



# **Early Childhood Handbook**

## **2018–2019**

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

*The Denver Waldorf School reserves the right to interpret the content of this Handbook, including the rules and regulations governing the academic and non-academic conduct of students. This Handbook is not a contract, nor is it intended to be so construed. Our School reserves the right to modify and/or amend the content of this Handbook at any time during the year. If any modifications or amendments are made to this Handbook, a copy of those changes will be distributed to parents/guardians.*

Dear Early Childhood Family,

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

With Warmth,

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

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Please note that this program is located at:  
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## Philosophy and Program Description

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

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

In the Nursery (ages 2 1/2 to 5) and Preschool/Kindergarten (ages 3 1/2-6), a child will gradually become accustomed to working within a group, listening to stories, interacting with a teacher, and following a daily routine, while at the same time being aided in his or her development as an individual through the encouragement of creative play, practical life skills, and artistic opportunities. The teacher deeply understands the young child and the need for movement, as well as the child's devotion to learning about the world through imitating everything he or she experiences.

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

### Birthdays

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

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

### Circle Time

The class is brought together to sing songs and recite verses with the teacher. These may be connected with the seasons, a particular fairy tale or story, or just part of the general lore of childhood. Circle time also includes developmental movement activities with the songs and verses. Repeating and remembering verses sets the stage for the more intense memory work that will be required in elementary school. Repetition is lauded as a foundation for healthy brain

development. Rhyming sounds and alliteration found in poems and songs educate the ear, forming the beginnings of spelling and phonics. Teacher directed movement that includes repeating developmental movement sequences provides support for healthy brain development.

### **Craft and Artistic Activity**

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

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

### **Creative Play Time**

The children have a long period of time each day during which they are encouraged to imagine and play with a wide variety of natural materials and playthings, following their own initiative. During this time, the teacher is involved in preparing the snack, sewing, cleaning, making toys or any of a number of practical activities in which the children are welcome to participate. An atmosphere of work and play permeates the room.

Within the activities of play, children integrate the world and practice their life skills such as movement and balance, sensory integration, speech and language development, social and emotional interactions, and imaginative and cognitive development.

### **Festivals**

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

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

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

### **Life Arts**

Part of the daily experience is tending to the domestic life (cleaning, gardening, cooking, repairing) and self care (toileting, hair brushing, hand washing). It is a process-oriented approach. For example, the children may grind the grains that they will later mix into their flour for bread making.

Involving the children in practical activities and care of their materials, their environment, and themselves lays the groundwork for organizational skills needed in adult life.

## **Music**

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

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

## **Outdoor Play and Morning Walks**

The nurturing of a child's senses through outdoor experiences and activities is cherished in the early years. Children deeply experience sunlight and darkness, sparkling frosts, muddy puddles, and clear blue skies. In addition to outside playtime, class walks are taken regularly in the nursery and preschool/kindergarten classes. You will find our nursery and kindergarten classes outside in all but the most formidable weather.

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

## **Snack Time**

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

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

## **Story Time**

Children hear a special story each day told directly by the teacher. Stories are often told along with a puppet show, especially in the nursery.

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

## **Rhythms**

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

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

## Verses and Blessings

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

### Verse 1

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

*The following lines are sometimes added:*

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

*The following blessings are said at mealtimes:*

### Blessing 1

*To be said or sung:*

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

*Hold hands*

Blessings on the meal and  
Peace on the earth.

### Blessing 2

*Song:*

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

## Policies and Procedures

### Morning Arrival

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

The official time for the day to begin in all the classrooms is 8:30 am. There is morning care available at the Main Campus, which begins at 7:30 am with Laurie Clark in the Morning Glory classroom. You may drop off students at Starflower Nursery at 8:30am.

### Drop-Off Time

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

### Sign-in and Sign-Out

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

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

### Attendance

For both the nursery and kindergarten children, please call or text your child's teacher by 8:30 am each day that your child will be late or absent.

