essence of their concern when scheduling the meeting so that the teacher can prepare in a professional, reflective manner. The school encourages teachers to schedule these meetings as soon as it is convenient for both parties. The teacher will inform the school director when such a meeting is planned. Parents are also welcome to share their concern and let the school director know that there will be meeting with the teacher.

In most cases, a single meeting with the teacher will resolve an issue. However, if the meeting's outcome is not satisfactory to either or both parties, school policy requires a second meeting, this time with the school director; either party may request that a mediator also attend. Teacher and parent(s) should find a mediator who is mutually agreeable to both.

If an issue remains unresolved after a second meeting, the school director will then take whatever measures seem warranted, practical, and promising. These measures will vary with each case, but in all cases will include a clear, step-by-step process for resolving the matter amicably. The school expects reasoned civility from all parties throughout this process. Our mutual goal is to resolve a concern in a manner that benefits the children.

Sometimes parents may be confused about or disagree with one of the school's policies or procedures. Ashwood's teachers, administrators, and board of trustees maintain an open-door policy on all matters. There is always someone to listen to your concerns, and, while the school may not be able to meet every expectation and hope, we can guarantee that all parental feedback will be heard, addressed, and conveyed to the faculty leadership and/or board of trustees based on the nature of the concern.

We understand that it can be difficult to bring forward a concern about your child's teacher. Building honest social relationships and working through conflict is, perhaps, the most significant challenge facing individuals in our times. While the school's leadership will always give each parent an open and kind-hearted listening ear, to move beyond listening and into problem-solving, the discussion will always need to include communication between the parent and the teacher. We will always offer help to facilitate these conversations.

Inclement Weather

To avoid confusion, please note that when SAD #28 is canceled, Ashwood Waldorf School is canceled as well. When SAD #28 is delayed, Ashwood Waldorf School is delayed as well. Ashwood makes weather-related decisions concerning early-release days and times independently. Early dismissals are confusing due to a host of factors, including that SAD #28 closes its individual schools at different times and has a different weekly early-release day than Ashwood. Because of these variables, Ashwood makes independent emergency early-release decisions. In these circumstances we make every attempt to contact each family individually, either by speaking with each parent personally at drop-off, calling each family, and/or sending out an all-school e-mail.

The easiest way to know when school is canceled or delayed is to determine whether SAD #28 is. In addition, however, Ashwood school cancellations and late start days are announced on WCSH6 and the Knox County Village Soup website, as well as on 102.5 FM, and WMTW News. When possible, an all-school e-mail will be sent for school closings and delays, but when power outages occur, or Internet service is down, this is not possible. Please note that the school answering machine can be unreliable, and school closings will **not** be announced on the answering machine. Parents may choose to sign up for automatic text messages on the WCSH6 Storm Center website, www.wcsh6.com/about/text-alerts We respect each family's individual decision about whether to attend school on snowy days when school is in session. Please use your own discretion when making this decision.

Students' Arrival and Departure

Dismissal Protocol:

For your children's safety, when picking them up we ask that you park your vehicle and come get your child, who will be under a teacher's supervision; or that you park, and then stand at a spot on the school grounds (not in the parking lot) where the teacher dismissing your child(ren) can see and acknowledge you when you are ready to receive them. We want to be sure that an authorized person picks up each child, and to prevent students from entering the parking lots at such a busy time without supervision. After a child has been dismissed to a parent or other authorized adult, that person has full responsibility for the child. If you remain on campus to converse while your children play, please connect with them first, and keep them in your sight and awareness at all times. Children must honor all school rules anytime they are on campus.

Please drive slowly on campus at all times and observe all signs. Park only in designated areas and supervise children as they cross the parking lots and driveways going to and from cars. We ask that parents use the footpaths provided and teach their children to do so as well; walking behind cars in the parking lots is especially discouraged.

To protect our school and children, **we require that all parents complete a student information form** listing the names of all persons who are authorized to pick your children up from school. Please contact the office to update this form as necessary.

Parents must contact the office to give special permission any time someone whose name does not appear on the parent-approved list is going to pick up a child. A specially approved driver must then identify themselves to the teacher before taking a child. **Under no circumstances will children be released to unauthorized adults.**

Parents on campus during the school day and all visitors to the campus must come to the office to check in. Please do not direct visitors to a classroom, to the playground, or to an individual child. As our school continues to grow, so does our exposure to the world at large. With increased consciousness as adults, we can continue to care for our children safely.

Under no circumstances should a child who will be or has been absent for the day be on campus for any reason. In the event a sick child must be brought along at drop-off and pick-up times, please have him or her remain in the car.

School rules must be observed on campus at all times, including outside of school hours. Parents must supervise their children on campus before and after school hours. Please note that children must wear shoes on campus at all times, unless they are participating in a teacher-directed activity and the teacher has specified that students may remove their shoes.

Arrival and Departure Times

At Ashwood Waldorf School, the opening of each school day is a special moment for the teachers and children. It is essential to the well being of the children and their classes that students arrive on time. When a child arriving late interrupts morning exercises, it affects the whole class. It is equally important that the students be picked up promptly at dismissal time. Waiting to go home is hard on children, and teachers can't provide supervision after regular hours. If you will be delayed, please call the school office as soon as possible so that the office can let the teacher know. Any child remaining after 3:30 will be brought to the office, and the parent will be charged a late fee for emergency care.

Early Childhood

Ashwood's early childhood program starts at 8:30 a.m. If children arrive before 8:15 a.m., parents must stay with them in the outside play area. If your child arrives after 8:30 a.m., please come to the office with your child so that attendance records can be corrected.

The early childhood program has options for either noon or 1:00 p.m. dismissal. We ask that you please make every effort to pick up your child on time. Children can become stressed and anxious when the other children have left and their ride is late.

Parent-Child Program

Parent-Child classes begin at 9:00 a.m. and end at 11:00 a.m.

Arrival for Grades 1-8

Children should arrive between 8:15 - 8:25 a.m. to begin main lesson promptly at 8:30 a.m. For parents' convenience, children may arrive as early as 8:05 a.m. Bring them to the teacher on duty by the lower loop, short-term parking area. There is no fee for this service. Students may not enter the buildings until the bell rings at 8:15 a.m. without specific permission from the child's class teacher for a specified reason.

If your child arrives after 8:30 a.m., **please bring your child to the office** to pick up a late slip to bring to class. All teachers require this slip in order admit a late child to the classroom. A late child should approach the classroom, knock on the door, and wait to be admitted.

Once the school day has begun, please do not enter your child's classroom. After 8:30 a.m., anything you need to deliver, such as lunches or musical instruments, should be brought to the office.

Grade School Dismissal

Dismissal is at 3:15 p.m. **except on Thursdays, when students will be dismissed at 1:00 p.m.** (see below). Teachers will remain with students until 3:30 p.m. in order to allow reasonable leeway for parents who are running late. Beginning at 3:30 p.m., any student who has not been picked up will be brought to the office. The office will attempt to contact the parent. The administrative assistant will care for the child until the parent arrives. Parents will be charged for this service automatically via FACTS, and will receive an electronic receipt of payment within 30 days. Families who pay tuition annually will receive a mailed invoice for this service.

Students Leaving School Early for Extracurricular Activities

We understand that sometimes fifth through eighth graders need to leave school early to participate in extracurricular activities. In such cases, please bring a note to the office specifying the days and times that this will occur. Whenever possible, it is best for your child to remain in class through fourth period, which ends at 2:50. Also, if your child needs to change clothing, please have them do this after you have picked them up or, if their change of clothes meets the dress code, during lunch recess. Teachers will not release students to the office prior to the responsible adult's arrival on campus since this frequently results in students missing essential class time, only to sit in the office waiting. As always, please come to the office to sign your child out before picking him or her up. These practices are meant to help ensure our students' safety and to minimize disruptions to their education here at Ashwood.

Students are responsible for making up work and collecting assignments given during this last period of the day (from 2:50 until 3:15). Class teachers will recommend the best

way for the student to meet these obligations on a case-by-case basis. The privilege of regularly leaving school early to attend extracurricular activities is only allowed to continue if the student is able to complete their work and the loss of school time does not become detrimental to the student's life at school. We ask parents to help their children by promoting an attitude that success in school takes precedence over non-school related, extra activities.

Thursday: Early Dismissal for All Grades

Thursday is an early dismissal day. All grades leave school at 1:00 p.m. This allows for a weekly faculty meeting that takes place from 1:30-5:00 p.m. each week.

