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## Admissions Policy and Procedures

### Introduction

Ringwood Waldorf School is an educational centre that offers Waldorf (Steiner) Education based on the philosophy of Dr. Rudolf Steiner. Waldorf Education is a worldwide educational movement where the education is practised regardless of creed, race and religion.

As part of this movement Ringwood Waldorf School aims to welcome all those who choose Steiner education. The school aspires to a non-selective admissions policy and does not discriminate between applicants on grounds of academic ability, gender, disability, race or religion or any other protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Children will be considered for admission in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy and Procedures which are set out below.

The sole criteria for admission are as follows:

- The availability of a place in the class appropriate to the applicant's age
- The capacity of the school to meet the applicant's educational needs, taking into account its responsibility to the children already in the class, the mix of educational backgrounds and the distinctive nature of the curriculum. In general, we only accept children into Class 8 who are transferring from another Waldorf school.
- The agreement of the applicant's family or guardian(s) to contribute financially
- The agreement of the applicant's family to support the ethos of the school

### Ethos

In Waldorf Education the pedagogy, curriculum and management practices are integral to the education itself and these are informed by Anthroposophy, its concept of the universe, the world and the human being. This is the basis of the art of education and all endeavours in the school. It includes celebrating festivals which are Christian in the broadest sense and free of dogma or sectarianism.

Parents applying to enrol their children to Ringwood Waldorf School need to demonstrate that they have given consideration to this form of education, agree and support the educational principles on which it is based and wish it for their children. This is an active, not passive, process. The school supports these considerations by offering individual family tours and Introductory Mornings where an overview of the education is outlined. In addition, there are scheduled Open Days and suggested reading lists available. Courses and seminars are also periodically available, and the admissions process itself also offers opportunities for discussion and for questions to be asked.

When an application for admission is accepted by the Admissions Group, the Admission Agreement requires that parents continue to support the educational principles and ethos on which the school is founded. See Appendix 1

## **Waiting List Management**

We can under normal circumstances accommodate the following numbers of children per class:

Kindergarten: 16

Classes 1 - 12: 25

These are the levels at which the classes are regarded as full. When the number in a class is below these levels, places will usually be given to applicants who meet the other criteria for admission in the following order:

- Children of staff members
- Siblings of students already enrolled in the school.
- Students transferring from other Waldorf Schools.
- Other applicants who have demonstrated commitment to Steiner education on a first come first served basis.

## **Family Policy**

Ringwood Waldorf School has a Family Policy where preference for admission is given to families who have other siblings in the school. Experience has shown that it is preferable educationally for siblings to attend the same school. This will also better enable the family to maintain the educational principles stated.

## **The capacity of the school to meet the applicant's educational needs**

The school has always endeavoured, where possible, to offer places to families regardless of financial circumstances. As a result of this, there are some constraints on resources available to support pupils requiring additional learning support and/or have special educational needs. Each class is able to accept some children with specific learning needs, with extra help from the school's SENCo. This assessment will be made by the Admissions Group which assesses the ability of the school to meet the educational needs of the child, now and in the future. This forms the first part of the assessment made during the admission process. This assessment is made in the light of the resources currently available in the school for this purpose and, in addition, the needs of the rest of the class will also be considered. This assessment will require that records of work, medical records, school reports and other relevant documents be made available before the educational interview takes place. Interviews with the parents and the student will also form part of this process of assessment. Ringwood Waldorf School will contact the previous educational setting before or after the interview.

## **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

The school requests an Admissions Administration fee of £95 when an application is made, and a £700 family deposit upon offer of a place. More information on Financial Contributions to the school can be found on the school website (in the 'Financial Contributions Policy') under the 'Financial Information' page.

Failure to meet financial and community responsibilities may result in a family being required to withdraw from the school on the basis of non cooperation.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **1. Book a Call**

All prospective families are asked to book an initial Zoom or phone call with the Admissions Office. This is an opportunity to ask any questions they may have, find out more about the school and to check availability of spaces in the relevant class(es).

## **2. Book a tour or attend an Open Morning.**

All families are asked to visit the school before putting in an application, and individual tours can be arranged with the Admissions Office. The school also holds regular events including Open Mornings, Open Evenings and Parent Educational talks and conferences. Prospective parents can also gain information from the school website or by contacting the school office to set up a talk with a school teacher.

## **3. Application.**

Applications can be submitted online. Applications will need to include:

- A copy of the child's birth certificate
- A copy of the child's last school report
- A copy of any reports from educational psychologists or SEN coordinators
- A financial contribution form

Financial Guidance on costs is available on the Admissions page of our website. A £95 administrative fee is applicable per application. On return of the completed application forms, parents receive an acknowledgement of the application with any requests for further information required.