### Afternoon Program

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

If you are expecting to be late for afternoon pickup at Starflower Nursery, please text Mary Ray at 303-921-0687, to let the teachers know.

**After Care:** After Care begins after school and ends at 6:00 pm at an additional charge at the Pennsylvania location. There is no After Care available for the Starflower nursery class. If you are late picking up your child from the Afternoon Program, they will be signed into After Care and you will be billed accordingly.

If you need to reach After Care staff or get a message to your child between the hours of 2:30 – 6:00 p.m., you may call extension 113. For urgent needs during After Care hours only, you may contact Dawn Archer, After Care director, on her cell phone, 720-837-4933.

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

### **Releasing Children from the School**

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

Children will only be released to persons on their approved emergency contact/pick up lists. If a person who is not an emergency contact/pick up person for a child attempts to pick up that child, parents/guardians will be contacted to ensure this person has permission to pick up that child. Per licensing regulations, we cannot allow children to be picked up by anyone under 18 years of age.

### **Illness**

The best place for your child to be properly nursed through a sickness is at home. Kindergarten is a busy place and not the right environment for a sick child. Please do not send your child to school if they have symptoms indicated on the Illness Policy. Our illness policy from Children's Hospital is on our website, under community-family information and forms. If a child has a fever with flu-like symptoms, they may not return to school until they have not had a fever for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Children can be adamant about wanting to come to school, but it is far better for them to remain at home until they are truly well. All working parents know the desperate feeling of needing to go to work when a little one is not feeling well. The teachers are very sympathetic to the situation, but we urge parents to arrange back-up childcare. After an illness, children often appear healthy in the morning, but are still not up to the vigorous activity of the classroom. Please allow your child at least one full day of rest after an illness before returning to class.

Upon notification that a student has contracted a communicable disease or has another condition listed on the Colorado Board of Health's Reportable Conditions document, the Main Office Manager will report to the Board of Health, using appropriate forms and documentation. Please notify your child's teacher of any illness your child has as well as any exposure to communicable or highly contagious illnesses.



## **Parking at School**

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

At Starflower Nursery, parking is available in front of the school on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and around the corner on Adams Street. Please do not park in the alleyway or behind the church.

## **Symbols**

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

## **Food**

Parents may be asked to buy groceries for the classroom snack on a rotating basis. If your class does this, your teacher would provide you with a list of needed items. You would pick up a grocery card in the business office to purchase the groceries. If your purchases exceed the card's amount, keep your receipts and bring them to the business office for reimbursement. Starflower Nursery does not ask parents to pick up groceries. In keeping with the wholesome atmosphere, environment, and activities for the children, we also ask that the groceries provided be of the highest quality. Whenever possible, organic food is served. Each child's special needs are considered. If your child has allergies, please speak to your teacher. Because of peanut allergies in the school, no peanut butter or peanut products are allowed in any early childhood classroom.

If your child stays for the afternoon, we ask that they bring their homemade lunch in a media-free lunch box or basket. It is very helpful for your child to have a cloth napkin. Please avoid packaged snacks and all gum and other sweets. Be sure to pack plenty of protein rich foods (cheese, nuts, meat, beans, yogurt...but no peanuts, please) to help children sustain high energy levels throughout the day. We ask that only water, milk or milk substitute be sent for a beverage, excluding chocolate milk, strawberry milk, juices and other high sugar drinks. We encourage a lot of water drinking throughout the day, and it is available throughout the day for the children.

\*\*\*There may be specific food restrictions in your child's unique class due to life-threatening allergies. Please be alert and aware of these restrictions when preparing and packing lunches.\*\*\*

## **Clothing**

We strongly suggest you bring a cloth bag containing extra clothes to hang in your child's cubby. Don't forget plenty of socks and underwear. **All clothing must be labeled with your child's name.** It can be distressing to fall in a puddle or arrive late to the toilet, and it helps if an upset child is able to put on his or her own clothing. The clothes need to be replenished with clean ones as they are used and updated seasonally. In cold weather, include extra hats and mittens.