The school day ends at dismissal time. Children are released directly into the custody of the adults responsible for them and not onto the playground. Please make alternate arrangements if you are unable to pick up your child promptly.

Attendance: Absence and Tardiness Guidelines

In the Waldorf school each lesson block is a carefully designed, complete unit of study. Given the breadth of the curriculum, even a few days of absence can adversely affect your child's education; the rhythm is disrupted, social dynamics change, and a substantial amount of educational experience is lost. Because the pedagogy is based on the experience of human-to-human sharing of information between teachers and students, it is difficult for work to be "made up" or completed at home, away from the classroom setting. Therefore the faculty has established the following guidelines:

- Please inform the school office before 8 a.m. if your child is going to be absent or tardy for any reason.
- We encourage parents to keep children home when they are overtired or recovering from an illness.
- We encourage parents to schedule regular doctor and dentist appointments after school hours.

Ashwood Waldorf School considers continued tardiness and/or absence, for reasons other than illness, inexcusable. Below are guidelines for when our faculty is concerned about student absences:

- 5 absences by the October parent-teacher conferences: in such cases the teacher will discuss the situation with the parents at parent-teacher conferences.
- 10 absences: a letter will go home to parents/guardians, from the school director, drawing the families attention to the number of days the student has missed school
- 15 absences: the faculty will discuss the situation and may request that the class teacher, parents and school director meet to create a plan for how to best support the student. If the plan is not successfully followed, then the student's progress and advancement to the next grade will need to be further discussed with the class teacher and the Leadership Council in partnership with the child's parents.

When making plans for extended vacations keep in mind both what is best for your child as well as for your child's class. Please support regular attendance at school.

- The school doesn't hold its teachers responsible for providing work for students who take family vacations during school days or for providing special help in catching up with work that has been missed during such times. Teachers will let parents know what the student has missed and parents will be asked to make private arrangements for their child to learn the concepts s(he) has missed during such absences whenever possible.
- If unavoidable or special circumstances require a child to be absent for more than the normal school vacation time, parents are requested to submit a written request for the child's absence at least two weeks in advance. The class teacher will respond to parents after the faculty has reviewed the matter.

Early Childhood Program

Introduction

Ashwood Waldorf School's mixed-age kindergarten lays a strong foundation for literacy and intellectual growth, and provides a unique opportunity for children ages 3-6 to explore nature fully and learn to know it well. Our nurturing faculty provide space and time for young children to grow, explore, and discover the world. In the Waldorf mixed-age kindergarten, young children acquire the confidence and discipline they will need for the challenging academic work of grade school.



The Teacher

A highly experienced and Waldorf- trained teacher with an assistant leads our early childhood classroom, guided by a deep familiarity with child development. The teacher endeavors to build a bridge between home and school, beginning with a **home visit**. This visit gives the child a sense of security (“ my teacher knows where I live”) and pride. It is an opportunity for the children to introduce their new teacher to their world outside of school. Home visits provide the teacher with a fuller picture of the child's life and home environment. The visit is short (about half an hour), social, and for the child's benefit.

The Program

Imaginative play, purposeful movement, and social and artistic activities support and enhance early development. Creative play develops a foundation for concentration, coordination, language, and number skills.

Early Childhood Day

Each day the children experience a rhythmic flow of regularly scheduled activities, which fosters confidence and a sense of security.

Creative Play: Shortly after the children arrive, they happily join in imaginative play (undirected) or an artistic activity set up by the teachers beforehand. These activities foster creative and flexible thinking, self-discipline, personal initiative, and interpersonal skills.

Snack: Each day, the children help to prepare a snack made with nutritious, mostly organic and local whole foods and herbal teas. Child-sized cups, cloth napkins, and a natural centerpiece grace the table, which the children set themselves.

Cleanup: In the classroom, "there is a place for everything, and everything returns to its place." The children come to know where each plaything belongs, and they tidy the room in an atmosphere of happy industry and cooperation.

Morning Circle: The children enjoy group circle activities that feature seasonal songs, nursery rhymes, and finger plays. The games involve both large- and small-motor movements, poetic language, imaginative content, and are quite lively.

Quiet/Rest Time: Every day includes a short quiet time during which the children rest quietly. The teacher may sing lullabies or quietly play a lap harp during this time.

Outdoor Play: Each day, the children and teachers go outside whatever the weather and enthusiastically experience all the seasons. They thrive outdoors in our welcoming play yard with its gardens, deep sand pit, shovels, and wheelbarrows, climb, swing, jump, and run. At times, the teachers guide the children in a joyful exploration of the wooded trails that traverse our beautiful, 30+-acre campus.

Storytime: The teacher tells a fairy, folk, or nature story from memory: "by heart." Sometimes the stories are depicted with handmade puppets; these presentations often inspire the children to create their own puppet plays.

Lunch: Our early childhood program includes an optional lunch hour from noon until 1:00 p.m. Students are asked to bring a nutritious, packed lunch.

Extended Day Program

Ashwood offers care from 1:00-3:15 on both a contractual and drop-in basis (drop-in is first-come, first-served, and space is limited). Afternoons in the extended-day program are very simple. We work to create a relaxing, home-like atmosphere with lots of outdoor play, as well as time for a nap. Parents may pick up their children at the gazebo adjacent to the main office.

Children whose caregivers arrive late to pick them up will join the aftercare group at 1:15. In such cases, the administration will make every attempt to reach the person who

is responsible for pickup and, if they are unavailable, the contacts provided on the emergency form. We ask that caregivers please call the office if they are unexpectedly delayed; it creates stress for children to be unexpectedly left at school.

Families will be charged at the drop-in rate if a child joins the extended-day program due to a late pickup. At day's end, children who are not picked up by 3:30 (or by 1:15 on Thursdays) will be brought to the office, and the family will be charged a late fee.

Parent-Child Program

Parent-Child classes are a gentle and nurturing program for children 18 months to three years old with an accompanying caregiver, led by an experienced Waldorf educator. Children engage in creative play with simple, natural toys that stimulate their imagination. While the children play, parents work on a craft project provided by the teacher, help with snack preparation, or discuss aspects of parenting and child development. The morning ends on the playground with time to swing, climb, and play in the sandbox. A goodbye song in a circle completes the morning. The flow of activities each week is the same, so that even the youngest children observe the weekly rhythms and begin to participate as part of the larger group. The Parent-Child program is a wonderful social opportunity that nurtures the whole family and provides a bridge from home to school. When ready (at age three), young children may transition into the mixed-age early childhood classroom.

Early Childhood Parent-Teacher Communication

Two **parent-teacher conferences** are scheduled during the school year, in October and in March. The conferences are an opportunity for parents and the teacher to share impressions, and any questions or concerns, about the child's growth, development, and school experiences.

There are also several scheduled **parent evenings** during the school year. Parent evenings provide an opportunity to hear about life in the classroom and to learn more about Waldorf early childhood education. It is also a valuable way to form relationships with fellow parents. Attendance at parent evenings is an important support for the children, and we heartily encourage it.

At the end of each year, the teacher writes a report describing the curriculum and the child's development throughout the year.

Parents may contact teachers by email, or by leaving a message at the office; teachers will respond within 24 hours during the school week. Teachers welcome comments and questions and look forward to working with parents throughout the school year.

In accordance with the Family Education Records Protection Act, parents have access to their children's records at any time during regular school office hours.

Clothing

Students go outdoors every day throughout the seasons, so it is important that they be dressed appropriately. They will need layers of warm clothing and protective hats in the cooler months; waterproof boots and raingear for wet weather; and sun hats when it gets warm. The teacher will provide more detailed guidelines at the beginning of each school year.

Simple, sturdy clothes will keep the children comfortable throughout their very active days. Neon colors, strong graphic designs, cartoon or media images, glitter, sequins, and light-up sneakers can all be distracting in the classroom, and are best saved to be worn at home.

Toys

The Waldorf early childhood classroom is both beautiful and practical. It is designed to be homelike, with an emphasis on simple, natural toys that have endless uses according to the children's imagination.

To encourage social harmony in the classroom, we ask that children leave personal toys and books at home. Some children may wish to bring a small blanket, stuffed animal, or doll to school to ease the transition from home; these can wait in the child's cubby during the morning.



Festivals

In Ashwood's early childhood program, we enthusiastically celebrate seasonal festivals. Festival celebrations reflect the natural year as we experience it in Maine. We encourage family participation in many of these festivals; teachers will communicate with families directly about details.

