



Ringwood Waldorf School

Independent Education from 3 to 18 years

The background is a photograph of a school courtyard. In the center, a tall white maypole is surrounded by children and adults holding colorful ribbons (red, yellow, blue, green) that are draped around the pole. The building in the background has a wooden facade and a tiled roof. The overall scene is bright and festive.

Parents' Handbook 2024-25

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A non-profit making Limited Company registered as a Charity No. 1158673

SCHOOL TERM DATES 2024 - 2025	5
ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK	6
INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW	7
SECTION ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION	8
1) SCHOOL HOURS	8
2) OFFICE HOURS	10
3) PUNCTUALITY, LATENESS PROCEDURES AND ATTENDANCE	10
4) CHANGE OF ADDRESS	13
5) USE OF TELEPHONES – MESSAGES	13
6) GETTING TO AND FROM SCHOOL	14
7) SITE SECURITY	15
8) FOOD, REST AND TOYS	16
9) DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY GUIDANCE	17
10) CLOTHING LIST AND GENERAL EQUIPMENT	20
11) CELEBRATING THE FESTIVALS	22
12) LEARNING SUPPORT	23
13) PARENT EVENINGS	24
14) SCHOOL REPORTS	25
15) MODERN LANGUAGES	25
16) OVERSEAS/VISITING STUDENT PROGRAMME	25
17) MUSIC	26
18) SCHOOL TRIPS AND CAMPS	26
19) HOMEWORK	27
20) PUPILS AND MONEY	27
21) DOGS	28
22) FOUND PROPERTY	28
23) HOT LUNCHESES	28
SECTION TWO: THE SCHOOL RULES	29
1) BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS	29
2) GENERAL RULES (Whole School)	29
3) BREAK TIME RULES (Whole School)	31
4) CLASSES ONE, TWO AND THREE PLAYGROUND	32
5) DRESS CODE	32
6) LOWER SCHOOL DRESS CODE	33
7) UPPER SCHOOL DRESS CODE	34
10) CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE	34
11) SANCTIONS	35
SECTION THREE: HOW THE SCHOOL IS ORGANISED	37
1) THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES	37

2) THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM	38
3) THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM	38
4) MANDATED GROUPS	39
5) THE COLLEGIATE MEETING	39
6) QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS	39
SECTION FOUR: GETTING INVOLVED WITH SCHOOL LIFE	41
1) THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY GROUP	41
2) GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING	42
3) CRAFT GROUPS	43
4) ADULT EDUCATION COURSES AND STUDY GROUPS	43
5) PARENTS' LIBRARY	43
6) ONE DAY SEMINAR AND WORKSHOPS	44
7) EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY GROUP	44
SECTION FIVE: COMMUNICATION	45
1) THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY	45
2) THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETING AND AGM	45
3) CLASS PARENTS	46
4) THE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER	46
5) THE PARENTS' HANDBOOK	47
6) HOME VISITS	47
7) NOTICE BOARDS	47
SECTION SIX: FINANCIAL MATTERS	48
1) MINIMUM FUNDING CONTRIBUTION	48
2) ANNUAL FINANCIAL PROCESS	48
3) CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES	49
4) WITHDRAWALS	49
5) MATERIALS	49
6) NON FINANCIAL GIFTS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES	49
7) FUNDRAISING	50
8) PARENT COLLECTION FOR GIFTS & CLASSROOM SUPPLIES	51
SECTION SEVEN: SAFEGUARDING & HEALTH AND SAFETY	53
1) SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN	53
2) HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY	53
3) HEALTH SERVICES	54
4) RELATIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND BULLYING	54
5) HEAD LICE	55
6) TICKS	55
7) SMOKING, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL	55
8) FIRST AID	56

9) MEDICATION	56
10) PARTICULAR HEALTH RISKS	56
11) ILLNESS	57
12) PHYSICAL ACCESS	57
13) WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CARE	57
SECTION EIGHT: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT	58
A FINAL WORD	61
Appendix One	62
Tv, Screens and Electronic Games - Additional Information and Recommended Reading	62