A paper version of the Application Form is available from the Admissions Office.

**4. Further Documentation:** The Admissions Officer has the authority to progress the application and will inform the parents of the next step. If further school reports/medical reports or assessments are required, these must be received before any taster days or the educational interview is arranged. If no further documentation or discussion is required, the next step will be taster days or the educational interview.

## **5. Taster Days**

There may be the option for the child to attend some taster days in the class. The Admissions Officer and relevant class teacher will advise if this is appropriate for the child. Taster days are only offered when there is a space available in the class.

## **6. Educational Interview.**

Parents are invited to attend the educational interview with their child. At least two staff members conduct the educational part of the interview; normally one of these would be the main teacher of the class concerned. If deemed necessary, a learning support teacher will be present. The child will be interviewed by the teacher. During this time a colleague will discuss the child's background with the parents whilst completing the interview form. In the lower and middle school, the class teacher, possibly together with a colleague, will assess the child's literacy and numeracy skills and coordination. The class teacher aims to get a sense of how the child and the class would fit together. Both the parents and the teacher need to arrive at a sense of the suitability of the education offered by Ringwood Waldorf School.

If there is a delay in the admissions procedure, this is because the application requires further investigation or discussion. This is usually due to financial or educational considerations.

**7. Financial interview and further information:** Parents will be informed if they need to make an appointment with the finance team for a financial meeting or if further information is required about the needs of the child. A learning support assessment may also take place as part of the admissions procedure. On receipt of all necessary documentation, a final decision is to be reached within two weeks.

**8. Decision:** If it is decided that the school cannot offer a place, the application will not progress to the educational interview. Parents are informed about the decision on the same day. Whilst there is no legal obligation to inform parents of the reasoning for a rejected application, we would always do our best to communicate clearly and help parents understand the decision.

There is no right of appeal. However, if a re-application can be considered at a later date, we will inform the parents.

**9. Admission:** (including an admission fee) If successful the parents will be advised in writing and sent the Admission Agreement together with various consent forms and the Parents' Handbook. Once signed and returned with a £700 deposit, the Admission Agreement forms a legally binding contract between the school and the signing parents. A start date is arranged and the integration process into the school begins.

**10. Trial Period:** The first half term is considered a trial period. During this time, the school or the parents can end the child's stay at the school without notice or further obligation. Throughout the trial time, the child's progress and integration into the school will be reviewed by the teachers and management. The outcome of this may result in the ending of the child's stay at the school, an extension of the trial period or full acceptance into the school. This trial period involves consultation and review with the parents. This may be extended in exceptional circumstances by written agreement to a term's trial.

Withdrawal by the parents after the trial period is subject to a full term's notice or equivalent financial contribution being payable.

### **Data Protection**

Documentation of important records for each child is kept centrally from enrolment onwards according to data protection legislation. Once the child has been admitted appropriate details are entered into the formal admissions register/database; even if this is a trial period of more than one week – date of leaving is entered against the entry in the register. Any data collected in the application process will be used solely for the administration of your application and care of your child. We will not contact you for any other purpose unless you give your express permission. Ringwood Waldorf School will not share any data with a third party unless strictly necessary for the care of your child or we are legally required to do so.

You can read our full Data Protection Privacy Notice and Policy on our website.

### Appendix 1



# ADMISSION AGREEMENT

**IN RESPECT OF:**..... (Full Name)

This document sets out the terms and conditions of Ringwood Waldorf School's offer to admit the above pupil. The act of signing the attached Form of Acceptance indicates the acceptance of these terms and conditions and this then forms the basis of the legal and social contract between the Parent(s)/guardians on one hand and the school on the other.

## **1. THE OFFER**

- 1.1. Ringwood Waldorf School is pleased to advise you that it offers a place for the above named pupil and looks forward to warmly welcoming your family into the school community. To accept this offer of admission please read these terms and conditions carefully and complete the Form of Acceptance that forms part of this Admission Agreement.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1. 'Trial Half-Term' means that admission is provisional and subject to review. Continuance is subject to mutual agreement. Trial half-term can be extended to full term.
- 2.2. 'Form of Acceptance' means that form provided by the school and which forms part of this document that is to be completed and signed when accepting an offer of a place in the school.
- 2.3. 'Child' means a child of whatever age is admitted to the school to be educated. This term is synonymous with the word 'pupil'.
- 2.4. 'Refundable Deposit' means the sum asked to be paid to the school before the admission has effect.
- 2.5. 'Minimum Funding Contribution' means the annual promise that parents are asked to make and that reflects the social ethos and responsibility that parents have to contribute in accordance with the school's Finance Policy and their means and their responsibility for the financial wellbeing of the school.
- 2.6. 'School Management Team' means the body or group in the school responsible for all day to day management and who carry responsibility for the spiritual destiny of the school.
- 2.7. 'School Rules' means that document which sets out the general rules that pupils are expected to follow and parents to support. A copy of this document is sent to all parents when offered a place and it is printed in the Parents' Handbook. The rules may be periodically amended and parents will not be notified of any such changes.
- 2.8. 'Term's Notice' means notice of withdrawal given not later than the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the term preceding the term to which the notice relates.