Birthdays

Families are invited to join us as we celebrate their child's birthday. The teacher tells a special story recalling each child's birth and growth. The teacher and children then offer the birthday child a small present. Sometimes, the birthday child brings simple, natural little gifts for the other children – for example, shells, feathers, shiny stones, or flowers – so that the birthday is a celebration of sharing and giving as well as receiving.

First Grade Assessments

Each year, the faculty conducts a group assessment for all children who will turn six prior to June 1 to determine their readiness to enter first grade the following year. The assessment takes the form of playful games; the children are not told that this activity is

any sort of evaluation. Teachers observe fine- and gross-motor development, the ability to cross the midline, dominances of eye, ear, hand, and foot, visual and auditory memory, and other milestones of child development.

Faculty then review each child's assessment and decide who is ready for the transition to first grade. The first grade assessment provides the incoming first grade teacher with important insights as they prepare to welcome a new class.

Assemblies at Ashwood

First Day of School

Ashwood marks the first day of grade school in September with a special Rose Ceremony. The entire school community gathers, and the oldest class welcomes our new first graders into the grade school. Their new teacher then greets them with a special story. Family and friends are invited to join in this celebration. An all-school picnic follows; families bring their own lunch. School will end at 1:00 p.m. on the first day. If you're not able to be there for the Rose Ceremony, please pack a lunch for your children and pick them up at 1:00 p.m.

Friday Gatherings and Assemblies

Most Friday mornings, beginning at 8:40, all grade-school classes gather for a brief assembly or for all-school games. During the assemblies, classes share highlights of their work: songs, dances, poetry, plays, exhibits, etc.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to come to these assemblies and early childhood classes often attend as well. A calendar of these assemblies will be available on Ashwood's website calendar.

Graduation

The graduation of our eighth graders marks a special moment, both for these individual students and their families, as well as for our school community as a whole. All grade school children participate in this special commemoration and all parents are strongly urged to attend. Graduation is on Saturday afternoon, following the final day of school. Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend this special event.

Winter and End-of-Year Assemblies

Twice a year, just before December break and at the end of the school year, the Ashwood community gathers in a large assembly space off campus. Each grade school class presents a sampling of its recent endeavors in the performing arts. Parents, family members, and interested members of the surrounding community are warmly invited to share in this celebration. We encourage parents to bring guests who might enjoy the performance. We ask that children dress up for assemblies in attire that is nicer than their everyday clothes. For further guidance, see the section entitled "Dress Code."

The faculty feels strongly that taking photographs during assemblies is detrimental to the performances. For the sake of all concerned, we ask that parents please refrain from photographing and/or videotaping during assemblies. Teachers may arrange for a photography session at dress rehearsals or after the assembly.



Birthdays in the Grade School

Each class acknowledges a birthday child in its own way. For the teacher, a birthday provides an opportunity to reflect on a child's special gifts, strengths, and growth during the past year. A shared snack from home is generally part of a classroom birthday celebration. Birthday celebrations will vary from class to class and may change from grade to grade.

Class Photos

The school arranges for photos to be taken each year in the autumn.

Clothing

Please see the "Dress Code" section (below) for detailed guidelines.



For students of all ages, warm clothing for daily outdoor play is extremely important, as students will go outside for recess in all but the most extreme weather. Strong, secure, non-slippery footwear is necessary for safety at school. The children need coats (or raincoats), mittens, hats, and boots for cold or rainy weather so that their experience of nature and the elements is a rewarding one. Please keep in mind that body heat escapes most rapidly from the head and neck. When in doubt, make sure your child has more than enough clothing.

It is difficult to keep up with the vagaries of New England weather, and children tend to dress for the moment. Extra clothing (a complete change of clothing is suggested) should be kept at school for accidents or emergencies. Dry socks, footwear, and a sweater or sweatshirt are strongly recommended. Each child should have a pair of soft-soled shoes for indoor wear; bare feet are not allowed indoors or out. Please label each item of clothing clearly and check the lost and found basket in the grade school building for missing items.

Dress Code

Ashwood wishes to have its students dress neatly, in clothes that fit properly and are appropriate for indoor and outdoor activities. Dress should be neither too formal nor too casual. It should be a "cut above" what children wear for lounging at home. Our students represent the school to visitors and the greater community, and we would like them to dress with care.

We ask that parents carefully consider how choices of clothing and other forms of personal grooming can affect their children during childhood and adolescence; these choices can help to preserve our children's childlike innocence and shield them from cultural pressures. Simple, modest clothing facilitates focus on schoolwork in the

classroom. The following types of clothing are not allowed at school: bare midriffs; shirts or tops with necklines lower than two inches below the collarbone or with straps less than an inch wide; shirts with open backs; clothing with writing too large to be covered with a closed hand; clothing containing political or religious statements; skirts, shorts, or dresses shorter than the tips of the longest fingers when hands are held at the side and shoulders are relaxed; tight leggings worn as pants; long sleeves that cover the hands; pajamas; torn, ragged, or stained clothing; hats, visors, and hoods worn indoors. Students' clothing must cover their underwear, including bra straps. Sheer or see-through clothing must have dress-code appropriate clothing underneath. Also unacceptable are extreme hair dyes or styles, face piercing, and tattoos (even "pretend," temporary kinds) or writing on the skin. Jewelry may be worn, but must be removed for physical activities and/or if it causes distraction or impedes the students' ability to participate in activities. Hats may not be worn in the classroom without a doctor's note.

A note about leggings (worn as pants): As a school we work on the basis of the teacher as a loving authority. We believe that having rules is a very important part of childhood. Rules support children, giving them forms that they can relax into and taking the burden of decision making off of their tender shoulders. As such, we are comfortable with having and enforcing rules about what Ashwood students can and cannot wear to school. We are not for or against girls wearing leggings as pants, any more than we are for or against students wearing bikinis or pajamas. However, we do not see these kinds of clothing as appropriate attire for our school. This is not a judgment of what children look like in particular kinds of clothing, it is a judgment concerning what clothing is appropriate to our school environment.

Digital Watches: Please support your children's ability to read a clock by sending them to school with analog rather than digital watches through fifth grade.

While we recognize that middle school students may want to explore their identities by experimenting with their appearance, we expect them to consider, when choosing their apparel, that they are role models for the younger students. That being said, the following dress code privileges are accorded to students in the upper grades: subtle makeup and nail polish are allowed in seventh and eighth grades. Jewelry must be removed during physical activities. Any teacher, at his or her discretion, may ask a student of any grade to change or cover distracting clothing or remove distracting makeup or jewelry. In special cases, students may be sent home.

Ashwood students should always have two pairs of shoes at school: (1) indoor shoes that protect the floor, support the feet, and do not slip off during physical activity (sneakers, for example); and (2) footwear that is appropriate for the current weather, to be worn only outdoors. Please note that children must wear shoes on campus at all times, unless they are participating in a teacher-led activity and the teacher has specified that students may remove their shoes.

Additionally, there are special times during the school year when students are expected to dress more formally: winter and end-of-year assemblies, festivals, formal field trips,

and Friday assemblies (performing class only). On these special occasions, we ask that students not wear T-shirts, sweatshirts, high heels, platform shoes, or boots. We suggest that boys wear collared shirts, with a tie; girls may wear dresses, skirts, or slacks with appropriate tops. For the winter and year-end assemblies, no one may wear blue jeans; sneakers and athletic shoes are discouraged. If the weather dictates that children wear boots, they should bring along appropriate shoes to be worn indoors.

What Is Expected of Students and Adults at Community Events

Ashwood expects that its students, encouraged by their parents, will exhibit polite, respectful behavior and consideration of others while at school, and at school events that occur outside normal school hours. Parents are responsible for monitoring their children's behavior at such events. This applies to students throughout the grades. Children may not go into buildings and classrooms or remove items from them without permission from an appropriate faculty member.

Students are expected to sit with their parents when the class doesn't sit together with their teacher. At potluck events, parents are asked to take responsibility for their children's "potluck etiquette," ensuring that they are courteous, serve themselves an appropriate amount of food, and wait until the food is offered before helping themselves.

Expenditures

Individuals who purchase any materials on Ashwood's behalf need to obtain written approval from the school director before making a purchase. Check requisition forms are available in the office. Receipts must be turned in within 30 days of a purchase, or by July 15th, whichever comes sooner.

Field Trips

When a class travels by car on a field trip, the teacher determines grouping and seating arrangements. The first adult to arrive should locate a spot and wait quietly for all groups to convene. The adult chaperones must stay with their groups and, if necessary, remind the children of field trip rules. No group of children should be left unsupervised. Upon return to school, at least one adult must stay with the groups until the teacher arrives.