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

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

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

## **Potty**

In Starflower nursery, for the children new to potty training, we take regular potty breaks, but occasionally accidents happen, even with children who have been potty trained for a while. Sometimes the excitement of being in a new place can be a distraction for a while.

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

## **Diapers**

Starflower nursery has a shelf to store diapers, please bring a supply for your child to keep at school. The Starflower teachers will let you know when more diapers are needed. We wear gloves and the changing table is cleaned with antiseptic spray. We wash the children's hands and our own. They are encouraged to try the potty when they show interest after seeing their peers using the big potty. If you wish for us to use special cream for your child, it must be clearly marked with the child's name and we must have a signed permission from the parents.

## **Shoes and Slippers**

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

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

## **Weather**

We are outside every day in most weather, so it is imperative that your child is dressed appropriately. When the temperature is above 90°, all children must wear sunhats and we encourage play in the shade, give access to water, and shorten our play periods outside. When the temperature is between 32° and 20° we will still go outside, with children bundled up and for a shorter period of time. Per CDHS guidelines, we cannot take children outside when it is below 20°. A good rule of thumb for assuring your child is warm enough is to dress them in at least one more layer than you are wearing yourself.

## **Snow Clothes/Boots**

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

## **Snow Days**

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

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

## **Pro-social Behavior/Guidance and Discipline**

As teachers of the early childhood program, we see our task to be removers of hindrances, allowing the children's gifts to unfold. We try to harmonize the children's development by providing opportunities for physical activity, creating feelings of security (which involves the teachers being kind but strong individuals), providing warmth (both outer to protect their organs and inner warmth to make them feel acknowledged, accepted, and cared for), serving good, nutritious whole foods for optimal growth, providing behavioral boundaries (rules), presenting calm activities that interest but do not overwhelm, allowing children to do things for themselves, and providing predictable and rhythmic days, full of time for imaginative play. Young children learn much about their environment through imitation and positive role models. The teachers at DWS provide positive instruction, both by guiding and redirecting children during situations that are difficult for them to navigate. Faculty and staff model prosocial interactions with each other and with the children. It is fundamental to see and affirm the children for who they are, and to assist them when they are having social difficulties. "No" is saved for the occasions when children may hurt themselves, others, or the classroom things.

Occasionally a child may need to be separated from the group in order to have guidance from a teacher or in order to calm themselves. On these occasions they are most often with an adult who keeps the child close by her side. Children are never separated for more than a couple of minutes from their classmates, and children are not left alone. If a child needs this type of separation from the group on a regular basis parents will be notified.

The Denver Waldorf School works with a Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) from Children's Hospital and with DWS student and therapeutic support professionals who assist in assessing medication administration, interactions between children and caregivers, and normal growth and development of children. In the case of developmental concerns, parents and teachers will work together to meet the needs of the child.

## **Field Trips and Transportation**

Every teacher has a checklist of items as a support tool to promote safety, communication, and planning for outings. A Class Field Trip Form is filled out and returned to the office listing the names of the children in attendance, the destination, destination phone number, and directions to the destination. The date/time leaving the school is listed, along with the return time. A Field Trip Driver/Chaperone Information Sheet lists every driver, their cell phone and their passengers. Each driver will carry directions and a complete set of Back to School forms for the class with permission from the parents and emergency contacts. Copies of drivers' licenses, registration and insurance are required from each driver who drives children who are not their own and are filed in the Main Office. The teacher talks to the parents concerning seating (proper seat belts and restraints) and emergency procedures on the road. Each car carries some first aid items with them. All drivers must be at least twenty (20) years of age.

## **Late For Field Trips or Morning Walks**

At the Main Campus the Main Office will have all the information of where the class is and the route or location of the morning walk will be posted on the classroom door. If you arrive with your child late for a field trip at the Starflower location, a note will be taped to the front door with directions to the field trip and the time we will return.