- 2.9. 'Terms and Conditions' means these terms and conditions and as amended from time to time.
- 2.10. 'The Complaints Procedure' is the school's procedure for the review of the treatment of serious disciplinary matters and related decisions, as amended from time to time, a current copy of which is available on request from the school and is printed in the Parents' Handbook.
- 2.11. 'We' or 'the school' means the legal entity that is recognized as Ringwood Waldorf School
- 2.12. 'You' or 'the parent(s)' means each and every person who has signed the Admission Agreement as the parent or guardian of the child or who, with the school's written consent, has subsequently assumed parental responsibility for such child.
- 2.13. 'Community Support Fund' means that fund that is made up of those financial contributions made over the indicative minimum and which forms a notional fund to support those families who cannot contribute the Minimum Funding Contribution. This fund is also 'subsidised' by the general operating budget and may be limited to a percentage of the overall budget in any one year.
- 2.14. 'Community' means the collective body of parents, teachers, friends and staff who support Ringwood Waldorf School as an educational centre.
- 2.15. 'Ongoing Assessment' means the process of continual monitoring in the Kindergarten and the sharing of this between the parent(s) and the teacher.
- 2.16. 'Connection' means the requirement that parents actively seek to further their understanding of Waldorf Pedagogy and the ethos of the school, so they are better able to support their child's education. They do this by participating and contributing to school life.
- 2.17. 'Learning Support Group' means the School Management Team group which oversees the special educational and learning needs of students in the school.

### **3. ACCEPTANCE AND REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT**

- 3.1. An offer of a place for your child is accepted by completing the Form of Acceptance and contributing the Refundable Deposit. This is asked for only in respect of each family, regardless of the number of children in the school.
- 3.2. The Refundable Deposit is repayable without interest and on request when the child leaves the school provided that:
  - 3.2.1. All financial responsibilities as they relate to the social ethos of the school have been met
  - 3.2.2. A term's notice of withdrawal has been given.

### **4. MINIMUM FUNDING CONTRIBUTION**

- 4.1. Parents are asked each year to fill in and promise their financial contributions to the school for the following year. Contributions represent tuition and general running as reflected in the school's operating budget. Materials are included. Contributions represent the community responsibility to ensure the financial wellbeing of the school.

- 4.2. Any extra curricular activities such as private music lessons, trips and visits as well as camps are supplemental to the costs and will be charged for accordingly.
- 4.3. Any additional costs directly incurred by the school in providing for the special educational needs of your child may be charged as supplemental. These charges will not be incurred without consultation between you and the Learning Support Group.
- 4.4. Each person signing the Acceptance Form is responsible for the whole of the social and financial responsibilities, unless the school has agreed in writing to look exclusively to the other person for payment of the contributions or any part of them. If your child has been accepted on the basis of support from the Community Support Fund, your financial responsibilities will be limited to that. In this event, a separate contribution promise form will be completed, which is renewable on an annual basis.
- 4.5. All contributions are asked for in advance unless separate arrangements have been made with the Bursar. This ensures that the cash flow of the school can be accurately predicted.
- 4.6. The school reserves the right to refuse to allow your child to attend the school in instances where financial responsibilities are not met, on the basis of the social contract between the family and the school such as non-cooperation with the Finance Policy which forms part of the social ethos of the school.
- 4.7. You consent to allowing us to inform any other school or educational establishment to which you propose to send your child of any outstanding financial responsibilities.
- 4.8. You are asked and agree to continue your financial promise in the event of any dispute or disagreement with the school.

## **5. SCHOOL RULES**

- 5.1. It is a condition of remaining at the school that your child complies with the School Rules and as amended from time to time. You agree to ensure that your child attends school punctually and when the school is open for instruction and that your child conforms to such rules as appearance, dress and behaviour as shall be issued from time to time.
- 5.2. A copy of the school rules is printed in the Parents' Handbook together with other school policies.