Adults need to monitor students' behavior; respectful and thoughtful behavior is expected at all times. Off campus, the daily school rules regarding behavior, appropriate clothing, and items that may be brought to school still apply. Please review the "Items Brought to School" section. Under no circumstances should alcoholic drinks be brought on any field trip, including overnight trips.

Food in the Grade School

Grade school children bring their own snacks and lunches to school each day. Snack time is scheduled from 10:30-10:45 a.m., and lunchtime is at 12:30 p.m. After a blessing, the children eat in their classrooms with their teachers. It is common for several classes to have lunch together with one of the class teachers or with a specialty teacher.

Wholesome, ample snacks and lunches provide your child with the energy to complete a day's work. Occasionally, teachers may allow candy as part of a special celebration. Otherwise, candy, gum, and soft drinks are not permitted at school.

Nut-Free Classroom

Because of potential serious danger to one of our students, we are creating a nut-free (other than almonds) classroom in grade 3-4. This means that no products containing any nuts, other than almonds, may be brought into the classroom. *We also ask that all children in the school who eat nuts at home in the morning, before school, please wash their hands afterward.* We also ask that no peanuts, nuts, or nut products be brought to potlucks or other class events.

Health Policies

Because Waldorf education is concerned with the whole child, and we recognize that there is a relationship between health and learning, your child's teacher will be receptive to any comments you wish to share about your child's health, illnesses past and present, sleeping and eating habits, stresses, and home-life rhythms.

Any child who is ill with an infectious or contagious condition or a fever must not be brought to school until the end of the infectious phase. If there is any question about your child's state of health, it is often better to keep your child at home. **If your child is ill and won't be attending school, please call the office at 236-8021 and leave a message by 8:00 a.m.**

We suggest that parents give their children at least one full day of rest at home after an illness. We ask that your child be fever-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school. When the child is well enough to do some work at home, parents of children in grades 4-8 should contact the class teacher to arrange for assignments to be sent.

Under no circumstances should a child who has been absent for the day be on the campus. We recognize that parents who have two or more children in the school may need to bring a sick child along at drop-off and pick-up times; in those cases, we ask that the sick child remain in the car.

If the onset of illness occurs during school hours, the school will contact parents to arrange for their child to go home. We ask that parents make arrangements to pick up a child who needs to go home within one hour of receiving a call from the school office. If a child receives a minor injury during school hours, he or she will be sent to the office for first aid as needed. When a child receives significant first aid, an injury report will

be filed in the office and a parent will be contacted.

Communicable Diseases

Teachers will send students to the office during the school day if they develop any symptoms that suggest illness, such as:

- Unusual listlessness
- Excessively red or draining eyes
- Skin rash
- Persistent cough
- Persistent nausea, with or without vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Persistent headache, stomachache, or sore throat
- Elevated temperature

Parents will be notified by phone of their child's illness and asked to make arrangements to have their child picked up from school.

Students with communicable diseases will be excluded from school for the time periods required by law by the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/>)

Head Lice

A child must be free of all lice and eggs before returning to school. All blankets, pillows, and articles of clothing that may have been exposed to lice should be taken home and washed thoroughly.

Splinters

We do not remove splinters or other foreign objects that are lodged below the skin. Such removal can result in infection, and also risk breaking the splinter, making complete removal more difficult.

Medications Brought To School

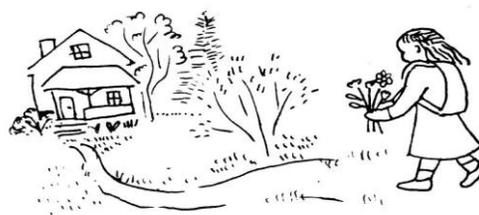
In order for children to receive medication at school, parents must complete and submit the Medication Authorization Form to the school annually. If any new medications are added during the school year, a new form must be completed and returned to the school with the medication.

All medications at Ashwood will be kept in the school office and administered by our staff unless other arrangements have been made with the school. Students may carry and self-administer prescription medications with signed permission from their doctor and parent/guardian. A doctor's prescription or pharmacy label is required for all medications, including over-the-counter medications or herbal supplements.

Immunization Policy

Waldorf schools around the world have focused on educating the whole child for nearly 100 years. With over 1,000 schools across 6 continents, we have a unique and broad view of childhood development and education. Across our 160 schools in the United States, we see a wide range of successful, healthy, well-adjusted students graduate and become productive members of society, their community, and their families. This is the Waldorf legacy.

Part of that legacy has to do with a strong partnership with parents – one that encourages them to be well informed and to make thoughtful decisions about their children’s education and school environment. With this in mind, we encourage parents to consult their physicians to determine the best course of action relative to immunizations. We respect parents' decisions regarding immunization and health. While we follow the Maine statute on immunizations to the letter, we do leave the ultimate decision about immunizations to parents. We strictly enforce a *stay-at-home* policy for children who are sick.



Insurance

Ashwood Waldorf School carries student accident insurance for all enrolled students. This coverage includes field trips and supervised school-sponsored activities.

Integrated Pest Management

It is the policy of Ashwood Waldorf School to have an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Policy, as required by state and federal law. Nonchemical pest management methods will be used at all times unless specifically approved by the board on a case-by-case basis. The business manager will act as the IPM coordinator. In the event that the school IPM coordinator and the board determine that a pesticide must be used, the least hazardous material and method of application will be chosen. All pesticides will be handled according to state and federal law.

The **objectives** of the school regarding pest management are:

- Maintain a safe school environment
- Protect health of students and faculty
- Monitor the school often for pest activity to minimize the spread of pests

- Limit exposure to pesticides
- Use pesticides only as last resort to control pest activity

The school will designate an **IPM coordinator** who will be responsible for

- Creating and IPM policy
- Recording all pest sightings by faculty and staff
- Recording all use of pesticide use and make records available
- Coordinating with custodian and or pest control contractors
- Approving appropriate pesticide applications-methods, material, and timing
- Posting and notifying school community when pesticides are applied
- Ensuring that pesticides are only used by licensed applicators
- Maintaining all records regarding the IPM policy

Record Keeping: Pest sighting data sheets and pest control records will be kept current and accessible.

Notification and Posting: This policy will be included in the parent handbook each year. Written notification will be provided to the school community at least five days before any high-risk pesticide application is done. No prior notification will be given when and if an emergency application is necessary. However, when emergency applications have been made, notice will be posted and information is always available in the school office.

Pesticide Applicators: Any person applying pesticides on school grounds will be trained in the principles and practices of IPM and licensed by the state to apply pesticides. Applicators must follow state regulations and label precautions and must comply with the school IPM policy and pest management plan.

Homework Guidelines for Grades 4–8

Class teachers and specialty teachers may, at their discretion, assign homework. Students returning to school after an absence may be required to complete missed and/or additional assignments at home.

Ashwood acknowledges that many parents enjoy working alongside their children on home-study assignments and encourages that practice for those who find it valuable. However, it is the school's intention that homework should fall within levels of academic challenge that allow the child to work independently. Parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers if the child seems to require too much support.

Items Brought to School

Students should not bring obviously distracting or dangerous items to school. Some examples of these are candy, toy weapons, trading cards, video games, and sound systems. Anything flammable or weapon-like – including matches, lighters, and jackknives – will be confiscated. In general, toys and games should not be brought to

school unless sanctioned by the class teacher for group purposes.

Sexually explicit material has no place in our school and will be immediately confiscated. If a parent becomes aware at any time that this type of material has been present at school, we ask them to notify the class teacher and school director.

Parent Meetings and Child Care

Unless childcare is specifically provided on campus during a school meeting, please do not bring your children when you attend parent meetings, parent-teacher conferences, school events, or when you come to volunteer. Ashwood cannot be responsible for unsupervised students on the grounds or in the classrooms. Children may not be present in classrooms outside of school hours without prior consent and the presence of the teacher.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Teachers are available to meet with parents at other times if either the teacher or parents have questions, concerns, or information that needs to be communicated. Please don't hesitate to contact your child's class teacher if you want to arrange a meeting.

In accordance with the Family Education Records Protection Act, parents have access to their children's school records at any time during school office hours.

Payment Dates, Late Payments, and Tuition Fees

Tuition makes up a vast majority of Ashwood's overall income. Virtually all of Ashwood's financial commitments are based on tuition income from enrolled families. When tuition payments aren't received, or are late, the school's capacity to meet its financial obligations is compromised. If your family is experiencing unexpected financial hardship, we encourage you to call the school's business manager to discuss options for meeting your tuition obligations. Ashwood offers a low-interest, short-term loan program for families experiencing unforeseen financial challenges. This program is available to enrolled families with good credit history and a clear way to repay the loan.