SCHOOL TERM DATES 2024 - 2025

Future term dates may be found on our website

Michaelmas Term

School Start: Thursday 29th August 2024
Half Term Break: 21st October to 1st November 2024
Inset Day: Monday 4th November 2024
School End: Friday 13th December 2024
Term = 13 weeks 2 days

Spring Term

School Start: Wednesday 8th January 2025
Half Term Break: 17th to 21st February 2025
School End: Friday 4th April 2025
Term = 12 weeks

Summer Term

School Start: Monday 28th April 2025 (*5th May - Bank Holiday*)
Inset Day: Friday 23rd May 2025
Half Term Break: 26th May to 30th May 2025 (*26th May - Bank Holiday*)
School End: Friday 4th July 2025
Term = 9 weeks

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

Founded in 1974, Ringwood Waldorf School was born from a deep understanding of how children learn and grow. Through a rich and holistic curriculum, we integrate academic knowledge with core human values - self-awareness, creativity, curiosity, critical thinking, and independent thought. This approach nurtures intellectual, emotional, and social growth, inspiring students to explore their identities, understand their place in the world, and contribute meaningfully to society. By fostering a love of learning and adaptability, we prepare them for the future with confidence, resilience, and purpose.

This Parents' Handbook, updated annually, serves as a key resource to keep families informed about school policies, organisation, and management. While it does not cover curriculum or pedagogy in depth, we encourage parents to engage in their own study of child development and Waldorf education, supported through Parent Evenings and resources available in the Parents' Library (located in Reception).

We welcome feedback and suggestions for future editions to our Administrator Liz, liz@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk. For further details on our curriculum and policies, please visit our school website. Ringwood Waldorf School remains deeply committed to providing the highest quality Waldorf education possible within our available resources, operating on a principle of continuous improvement.

*“The purpose of education is
to enable the mind,
to fire the imagination,
to fortify the will, and
to quicken the initiative for life”.*

Rudolf Steiner, 1861 - 1925



Ringwood Waldorf School

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Ringwood Waldorf School

Ringwood Waldorf School is a company (no. 8645246) and registered charity (no. 1158673). The school has been in existence since 1974.

Waldorf UK

Ringwood Waldorf School is a full member of Waldorf UK, formally the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship, and it is also represented by that body on the European Council of Waldorf Schools. Waldorf UK forms part of an ever-growing worldwide educational movement.

You can find more information on Waldorf UK at www.steinerwaldorf.org.uk.

Friends of Ringwood Waldorf School

Three former Activities of the Sheiling Trust form part of the movement of intentional Camphill Communities: The Sheiling School offers residential, as well as day and weekly placements for children with special needs; The Lantern is a community for adults with diverse learning abilities, and Sturts Farm is a land-based community, also for adults with a learning disability, specialising in organic and Biodynamic farming.

Proprietor

Ringwood Waldorf School

Chair of Trustees – Adrian Dunford

Please address correspondence to:

Adrian Dunford

c/o Ringwood Waldorf School

Folly farm Lane, Ashley

Ringwood, Hants

BH24 2NN

Telephone messages can also be left at the school and will be passed on: 01425 472 664

SECTION ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

1) SCHOOL HOURS

Parent and Child Group

For children up to Kindergarten age, these groups are facilitated by experienced early childhood practitioners with the support of the parents who attend the sessions. The aim is to nurture and support both the adults and the children, and to ease the transition from home to school life. Groups are held in the Parent and Child Group building, near Apple Tree Kindergarten. Emphasis is on simplicity, homeliness, repetition, imitation and imagination.

Sessions take place on:

Mondays to Thursdays 10:00am - 12:00pm

Tuesdays 1:30pm - 3pm (Baby Group)

Wednesdays 1:10pm - 3:10pm

Fridays 9:30am - 11:30am (Forest Walk sessions)

Parents wishing to attend should complete the application form available on the school website under Early Years - Parent and Child. There are waiting lists for places in some of the groups so parents are advised to apply and place their child's name on the waiting list as soon as possible to ensure a place is available by the time their child is ready to attend.

Progression to kindergarten requires a separate admission application and is not automatic. Parents are therefore advised to ensure that their child is on the school's waiting list if they wish to apply for a place in the Kindergarten.