## **Emergency Contact**

It is essential that we always have a current phone number so we can reach you should an emergency arise. Please keep the school registrar (x. 101, registrar@denverwaldorf.org) and your teacher up-to-date as to your whereabouts and any changes in your address, e-mail, or home, office, and cell numbers. Parents will be called to pick up a sick child. It is imperative that all health and emergency forms sent to you in your enrollment packet are completely filled out.

### **Notification for Illnesses, Accidents, Injuries**

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

Major medical incidents require the school to contact CDHS with an injury report, if you end up taking your child to the doctor as a result from an injury at school please report this visit to your teacher and the main office.

### **Emergency and Disaster Preparedness**

Each campus has a written plan for evacuating and safely moving children to an alternate site, as well as lockdown, shelter in place, and active shooter on premises. The plan includes provisions for multiple types of hazards, such as floods, fires, tornados, and local shootings. To see a copy of the plan, or for questions, please ask Christa Gustafson at the main campus or Rachel Nielsen at Starflower.

In the case of an emergency or disaster where the class must evacuate to an alternative location, **the school will contact parents to let them know**. Site A for the main campus is Our Lady of Lourdes School and Site B is Grant Beacon Middle School. For Starflower, Site A is our Administrative Director's (Kelly Church's) house, 838 Fillmore Street, 80206 and Site B is Good Shepherd school.

If your child has a disability or has access and/or functional needs, a plan will be drafted upon enrollment to help them evacuate during an emergency.

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

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

### **Health and Medication Information**

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

A Nurse Consultant has been assigned to our school through The Children's Hospital. Our Nurse Consultant this year is Marisa Beauchaine. Marisa will visit the school at least once a month to help us stay in compliance with regulations regarding the health and safety of your children. If

your child has a chronic condition such as asthma or serious allergies, or if you need the school to dispense any medication or vitamins/supplements to your child on a regular basis, Christa Gustafson, our Main Office Manager, will work with you regarding putting together a Health Care Plan or Medication Administration Permission Form in conjunction with your physician so the school best knows how to take care of your child. If your child needs medications on a temporary basis, such as antibiotics for an infection or pain medication for an injury, you and your physician will need to fill out a Medication Administration Permission Form allowing the school to dispense the medication. The form can be found on our website.

A copy of our full medication policy is available at Starflower and the Main Office at the main campus.

**Law prohibits The Denver Waldorf School faculty and staff from dispensing any medication, prescription or over-the-counter, or any vitamins/supplements, to your child unless prescribed in writing by a physician and brought to school by the parent along with a Medication Administration Permission form signed by both parent and physician.** Homeopathic remedies will not be given to any child in a licensed program, per Child Care Licensing regulations.

Emergency medications (epipens, inhalers) are stored in an unlocked cabinet out of reach of children to ensure access in the event they are needed. Emergency medications are also brought outside to the playground and on walks and are kept safely out of reach of children. On the Main Campus, all other medications are stored in the Main Office in a locked cabinet, or in the medication refrigerator if they must be refrigerated. At Starflower, all other medications are stored in the locked office.

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

### **Physician Statement**

Within thirty (30) calendar days of admission, and within thirty (30) calendar days following the expiration date of a previous health statement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of each child in the early childhood program must submit a Physician Statement indicating the child's current health status or written verification of a scheduled appointment with a health care provider. The statement of the child's current health status must be signed and dated by a health care provider who has seen the child within the last twelve (12) months, and must include when the next visit is required by the health care provider.

### **Immunization Records: Information regarding Colorado State Law and Immunization in Schools**

The Denver Waldorf School follows Colorado State Law and Child Care Licensing regulations for grades Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade. Colorado law requires proof of immunization be provided prior to or on the first day of admission. The requirements can be found on the following website: [www.coloradoimmunizations.com](http://www.coloradoimmunizations.com). The Denver Waldorf School accepts properly documented immunization exemptions.