If a family is one monthly payment in arrears (or the equivalent of such), they will receive written notification that their child(ren)'s enrollment at Ashwood has been placed on a probationary status. If the situation is not rectified, the child(ren) will not be allowed to attend school. Parents will have a minimum of 30 days to become current with their payments. A detailed policy is included in the enrollment and contract package and is available upon request from the school office. Our business office is committed to upholding good business practices, which means working with families to ensure clear and open communication, and, whenever possible, seeking solutions to

unexpected financial issues.

Pets

Please do not bring dogs (or other pets) onto the campus. If your dog is with you when you come to campus, please leave him/her in your vehicle. If you walk to school please don't enter the school grounds with your dog. Please get permission from the school office prior to bringing any animals onto campus or into the classrooms. There are many childhood allergies and fears that we must be mindful of as a community.

Middle School Student Cell Phone and Electronic Device Usage

With teacher permission, students may use the office phones to communicate essential information with parents during the school day. The faculty respects that students may want to bring electronic devices to school in order to have them available after the school day ends. In order to accommodate this, Ashwood allows students to carry their cell phones and other electronic devices, turned off, in their bags. This is seen as a privilege and a courtesy for students, not as an inherent right. Furthermore, students may not use their cell phones or other electronic devices on campus at any time, for any purpose, including taking photos. The consequences for violating this policy are as follows:

First infraction: The student is issued a warning and the teacher takes the device. The teacher will return the device to the student's parent.

Second infraction: The student will not be allowed to bring the device to school for the rest of the term (September – January or January – June).

Third infraction: The student will not be allowed to bring the device to school for the rest of the year.

To model conscious media use, we ask that adults also refrain from using cell phones, texting, or using other electronic devices while moving through the school buildings, walking on campus grounds, and while dropping off and picking up their children.

Student Conduct

Ashwood's Expectations

Ashwood Waldorf School is a community of students, teachers, parents, and friends who support the school's efforts to provide a comprehensive and caring education. To ensure good progress toward that goal the school expects each Ashwood student to treat schoolmates and teachers with respect, with kindness, with thoughtfulness, and

with open friendliness, helping to create an inclusive environment where everyone can fully gain from, and contribute to, the Ashwood experience.

At Ashwood, we characterize rules and regulations as "expectations," because ultimately, it is relationships, not rules, that inspire and ensure appropriate behavior. Our expectations ask students to act responsibly and with self-restraint. The choice to attend Ashwood represents a decision to respect these ideals and to be shaped by them. The Waldorf curriculum engages students throughout the grades in developmentally appropriate ways. As Waldorf teachers, we believe that the curriculum itself is our most important and effective means of discipline. The children's enthusiasm for and interest in their lessons are the foundation for all classroom management. In addition to using curricular content, teachers use artistic gestures – music, painting, choral speaking, puppetry, and humor – to establish and maintain a favorable environment for learning. Teachers also do their best to establish a predictable schedule that offers students the comfort of an established routine and a sense of rhythm within each lesson through the use of polarities, or contrasting activities: e.g., being still/being active, listening/speaking, creating strong colors/creating soft colors.

Although curriculum-based approaches are quite effective, more explicit disciplinary measures are sometimes necessary. Whenever possible, teachers use positive feedback to encourage desired behaviors (e.g., a simple reward when the class meets a goal). Teachers also use "consequences" to discourage disruptive behavior. These consequences range from standing briefly behind one's chair, to "timeouts," to minutes subtracted from recess in order to complete a given community-service task. In all cases, the teacher's goal is to remove hindrances to learning for the individual child and for the class.

The school takes into account that occasional lapses in acceptable behavior are normal for young students. Teachers deal directly and immediately with such isolated incidents – speaking out of turn in class, for example – and usually no further action is necessary. Repeated instances of disruptive behavior – taunting or bullying, for example – or any extreme single instance of such behavior, are a much more serious matter and call for a formal response. The school's response varies according to the grade level of the student(s) involved.

Procedure for Significant Misbehavior

Immediately following a single instance of especially disruptive behavior, or upon deciding that ongoing misbehavior needs a stronger response, a teacher notifies the office and either the teacher, the school director, or another member of the leadership council telephones the parents to come and take the child home.

Should this occur one time, the child will be allowed to return to school the next day and a conference will be scheduled with the parents, the teacher, and the school director within three school days. No record of this event will appear in the student's records.

Should there be a second occurrence of serious misbehavior, the child will be sent home and not allowed to return to school until there is a conference with the teacher, the

school director, and the parent(s). Participants will create a plan for how the school and the parents will monitor the child's progress. A subsequent meeting will take place with the child, explaining the plan and outlining expectations. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled within two weeks to review the child's progress. All documents will go into the child's permanent school records.

Should another occurrence of serious misbehavior take place all of the above will occur, and it will be necessary to consider whether the child can continue to attend Ashwood Waldorf School. The adults involved will determine whether – and, if so, how – it is possible to help the child in question, while at the same time maintaining a healthy classroom environment.

School Behavior Policy

Unacceptable behavior

- Intentional physical abuse and/or threat of physical abuse
- Leaving classroom, activity, or school grounds without permission
- Antisocial behavior
- Intimidation
- Rude speech, attitude, or behavior
- Taunting or hurtful teasing
- Persistent verbal abuse
- Persistent exclusion of another from group activity
- Interference with and/or destruction of school or personal property
- Lying
- Inciting or encouraging any of the above

Each of these behaviors requires a response appropriate to:

- The intensity of the behavior;
- The frequency of the behavior;
- An understanding of the individual(s) involved;
- The particular circumstances surrounding the incident.

These are the variables that determine the seriousness of the behavior and the school's response. In less serious cases, some of these behaviors can be classroom management issues, which are handled directly by the teacher.

Upper Grades Procedure for Severe and/or Illegal Activities

Stealing, assault, sexual abuse, destruction of property, the possession and/or use of illegal substances, or any other illegal conducts that take place on Ashwood's campus are considered not only serious infractions of student expectations, but also significantly impede the safety and health of the school environment and violate the trust of the entire community. Should such infractions occur, parents will be immediately informed, the student will be sent home, and a suspension period will ensue. During this time the school will work with the family, and when appropriate, law enforcement

officials, to determine the correct course of action. Each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis, but in every case expulsion from school will be considered.

Ashwood Waldorf School Upper Grades Disciplinary Policy for Extreme and/or Unsafe Behaviors

Prohibited Conduct at Ashwood Waldorf School

Students are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct on school property, while in attendance at school, or at any school-sponsored activity, or at any time or place that such conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school:

- A. Violations of state or federal laws.
- B. Possession, use of, or being under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, inhalants, or tobacco.
- C. Inhaling any toxic substance.
- D. Possession and/or use of weapons or of any object, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, to inflict bodily harm and/or to threaten, intimidate, coerce, or harass another person.
- E. Violent or threatening behavior including, but not limited to, fighting, or verbal or written statements that threaten, intimidate, or harass others (including cyberbullying).
- F. Willful and malicious damage to school or personal property.
- G. Stealing or attempting to steal school or personal property.
- H. Lewd, indecent, or obscene acts or expressions of any kind (including electronic communications among Ashwood students).
- I. Leaving school grounds without permission.
- J. Any other conduct that may be seriously harmful to self, other persons, or property.

Disciplinary Action

First Violation

If any of the above behaviors occur at school:

1. A teacher will bring the student to the office.
2. The student's parent will be called, either by the teacher, the school director, or another member of the leadership council. The student will be sent home.
3. The leadership council will be informed of the situation immediately.
4. The student will be suspended from the school for a minimum of one additional day and a maximum of three weeks.
5. Before the student will be allowed to return to school, a meeting will take place between the parents, the teacher, and the school director. The school may require the attendance of other trained personnel (such as a counselor, doctor, law enforcement official, etc.). During this time, the teacher, the parents, the student, and the school director will create, review, agree upon, and sign a detailed behavior plan. The plan will include specific goals, a time

- frame for meeting the goals, and any applicable consequences. The plan will include scheduling a meeting within two weeks from the onset of the plan to determine whether the plan is working, whether it needs amendments, and for what time period the plan will remain in effect.
6. There may be conflict resolution conversations with all concerned, led either by faculty or by outside, trained personnel.
 7. Therapeutic options for the student/family will be explored.