Kindergarten

The Kindergarten has a seasonal curriculum, and follows the rhythms of nature throughout the year. The weekly rhythm includes special activities for each day such as baking day or painting day. The daily rhythm flows between adult led activities and child led creative play; a time during which children form friendships and learn social skills such as sharing and turn-taking.

Kindergarten groups are made up of children from age three to six years, and morning and afternoon sessions are held Monday to Friday. A three to four year old child will usually begin with three mornings a week. This will build up to five mornings a week plus some afternoons, according to the child's age and needs, which are assessed by the Kindergarten Teacher in consultation with the parents. Children should be attending at least five mornings a week by the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday as this constitutes compulsory school age. In their final year of Kindergarten, children all attend

the Stepping Stones afternoon session.

Kindergarten morning hours are 8:25am - 12:45pm Mondays to Fridays. Teachers are there to receive the children from 8:15am. Prior arrangements should be made if your child arrives before this time. Kindergarten afternoon hours are 12:45pm to 3:30pm Mondays to Fridays.

Classes One to Eight

Classes One to Eight begin lessons promptly at 8:25am and children should arrive between 8:00am and 8:20am to ensure a timely and relaxed start to the day. It is essential that children are punctual for the start of the day and parents are asked to support this.

All classes break for lunch at 1:00pm and classes that do not have afternoon sessions finish then (please see below).

Classes One to Five have afternoon sessions finishing at 3:30pm on the following days:

Class One: Wednesday

Class Two: Monday and Wednesday

Class Three: Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Class Four: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Class Five: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Classes Six, Seven, and Eight have full days all week finishing at 3:30pm

Upper School

The Upper School classes begin at 8:25am and end at 3:30pm. Lunch break is from 1:00pm to 1:50pm. Parents of Upper School students should note that in order to accommodate the curriculum, the Upper School may, from time to time, schedule an extra week of schooling (sometimes during school holidays) which will be notified before the start of the school year.

Children arriving before 8:00am remain the responsibility of their parents.

In the afternoons, it is necessary that children leave the school premises as soon as possible after school finishes. Parents should pick up pupils promptly at the end of the school day. Children should not be on site unless they have an approved reason for being there. Approved reasons include the duration of private music lessons. Parents who are helping around the school should delegate the supervision of any accompanying children to a named person who is not engaged in any other task. Normal school rules continue to apply as well as Health and Safety provisions and parents who are supervising should be aware of these, e.g. no kicking of balls in the courtyard.

Additional Afternoon Sessions

In recognition of the needs and wishes of some parents, and dependent on demand, the school provides additional afternoon sessions until 3:30pm for children in Kindergarten and/or Classes One to Five. Children can be collected from 3:15pm to ease car park congestion.

There is no charge for afternoon sessions for children in Classes One to Five, however, afternoon sessions in kindergarten are a chargeable extra. Please speak to the office or see the Contribution Information sheet for costs. Booking forms for the afternoon sessions are sent out in the summer term for the following academic year and must be booked in advance. Some casual and 'ad hoc' sessions may be available throughout the year. Please speak to the office.

2) OFFICE HOURS

The office is open daily on Mondays to Fridays from 8:15am to 3:30pm. If you have business in the office you will need to complete it before 3:30pm. The office will be locked when a member of staff is not in attendance.

When the office is closed the answer phone will be on. All phone messages are cleared regularly. If the reception staff are not available, the school bursar or administrator may be able to help you. Please note that if their door is closed, they are either out or in a meeting and should not be disturbed except in an emergency.

Much of the business conducted in the rear office and general office is of a confidential nature. Please respect the office space and do not enter unless invited.

3) PUNCTUALITY, LATENESS PROCEDURES AND ATTENDANCE

All absences and lateness are recorded in the class registers and form part of a student's educational record. Instances of persistent lateness are reported to the Safeguarding and Management Team and you may be asked to meet with a group of Management representatives to discuss and agree a strategy to ensure timely attendance.

Punctuality

Punctuality is of the utmost importance and is taken seriously. Please ensure your children are not late for school. Late arrivals into class are very disruptive and educationally, punctuality is part of learning personal responsibility.