## **6. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

- 6.1. The School Management Team may require you to remove, or may suspend or exclude your child from the school if they consider that your child's attendance, progress or behaviour (including outside school hours) is seriously unsatisfactory and the reasonable opinion of the School Management Team the exclusion is in the school's best interests of those of your child or other children.
- 6.2. The School Management Team may at their discretion require you to remove, or may suspend or exclude your child if the behaviour of you, or either of you is in the opinion of the School Management Team unreasonable and affects, or is likely to affect adversely the child's or other children's progress at the school, or the wellbeing of school staff or is likely to bring the school itself into disrepute.

- 6.3. The School Rules set out examples of behaviour that may result in suspension or exclusion. These examples are not exhaustive and in particular the School Management Team may decide that suspension or exclusion for a lesser offence is justified where there has been previous misbehaviour. All aspects of the pupils' record at the school may be taken into account.
- 6.4. The review process for serious disciplinary matters is governed by the Complaints Procedure and Ongoing Assessment in the Kindergarten.

## **7. TRIAL HALF-TERM AND ONGOING ASSESSMENT**

- 7.1. This Admission Agreement is conditional on the half-term trial in the case of main school children and Ongoing Assessment in the Kindergarten.
- 7.2. In the case of the Kindergarten, progression to Class One is at the discretion of the School Management Team and is subject to a School Readiness Assessment.

## **8. THE BASIS OF THIS AGREEMENT**

- 8.1. Ringwood Waldorf School is a Steiner-Waldorf educational centre affiliated through the Waldorf Schools Fellowship with the world-wide Waldorf educational movement. The pedagogy, curriculum, social organisation and management practices are integral to the education offered by the school.
- 8.2. The school will strive to deliver the best possible Waldorf Education it can within the resources available and consistent with this statement.
- 8.3. You agree to support the school in all ways related to the above statement and this forms the basis of the ongoing 'connection' with the ethos of the school. In this respect you are joining a learning community and understand and accept this.
- 8.4. In any disagreement over the interpretation or meaning of this statement the view of the School Management Team will be final.

## **9. THE SCHOOL'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 9.1. While your child remains a pupil at the school we will undertake to exercise reasonable skill and care in respect to his or her education and welfare. This obligation will apply during school hours and at other times when your child is required or permitted to be on school premises for educational purposes. At all other times pupils are the responsibility of parents whether or not the child is on school premises.
- 9.2. In order for the school to fulfil its responsibilities it needs your support and cooperation, in particular:
  - 9.2.1. Fulfilling your own obligations under these terms and conditions
  - 9.2.2. Encouraging your child in their studies.
  - 9.2.3. Giving appropriate support at home.
  - 9.2.4. Keeping the school informed on matters that affect your child.
  - 9.2.5. Maintaining a courteous and constructive relationship with school staff.
  - 9.2.6. Attending meetings



- 9.2.7. Keeping in touch with the school when your personal circumstances change or your child's interests so require.
- 9.3. The school will not subject your child to any form of corporal punishment, nor physical contact except when such contact may be deemed appropriate for the maintenance of good order, your child's safety or supervision, that may entail some risk of physical injury.
- 9.4. If your child requires urgent medical attention while under the school's care, we will in all circumstances attempt to obtain your prior consent. You undertake to supply the school with two emergency numbers and to update these when required. Should the school be unable to contact you we will be authorised to make the decision on your behalf should consent be required for urgent treatment recommended by a doctor. This includes anaesthetic or surgery.
- 9.5. While the school Prospectus describes the broad principles on which the school is run and is believed to be accurate at the time of printing, it does not form part of this agreement between the school and you. The school reserves the right to make changes, and where these may affect you, the school will endeavour to consult you by giving you at least one term's notice of any proposed changes.
- 9.6. The school will monitor your child's progress and will regularly inform you of progress with written reports in the main school and periodic personal meetings. We undertake to inform you if we have any concerns about your child's progress however we do not undertake to diagnose any specific learning difficulty although assessments will be undertaken. A formal diagnostic assessment can be arranged with the appropriate experts for this purpose.
- 9.7. You may be advised by us to seek alternative education for your child if in the opinion of the School Management Team the school is unable to meet your child's specific educational needs.
- 9.8. The school celebrates the Christian festivals and has religion lessons. These are conducted in accordance with Waldorf pedagogy.
- 9.9. The School operates a Family Policy whereby it is recognised that it is educationally advantageous for all siblings to be at the same school. If you withdraw one child from a class the School Management Team reserves the right to review the family's place in the school in respect to the other children
- 9.10. The school does not accept any responsibility for the welfare of your child while off the school premises unless they are taking part in a school activity or otherwise under the supervision of a member of staff.