If state or federal laws have been violated:

- Law enforcement officials will be notified immediately.
- A minimum one-week suspension will ensue while the details of the situation are being worked out.
- Expulsion from school will be considered.

Second Violation

All of the above will apply with the exception of:

- The student will be sent home and will be suspended from the school for a minimum of three days and a maximum of three weeks.
- Therapeutic counseling options for the student/family will be recommended, and may be required, in order for the student to return to school.
- If the student behavior plan from the first violation does not include the possibility of expulsion, this plan will include specifications on possible expulsion from school.

If state or federal laws have been violated for a second time:

- Law enforcement officials will be notified immediately.
- A minimum three-week suspension will ensue while the details of the situation are sorted out.
- The process of expulsion from the school will be initiated.

Screen Use and Media

We ask that parents minimize their children's exposure to television, movies, video games, computers, and other electronic media. This is especially important on school days and evenings.

In our experience, exposure to television and other media (including "quality" or "educational" programs) in early childhood seriously threatens the development of children's imagination. For this reason, media exposure undermines a child's ability to receive what we have to offer. At the very least, we have found that children who consume media regularly find it difficult to participate wholeheartedly in the classroom. Therefore, we ask families to protect their children from exposure to television, video games, movies, and computers.

During grades six, seven, and eight it is appropriate for students to have a gradual and guided introduction to the applications and uses of electronic media. During these transition years, use and exposure to media should be very moderate, occur with clear parental guidance and participation, and not work to the detriment of the social and educational climate of the class. Media exposure can be a socially divisive influence in these years and often works directly against what is brought in the classroom. Children in these grades should not be exposed to electronic media during the school week, and should have, at most, limited exposure on weekends and vacations.

Effects of media on children are noticeable and well documented. A growing body of recent research has cited effects such as shortened attention span, reduction in children's ability to use their inner picturing capacities, decreased literacy, difficulty following directions, and even, in some cases, inability to play.

Our teachers are happy to work with you to offer support and suggestions for reducing and eventually eliminating your child's media exposure. We have found that when adults work together on this issue, it becomes less of an issue for students.

To model conscious media use, we ask that adults also refrain from using cell phones, texting or using other electronic devices while moving through the school buildings, walking on campus grounds, and while dropping off and picking up their children.

Internet Use on Campus

Ashwood Waldorf School computers, network, and Internet access are provided to support the school's educational mission and to enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for students and school staff. Students at Ashwood do not have access to computers and/or the Internet during the school day. Students are allowed to carry cell phones, but they must remain turned off, and in their bag or locker during the school day. Violation of the policy can result in disciplinary action as outlined in the school handbook.

Internet Safety

Ashwood Waldorf School uses filtering technology designed to block materials that are obscene or harmful to minors, and pornography. Although Ashwood Waldorf School takes precautions to filter the Internet and children are not given access to WIFI at school, Ashwood cannot reasonably prevent all instances of inappropriate computer and Internet use by students.

Tuition Assistance Program

Ashwood Waldorf School commits a significant portion of the annual budget, including gifts received, to fund our needs-based tuition-assistance program for grade

school families and for five-day early childhood families. Each family requesting assistance must apply annually by completing and returning an application that is processed through Tuition Aid Data Services (TADS) and then reviewed by Ashwood's tuition-assistance committee, an independent committee comprised of qualified members of the midcoast community who are not current Ashwood parents, trustees, or employees. All documents and forms are handled in complete confidence. The committee, taking into account all of the information from each family, together with the school's budgetary needs, makes a final allocation of tuition-assistance awards. The business manager acts as sole liaison to the committee by answering questions, providing documentation, and communicating with applicants.

Tuition assistance forms are available in the office, online, or you can request that they be e-mailed or mailed to you. If you have any questions about the process, please contact the business manager.

The Ashwood Leaflet

The *Leaflet*, Ashwood's biweekly online newsletter, includes timely communications and updated calendar events. The deadline for submitting articles, announcements, and ads to the office is Monday, 9:00 a.m., the week of publication (the publication schedule appears on Ashwood's website). Ashwood parents and faculty may submit short classified ads, which will appear as space is available. Send submissions by e-mail to jsoleil@ashwoodwaldorf.org.



Wellness and Safety

We require that parents submit a student information form for each student in case of emergency. This includes parents' home and work telephone numbers and an emergency number for someone who can be responsible for the child when parents cannot be reached. The form must be submitted to the office no later than the first day of school. It is important that the office be promptly informed of any changes.

Withdrawals and Late Entrances

Enrollment is for the entire year and school expenses are budgeted accordingly. Therefore, no reduction in tuition is made for absence due to illness or vacation. Tuition for children enrolling after the start of the school year will be prorated from the date of entrance.

One month's notice is requested prior to withdrawal from any Ashwood program. After conversing with the teacher, parents should give the school director written notice of their intention to withdraw their child. Once the school year has started, tuition is due for the remainder of the school year whether or not the child attends Ashwood during that period.

Curriculum

Three Phases of Growth in Childhood

All children pass, albeit not always at the exact same age, through three phases of growth and development before reaching maturity, and the Waldorf curriculum works with these phases. The first period extends from birth to age seven. During this time, children learn through imitation, absorbing not only the words and gestures of those around them but the moral climate as well. The second period begins around age seven, when children experience new capabilities through the forces of imagination and memory. The third period begins at puberty, when children experience physiological changes, increasingly independent thought, and turbulent emotions.

The curriculum reflects the idea that child development retraces the history of the development of civilization. Children learn to read after learning to write, just as, historically, reading followed the development of notational systems. By third grade, children are more able to participate in the practical aspects of life, and the curriculum includes farming and house building. A growing interest in social development in fifth grade leads children into a study of ancient civilizations and issues of government. As children reach the seventh and eighth grades, they learn to think more abstractly through the study of algebra, geometry, physics, chemistry, and cause and effect in history.

Early Childhood

Our early-childhood teachers create a warm, caring atmosphere that nurtures each child's initiative through creative play and fosters healthy social experiences. Daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythms create a secure foundation that grounds the children in their world; these rhythms weave through the practical and artistic activities of each day. Ashwood's teachers recognize that imaginative play and purposeful physical activity are the true work of early childhood, providing strong preparation for the intellectual challenges of elementary school.

Grade School Day

Class teachers begin each day with opening exercises that may include saying the morning verse, singing, recitation, and recorder playing are common elements. Academic work is concentrated during morning hours, when children are most alert and receptive. After the main lesson, the day is divided into four periods, taught by both class and specialty teachers.

Main Lesson

Each morning, the class teacher presents one of the principle academic subjects – such as English, history, geography, science, or math – for two hours in three- to four-week "blocks." The concentration achieved in the main lesson block allows each subject to be pursued in depth and with continuity. Subjects such as English and mathematics, which need frequent practice, are taught both in main lessons and in regularly scheduled skills

classes.

Students put great care into creating their own main lesson books rather than using conventional textbooks. Students carefully write and beautifully illustrate a book for each subject. A main lesson book on chemistry, for example, may include quotations from early chemists or philosophers, poetry, and detailed lab reports.

Language Arts

The language arts program includes speech, handwriting, reading, grammar, spelling, composition, creative writing, theater arts, and world literature. These elements are both woven throughout the entire curriculum and emphasized in specific blocks.

Hearing and reciting rhymes and listening to the rich language of classic stories in the early childhood program form the beginning of the language arts program. The children's enthusiasm for drawing leads naturally to writing.

In first grade, the children begin with writing, and out of this activity they learn to read. The poems and stories that they have heard serve as the content for writing and reading. By the end of second grade, the children make the transition from reading what they have written and illustrated in their main lesson books to reading aloud from a text.

Teachers guide students in writing compositions in the early grades. This guidance provides the children with the capacity to develop their own creativity in language and writing skills in the upper grades.

Mathematics

Numbers are introduced in first grade. Students explore the qualitative aspects of numbers such as oneness, duality, and threefoldness, as well as the quantitative. They learn addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division in many ways, such as by stamping and clapping rhythmically, by walking geometric patterns, by playing number games, by hearing stories, and by drawing forms.

Progressing through the grades, the children master the basics of arithmetic and then go on to work with fractions, ratios, decimals, and percentages. Algebraic concepts are introduced in seventh and eighth grade.