Lateness procedure

The register is called as soon as class starts and this is then collated in the office so that all children can be accounted for. It is important that the school knows who is on the

site at all times. Children arriving late (after the bell) must report to the office before going to their classroom.

Please remind your child or go to the office yourself to ensure that your child has been signed into the register. If the office receives no notification of a late child, the staff will ring or email the parents to establish the whereabouts of the child.

Attendance

In Waldorf Education continuity is a vital factor: subjects are taught in blocks that often build one upon the other, so that experiences missed are not easily made up at another time. All children are expected to attend for a full school year and when the school is open for instruction, except for absences due to medical reasons.

Please do not arrange for holidays to be taken in term time.

The law requires that parents ensure that all children of compulsory school age receive a full-time education and that they attend when the school is open for instruction. At Ringwood Waldorf School we regard any unnecessary absence as educationally detrimental. As our scheduled holidays are significantly longer than in state schools, and because we have a shorter school year, we are unable to authorise pupils to be absent during term time. Ringwood Waldorf School has a 34-week year against a state school year of 38 weeks. Any absences will therefore be recorded as unauthorised in the Local Education Authority Registers. Registers are inspected during all school OFSTED inspections.

Procedure for Reporting an Absence

If your child is absent due to illness or emergency, you must inform the school before the start of the school day, no later than 8:30 AM. Please notify the school by emailing registers@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk or by calling the school office and leaving a message on the answering machine. If the school does not receive a reliable message, a staff member will contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) after taking the register. Parents will also be contacted if their child is unexpectedly late and has not arrived by the time the register is called.

For every day that your child is ill, you must notify the office and provide a reason by emailing registers@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk. The school advises parents to keep children home for at least 48 hours after vomiting before returning to school.

Authorised and Unauthorised absence (see Attendance Policy)

- The law states that the school day must be in two sessions. This will normally involve separate morning and afternoon sessions.
- Attendance registers have to be called at the beginning of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Schools also have to record in their

registers whether an absence of a day pupil of compulsory school age is authorised or unauthorised and the reason for the absence.

- Authorised absence is absence which has been authorised by an authorised representative of the school (School Management Team). Parents or guardians may provide an explanation for a particular absence, but only the school can authorise it
- Unauthorised absence is absence without leave from an authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences and truancy. Please note that individual teachers cannot authorise an absence.

Leaving during school hours.

Pupils in the Kindergarten, Lower and Middle School are not allowed to leave the site during school hours unless arrangements have been made in advance by the parent(s) with the school. Where this is necessary the Class Teacher and office should be informed and the office must be notified when the child leaves the site. Parents/caregivers collecting a child should advise the office BEFORE collecting the child. No child will be allowed to leave unless collected and accompanied by a parent or authorised guardian (or a person authorised in writing previously by the parent or authorised guardian).

The office must be informed when a child returns to school during the day/school hours so that the school is aware which children are on site.

4) CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please inform the office of any changes to addresses, emails or phone numbers.

5) USE OF TELEPHONES – MESSAGES

Emergency calls

The office telephone may be used by parents to make emergency calls with the permission of a staff member. Pupils require written permission from their Class Teacher during school hours to use the school phone. School phones may not be used by pupils to make social arrangements. After school care and play arrangements must be made in advance with the child before school commences in the morning.

Mobile Phones

The school is a mobile free zone. Mobile phones are allowed to be brought onto school premises only by Class Eight pupils and above and must be switched off and kept in the office at all times during the school day. They may only be used after 3:30pm and off school premises. The same rule applies at all school based events and trips. Any

infringement of this may result in confiscation. See our Online Safety Policy for more information.

Parents, guardians and visitors are also asked to avoid using their mobile phones on the school grounds.

Messages for pupils and staff

The office will take messages for pupils in emergencies only and use its best endeavours to ensure they are delivered. Parents should note that it is not always possible to deliver a message at the end of the day and that requests regarding changes to pickups and after school arrangements will not be accepted except in emergency situations such as a car breakdown. The office advises parents to contact each other directly to re-arrange pick-ups or changes in routine.