## **10. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 10.1. You will attend Parent Meetings regularly and where this is not possible send an apology. These meetings are considered an integral part of parent education where you will learn about the current lessons, the phases of child development and how the curriculum is designed to support this development. This information is vital for you to be able to support your child's development.
- 10.2. You will uphold the school rules.
- 10.3. You will notify the school office and your child's teacher at once by telephone, and later by letter, of the reason for any absence of your child from school.

- 10.4. You will ensure that any absence falls within the definition of an authorised absence (see attendance policy)
- 10.5. You will meet with your Class or Kindergarten Teacher when so requested as well as other members of staff including Administration Staff.
- 10.6. You will follow the agreed complaints procedure in the event of any grievance or disagreement with the school. If you have any concern as to a matter of safety, care, discipline or progress of your child, you will inform the school without delay.
- 10.7. You will respect and care for the school's reputation by refraining from idle gossip, language and acts that are likely to bring the school or parts of it into disrepute.
- 10.8. If you are unsure of anything or have questions about the education or other concerns you will ask a member of staff who can answer your question or concern, or who can supply you with accurate information, i.e. School Management Team Surgery.
- 10.9. You will make financial contributions as promised and in accordance with the school's policy and in the event you are unable to do this keep the school informed of the situation together with any changes in your personal circumstances.
- 10.10. You will support the ethos of the school and its community by as far as is practical, supporting school based events and contributing time and skills when able to and when the participation of parents is required. This includes Fundraising, class support, maintenance days, end of term cleaning, School Association meetings and so on.
- 10.11. The school will be entitled (unless otherwise notified in writing) to treat any communication from any person who has signed the Form of Acceptance as having been given on behalf of each such person. Unless other agreements are agreed between you and the school we shall be entitled to treat any communication from the school to any such person as having been made to each of them.
- 10.12. Please note. This list is not exhaustive and is in addition to any responsibilities detailed elsewhere.

## **11. INSURANCE**

- 11.1. You must make your own insurance arrangements if you require cover for your child's person or property while at school. Personal items borrowed by the school for the use of the school or its activities are covered by the school's insurance.

## **12. CONFIDENTIALITY AND REFEREES**

- 12.1. You consent to our supplying information and a reference in respect of your child to any educational institution which you propose your child may attend. Any such reference supplied by us will be confidential. We will take care to ensure that all information supplied relating to your child is accurate and any opinion given as to ability, skills and aptitude for certain courses and character is fair. We will not be liable for any loss you or your child is alleged to have suffered resulting from a reference or report given by us.

## **13. CHANGES IN OWNERSHIP**

- 13.1. For the purposes of reconstruction or amalgamation we reserve the right to transfer the undertaking of the school to any other natural or legal person, and to assign the benefit of this agreement with any such transfer , and/or to amalgamate the school with any other educational institution.

**14. COMMUNICATIONS**

- 14.1. All notices required to be given under these terms and conditions must be given in writing. You undertake to notify the school of any change of address of any person who has signed the Form of Acceptance.
- 14.2. Communications (including notices) will be sent by the school to the address shown in its records. Notices that you are required to give under these terms and conditions must be addressed to the School Management Team and sent to the school's address.

**15. INTERPRETATION**

- 15.1. The headings in these terms and conditions are for ease of understanding only and do not form part of these terms.

**16. JURISDICTION AND GOVERNING LAW**

- 16.1. The agreement between you and the school is governed by English law. You agree with us to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.

**17. VARIATION**

- 17.1. These terms and conditions may be amended from time to time and in such instances the school will give you a term's notice.



**FORM OF ACCEPTANCE**

We/I hereby accept the offer of a place at RWS for:

(name).....

With effect from (date of entry).....

We/I enclosed a cheque for £700-00 as my refundable deposit. Cheques should be made out to Ringwood Waldorf School. For bank transfers: Triodos Bank, sort-code 16-58-10, account number: 20460422. Please reference your family name.

We/I acknowledge and agree to the terms and conditions herein and as varied from time to time and understand that this forms part of the agreement between us/me and the school.

We/I have seen a copy of the Parent's Handbook which we/I have read and understood.

We/I have drawn my child's attention to the school rules where appropriate (depending on the age of the child) and agree that my child will be bound by those rules and as varied from time to time.

Signed by.....Parent/Guardian

Date.....

Signed by.....Parent/Guardian

Date.....

Note. Except in the case of a single or custodial parent who has legal custody, the form must be signed by both parents