Questions? Contact Christa Gustafson, (303) 777-0531 x.102 or [dws@denverwaldorf.org](mailto:dws@denverwaldorf.org).

### **Sun Protection**

Use of sunscreen at school requires parent permission. Sunscreen must be labeled with the child's first and last name.

### **Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)**

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

### **Student/Teacher Ratio**

The ratio of teacher to student in the nursery is one to eight, and one to ten in the three early childhood classes on the Main Campus. Each class has an experienced lead teacher, a lead assistant, and an afternoon assistant.

### **Back-To-School Open House**

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

### **Parent Meetings**

The Early Childhood Program will have parent meetings throughout the year, both as individual classes and as an Early Childhood Program as a whole. Your child's teacher will inform you of the meeting place and time for all of these events. Families will be offered an opportunity to ask questions regarding school policies and procedures at the first parent meeting of the school year.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

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

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

### **Toys and Money**

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

### **Television and Media**

We have found that media screen time is counterproductive to what we, in the Waldorf Early Childhood Program, are trying to nurture in the young child. We ask that all families make a commitment to protect their growing children by eliminating these activities from their children's lives. We ask for no screen time before school, and on evenings prior to a school day, leaving the child freed up in their imaginative life.

We encourage you to explore the many alternatives to media/ screen time. Examples may be found in any domestic work (washing dishes, gardening, laundry, carpentry, polishing shoes, clearing and wiping the table, watering/spraying plants). Artistic activities such as drawing, painting, beeswax modeling, handwork like finger knitting or weaving are all great alternatives.

And play, both outside in nature and indoors is an ideal for the healthy development of the child. The Early Childhood Teachers would be happy to share ideas, or suggest other alternatives for your family. Transitioning from a media rich environment to a media free or very limited media environment can be challenging at first, but once settled, the rewards are astounding and will last a lifetime!

There is much research on the damaging effects of screens for young children. For more information and referrals on this topic, please ask your child's teacher.

### **Moving from the Nursery to the Kindergarten**

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

### **1<sup>st</sup> Grade Readiness**

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

### **Visitors**

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

### **Filing a Complaint**

If you have any concerns regarding your child's care, we ask that you first take it to the Lead Teacher. Many problems are easily resolved with clear, direct, and honest communication. If you still feel a need to pursue your concern, you may contact the Administrative Director or any member of the College of Teachers. The names and contact information of the College are listed in the first pages of the school directory.

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

This is a child care program that is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services and by the Department of Excise and Licenses. These licenses indicate that at the time of inspection the provider has met standards to operate a licensed Family Child Care Home, Child Care Center or School-Age Child Care Program. The license is posted and reports and records associated with licensing can be found in the Administrative Director's office. Standards for licensure include:

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

- Maintaining children’s records
- Administrative reports and records

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

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

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

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

The childcare provider’s State Child Care License and Denver Department of Excise and Licenses should be posted or available for review at your request. All inspection reports must be posted or available for review upon request. Inspection reports are located in the office of the Administrative Director.

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

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

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

### **Admissions Process**

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

### **Tuition Schedule**

On our website, [www.denverwaldorf.org](http://www.denverwaldorf.org) please see “Admissions” and “Tuition Schedule” for the rates. Kindergarten Total Tuition rates are calculated based on a standard daily rate. That standard daily rate defines the number of school days in a program. The five-day program is defined as 170 days, the four-day program is 135 days, and the three-day program is 105 days. Families wishing to change their enrollment schedule in Kindergarten must complete the change of enrollment form available in the Main Office. A reduction in enrollment incurs a \$250 change of enrollment fee.

### **Calendar**

The school year calendar can be found on our website, [www.denverwaldorf.org](http://www.denverwaldorf.org).



**When a Child Leaves the Program**

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

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

**Non-Discrimination**

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