Geometry is included in the curriculum in a wide variety of ways. In first grade, the children walk straight lines, circles, triangles, rectangles, and pentagons before beginning to draw them. Freehand geometrical drawing becomes more refined in sixth grade through precise geometrical constructions using compass, straightedge, and protractor. Seventh and eighth graders create complex geometrical forms and proofs.

Included in the study of mathematics are the history of number systems and biographies of the world's great mathematicians.

Science

In first grade, nature stories present the natural world in imaginative pictures that foster a love and reverence for the earth and its creatures. The children experience the seasonal rhythms and gifts of the earth within Ashwood's nurturing setting and its protecting forest. In third grade, the children study farming, housing, and measurement. The fourth grade science curriculum broadens to include studies of human and animal life. The fifth grade focuses on botany.

In the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, science studies emphasize careful observation. Physics, chemistry, astronomy, mineralogy, meteorology, anatomy, and physiology are taught. Scientific concepts arise from the experience of the phenomena themselves: for example, from music, students are led into the world of acoustics; from color and painting, they are led to optics. Heat, electricity, magnetism, mechanics, hydraulics, and meteorology are areas for further practical experimentation. Biographies of the great scientists complete the curriculum.

Specialty Classes

Specialty classes include French, handwork, strings, chorus, movement, woodworking, drawing, painting, and sculpting. Many of these subjects are taught by specialty teachers who work closely with the class teacher so that the children experience the curriculum as an integrated whole, with one lesson or activity enhancing another.

Foreign Language

Foreign language study begins in first grade. Children develop a good ear and feeling for language by reciting poems, singing songs, and playing games. In third grade, students start to read and write in a foreign language and begin a systematic study of syntax and grammar.

Music

Music is an integral part of the Waldorf curriculum. Music touches and nourishes the soul, enriching the inner life. It is especially important in the upper grades, helping to balance the effects of adolescence.

Singing begins in the early childhood program and continues through the eight grades. The class teacher introduces wooden pentatonic flutes in the first grade. A pentatonic scale is a simple five-note scale that is easy to sing and has a tone quality appropriate for young children. In grade 3-4, children move from the pentatonic flute to the soprano recorder.

In grade 3-4, recorder instruction continues, and the violin is also introduced as a whole-class activity with a specialty teacher. In sixth grade, students participate in a strings ensemble. Ensemble work continues through the eighth grade.

Families are responsible for the cost of renting or purchasing an instrument as well as

the cost of private lessons on their instrument (highly recommended). The cost of flutes and recorders is included in the annual tuition.

Handwork and Forming Arts

Handwork classes are taught throughout the grades. The children's power of concentration awakens as they learn to knit and crochet and later to sew and embroider. Handwork develops discipline, coordination, dexterity, initiative, and builds skill.

The forming arts include clay modeling and woodworking, which allow the children to experience the joy of working artistically with form and substance.

Movement

In the younger grades, imaginative play and active, noncompetitive games form the essential part of the movement program. String games build fine-motor skills. More formal sports begin in the middle grades, and may include basketball, volleyball, softball, and cross-country skiing. Children in the fifth grade participate in a Greek pentathlon with fifth grade students from other Waldorf schools in New England and Quebec. The fifth grade curriculum includes learning to throw javelins and discus, sprinting, long jump and wrestling.

Artistic Activity

Artistic activity permeates every aspect of the curriculum. Children have the opportunity to experience a sense of accomplishment when they create something useful and beautiful with their own hands. Drawing with crayons or colored pencils and writing beautifully in cursive are integral parts of main lesson work. Watercolor painting and modeling with beeswax and clay supplement this work.

Educational Support

We recognize that some children need educational support and assistance beyond what is offered in the classroom. Parents and teachers work together to identify students' needs and the resources – which may include remedial tutoring and occupational or other therapy – that will provide students who need it extra assistance and support. Families are responsible for arranging and paying for these services.

Ashwood Waldorf School believes that children learn best through interactions with teachers and other students and through the artistic, multi-sensory and multi-disciplinary approach that is distinctive to Waldorf classrooms. However, there are special circumstances when Ashwood allows the use of electronic devices in the classroom for students with significant learning challenges, when the use of an electronic device will support the child and sustain his or her ability to continue to attend the school. Each of these exceptions must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the grade school faculty and the leadership council, and will be considered only after alternative methods have been fully explored.

In order for an electronic device to be allowed in the classroom:

- A child must be in grades 5-8.
- There must be a documented disability.
- Modifications are necessary for the student to have equal access to the curriculum.
- The use of an electronic device is recommended by at least two qualified professionals
- A child must follow all of the guidelines for use of the device outlined by the teacher.
- The school director is part of the discussion with the parents that sets the clear boundaries of the privilege.
- The student's parents understand and support that the class and class parents will be informed as to why this accommodation is being made for the student.

Curriculum through the Grades at Ashwood

These activities recur throughout the grades: form drawing, French, handwork, music, painting, physical education, recitation, singing.

Grade 1

Fairy and folk tales, nature stories
Introduction to the alphabet and writing
Introduction to reading
Arithmetic: elements of addition, subtraction, multiplication, division
Handwork: knitting
Pentatonic flute

Grade 2

Fables, animal stories, legends of saints
Reading, writing, spelling
Introduction to elements of grammar
Arithmetic: continued work with the four processes, multiplication tables
Handwork: knitting
Pentatonic flute

Grade 3

Old Testament stories
Study of practical life: house building, farming, food, shelter
Reading, writing, grammar, cursive writing
Arithmetic: place value, long multiplication, measurement
Handwork: crocheting
Introduction to string instruments
Soprano recorder, and possible introduction to violin

Grade 4

Norse mythology
Reading, grammar, beginning composition
Arithmetic: fractions, long division
Local geography and history
Study of human beings in relation to animals
Handwork: cross-stitch and embroidery
Soprano recorder and introduction to violin

Grade 5

Ancient civilizations of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece
Arithmetic: decimals
North American geography
Botany
Grammar, composition, literature
Handwork: knitting with four needles
Strings and recorder

Grade 6

Roman and medieval history
Composition, grammar, literature
Arithmetic, geometry (ruler and compass constructions)
Business math (ratios, percentages)
Physics, astronomy, mineralogy
South American or European geography
Handwork: stuffed animals or dolls
Strings ensemble

Grade 7

Renaissance, Reformation, Age of Discovery
Composition, grammar, literature
Arithmetic, algebra, geometry
European, African, or South American geography
Physics, chemistry, human physiology
Handwork: felting
Strings ensemble

Grade 8

Revolutions: a historical perspective, modern history
Composition, grammar, literature
Arithmetic, algebra, solid geometry
World geography
Physics, chemistry, human anatomy, meteorology
Handwork: machine sewing
Strings ensemble

Morning Verse for Grades 1 - 4

The Sun with loving light
Brings brightness to my day.
The soul with spirit might
Pours strength into my limbs.
In sunlight shining clear
I reverence, O God,
The strength of humankind
Which Thou so graciously
Has planted in my soul.
That I may love to work
And learn with all my might.
From Thee come light and strength;
To Thee rise love and thanks.

Morning Verse for Grades 5 - 8

I look into the world
In which the sun is shining,
In which the stars are sparkling,
Where stones and stillness lie,
Where living plants are growing,
Where animals live with feeling,
Where humans within their souls
give dwelling to the spirit.

The world creator weaves,
In sunlight and in soul-light,
In world space there without,
In soul depths here within.
To Thee, Creator Spirit,
I turn my heart to ask,
That blessing and pure strength,
For learning and for work
May ever grow within me.

Festivals at Ashwood

Seasonal festivals help connect us with the rhythms of nature. Marking them in a festive way is enriching, and an opportunity to cultivate the art of celebration. Anticipation, preparation, the celebration itself, and the memories we treasure all bring joy.

Ashwood welcomes students from a wide range of religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, and differences are honored. The curriculum itself provides many opportunities to share religious traditions and particular festivals in the classroom. If you are interested in celebrating special holidays within your child's classroom, we encourage you to talk with your child's teacher.

Children love preparing for the festivals by creating decorations, baking traditional treats, learning special songs, and more. Nature stories and thematic tales help the children experience the deeper significance of each season in a pictorial way.

Michaelmas

A fall celebration of strength and courage as the days begin to grow darker. Grade 8 presents a pageant; grade 2 participates. Students from all grade-school classes hike up Mt. Battie using the Route 52 trailhead of the Camden Hills State Park, ending at the entrance to Mt. Battie State Park on Route 1 in Camden. Parents are welcome to hike with their children.

All Hallows' Eve

We celebrate All Hallows' Eve with pumpkin carving and a special lantern-lit walk through a magical forest pathway filled with wondrous characters. This activity takes place at Ashwood at dusk, and is open to the public. Homemade costumes are encouraged.

Martinmas

The Lantern Walk, or Martinmas, is a simple, quiet festival with European roots in the story of Martin of Tours, a fourth-century soldier who sacrificed his own cape to keep a beggar warm. We celebrate this festival at a time of year when days begin to grow darker. We craft lanterns and carry them in a procession at dusk, gathering the last rays of summer's sun in glowing candles to light our way into the coming winter darkness. The early-childhood class with grades 1 and 2 participate with their parents.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a time of giving thanks for nature's blessings and for the freedom that marks our heritage. It is celebrated in different ways in each classroom through stories, songs, and activities. It is often the theme of an assembly.

Saint Nicholas Day

Unseen, on this day Saint Nicholas visits Ashwood, leaving surprises for the children. Each classroom celebrates this in-school event a bit differently.

Winter Garden of Light

This is an occasion to celebrate bringing light into the darkness as we approach the winter solstice and the "turning" of the year. Carrying an unlit candle, each participant, one-by-one, walks to the center of a spiral created with evergreens. In the center of the spiral is a lighted candle from which to light our own before retracing our steps and placing our lighted candle on golden stars that line the path. When everyone has completed the journey, the darkened room is aglow with candlelight. This celebration reminds us that, at this most cold and dark time of year, our own inner lights serve to bring light and warmth to the world.

May Fair

Welcome spring with Maypole dancing, live music, games, a puppet show, refreshments, and more! Open to the public.

Ashwood Parents

Ashwood encourages parent participation in school life. Not only do parents provide most of Ashwood's financial support, they offer time, skills, and creative ideas as well. Volunteer activities, from assisting reading groups to chaperoning field trips, provide a great help to classroom teachers. Parents are nourished in turn by parent evenings, teacher meetings, lectures, and workshops. These offer a rich source of information about the school's pedagogical and philosophical background.

Rhythm and Home Life

A key element of Waldorf education is rhythm: the rhythms of the day, the week, and the year, including the seasons and festivals. Simple rituals help to mark the rhythm of the school day: lighting a candle at story time, blessing our food at snack time, a good-bye circle or song. A rhythmic home life harmonizes with the children's school experience, strengthening them and making life easier for the whole family. Regular times for meals, chores, play, homework, and bed help build a rhythm and lead to healthy child development.

In the words of Caroline von Heydebrand, a kindergarten teacher in the first Waldorf school: "Nothing makes a child so wild and nervous as capriciousness on the part of grown-ups. Children are full of deep trust, and when they can rely on a wholesome ordering of their daily life the basis is provided upon which the moral life as an adult can freely and quietly unfold."

For a number of books that elaborate on this topic, please see the "Reading List" at the end of this handbook.

Class Meetings

Class teachers hold approximately four parent evenings a year. These are an important way for parents to meet one another and to discuss questions about their children's education. Attendance at these meetings is very important for building the healthy communication between parents and teachers that is necessary to support the children in the classroom. Class meetings include curriculum presentations, discussions of issues currently facing the children at school and at home, and arrangements for class trips, plays, and other special class events.

Responsibility for Children at School Events

Parents are directly responsible for their children at all special and after-school events, on and/or off campus, except when teachers are with the children as a class. Accidents are more likely when adults are not fully conscious of children's actions.

Fundraising

As members of our community, parents, faculty, the board of trustees, and friends are asked to participate in fundraising activities. Each year, a substantial portion of

Ashwood's operating budget is generated through fundraising events.

In addition to special events, the school sends out an annual appeal letter each fall. Because tuition alone does not cover the cost of education at an independent school, we rely on voluntary gifts to the annual appeal to sustain our programs and to ensure Ashwood's ongoing health. Funds raised through the annual appeal pay for day-to-day necessities that spark and sustain the joy of learning.

Our fundraising efforts become all the more successful when school community members take the initiative to invite a family member to an event or share the name of someone who may be interested in supporting Ashwood through the annual appeal. By broadening our donor base, we enable others to become involved in our school and to witness the wonders of Waldorf education.

The willingness of our school community to support these initiatives is greatly appreciated. Families are encouraged to make financial contributions at a level they feel they can afford. Contributions of time and expertise are highly valued and accepted with gratitude.

Donations to Ashwood Waldorf School are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. Please check with your personal accountant for details.

Parent Participation on Committees

Another type of active involvement at Ashwood is through membership on one of the board-led committees that serve the school and help maintain its vitality. Committees perform many essential functions and provide opportunities for interaction with other parents, board members, and faculty. Anyone interested in serving on a committee is asked to contact the school director or the board president. Specific skills and qualifications may be required in order to join a particular committee, but we will find a committee that is a good fit for all parents interested in participating.

Reading List

Below are suggested titles for adult reading about Waldorf education. Some of these may be borrowed from class teachers or the school library.

Adolescence

Educating the Adolescent: Discipline or Freedom – E. Gabert
The Younger Generation – R. Steiner
All Grown Up and No Place to Go – D. Elkind
Between Form and Freedom – B. Staley
Encountering the Self – H. Koepke
On the Threshold of Adolescence – H. Koepke
Thirteen to Nineteen – J. Sleight

Early Childhood

The Disappearance of Childhood – N. Postman
The Incarnating Child – J. Salter
Childhood: A Study of the Growing Soul – C. von Heydebrand
Parenting: A Path through Childhood – D. Coplen
Phases of Childhood – B. Lievegoed
The Young Child: Creative Living with Two- to Four-Year Olds – D. Udo de Haes
Brothers & Sisters – K. Koenig
You Are Your Child's First Teacher – Rahima Baldwin Dancy

Early Childhood Education

Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk – D. Elkind
Rudolf Steiner Education & the Developing Child – W. Aeppli
Teacher, Child, & Waldorf Education – W. Aeppli
Kingdom of Childhood – R. Steiner
The Motherly & Fatherly Roles in Education – E. Gabert
Early Childhood Education & the Waldorf Plan – E. Grunelius
The Way of the Child – S. Harwood
The Recovery of Man in Childhood – A. Harwood
The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon – D. Elkind

Fairy Tales

The Wisdom of Fairy Tales – R. Meyer
The Uses of Enchantment – B. Bettelheim
Wisdom in Fairy Tales – U. Grahl

Festivals and Family Life

Festivals with Children – B. Barz
Celebrating the Festivals with Children – F. Lenz
Festivals, Family, & Food – D. Carey and J. Large
The Children's Year – S. Cooper, C. Fynes-Clinton, and M. Rowling
The Christian Year – E. Capel
Lifeways: Working with Family Questions – G. Davy & B. Voors, Eds.

Rudolf Steiner

The Essential Steiner – R. McDermott, ed.

Toys and Play

The Doll Book: Soft Dolls & Creative Free Play – K. Neuschutz

The American Boy's Handy Book – D. Beard

The American Girl's Handy Book – D. Beard

Toymaking with Children – B. Muller

Painting with Children – B. Muller

Pentatonic Song for Nursery & Kindergarten – E. Lebrecht

Journey through Time in Verse & Rhyme – H. Thomas, Ed.

Children at Play: Preparation for Life – H. Britz-Crecelius

TELEVISION

The Cyber Effect: An Expert in Cyberpsychology Explains How Technology Is Shaping Our Children, Our Behavior, and Our Values--and What We Can Do About It – M. Aiken

What to Do After You Turn Off the TV – F. M. Lappe and Family

Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television – J. Mander

Unplugging the Plug-in-Drug – M. Large

Who's Bringing Them Up? – M. Large

Amusing Ourselves to Death – N. Postman

Waldorf Education

Education as an Art: The Rudolf Steiner Method – H. Barnes and N. Lyons

Creativity in Education: The Waldorf Approach – R. Querido

School As a Journey – T. Finser

Toward Wholeness: Rudolf Steiner Education in America – M. C. Richards

The Education of the Child – R. Steiner

The Four Temperaments – R. Steiner

Education Towards Freedom – A. Klingborg and F. Carlgren

Teaching As a Lively Art – M. Spock

Waldorf Education: A Family Guide – P. Fenner and K. Rivers

Sources of Books, Toys, Supplies, and Equipment

To explore or purchase books, toys, art supplies, and anything Waldorf, the following web sites will lead you to many other sites of interest:

<https://waldorfeducation.org>

www.tinyurl.com/y87xkxgs

www.waldorfinthehome.org

www.bellalunatoys.com