Parents should use the Class Teacher's email address to contact their Class Teachers directly. Messages for staff can be taken in the office and, unless the message is of an urgent nature, will be sent to the staff member's email address. Please note that it may be some time before the staff member checks their emails and receives the message.

General notices of events will be placed in the newsletter and/or placed on the blackboard or notice board outside the office or emailed to parents.

Each class has a Class Parent and an official class messaging group such as Whatsapp or email. This will be used to inform parents specifically about school matters such as parents' evenings, festivals and class events. Parents that are not part of the WhatsApp group will be informed by email.

6) GETTING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

General parking

Children on foot and moving traffic do not go well together and should be minimised.

Parking is available in the car park and parking times should be minimised to allow space for others. Please do not park in the Lantern car-parking spaces unless you are intending to visit the Lantern Centre.

Please do not park in the lane or beyond the car park as this blocks access for emergency services. The school or the Lantern may have to call the police to have offending cars removed.

Overflow parking is occasionally permitted in the back playground in the afternoons after school (3:30pm) and on special occasions as notified. Please do not park in the back playground at lunchtime as this restricts the children's ability to exercise and play

during their lunch break. The school cannot accept responsibility for cars left in the car park during break and lunchtime or at any festivals or school events.

Traffic movement is circular in a clockwise direction on the site and speed is limited to 5 mph.

We ask that all drivers take special care when manoeuvring on the site.

The disabled driver's bay is strictly reserved for disabled people. Please park only in the marked spaces and NOT near the office in the unmarked areas. This area is required at all times for emergency services and deliveries and is not for parking in.

Please do not park in the staff parking area behind the hall as this may delay teachers and staff getting to classes and the office on time.

Kindergarten and Classes One, Two and Three parking and access

The entrance to the Kindergartens is through the access gate from the car park into the classes One, Two and Three playground and along the formed pathway. Please stay on the pathway as older children may be playing and not be aware that younger children are present. Entrance and pick-up for classes One, Two and Three is also through this gate and not from the courtyard. There is no access to the Kindergarten from the back courtyard and this gate will be locked while the kindergarten is in session.

Children should be picked up straight after school and not asked to go to the Lantern Centre by themselves to be picked from there. This is particularly unsafe for younger children. If you wish to go to the Lantern Centre please pick your child up first and then go together.

Walking and Cycling

The school wishes to be environmentally responsible and to encourage all safe means of transport, in particular where it reduces the number of cars on the roads. Lift sharing is encouraged as is also the practice of parking some distance away from the school and walking. This really does help the children prepare for their day.

We wish to point out to parents that, while we support walking and cycling to school, the slip road into the school is busy and can be dangerous and children should be supervised at all times. Please wear helmets if cycling. There is parking available on the grounds for bikes. Please ensure a lock is supplied for your bike.

The Castleman Trailway is an all-weather track and is suitable for cycling and as an alternative access. The security gate will be opened during drop-off and pick-up times to allow access. It will be locked at all other times.

The school does not support children hitch-hiking to or from school. Younger children should not be travelling to and from school by themselves at any time.

7) SITE SECURITY

The school is required by law for security and safety reasons to know who is on the site at all times, what their purpose on site is and when they leave. This applies equally to all adults as well as children. This is of vital importance, especially in the case of fire and safeguarding.

Anyone entering or leaving the site for any reason once school has started for the day must inform the office, signing their name in and out of the office book on the counter. This includes staff, parents, pupils, and peripatetic music teachers. All visitors must wear a lanyard while in the school so they can be identified. Any visitors or parents on site without a badge may be challenged by a member of staff.

We request that parents support site security by following the correct pick-up and drop-off procedures, i.e. Kindergarten and Classes One, Two and Three are dropped off and picked up via the One, Two, Three garden/playground and not through the courtyard or back gate. Children attending Classes Four and above should be dropped off and picked up at the blue gate at the main entrance for children to make their own way to their classroom.

We also ask that all parents and children enter and leave by the main gate. This should also apply if you are visiting the Lantern Centre. Please note that the school may not be used as a thoroughfare for this purpose

The school lockup can occur any time after 4:00pm. Anyone entering any space or facility after this time assumes responsibility for securing that space or facility whether or not it was locked when they entered. (This also applies to music teachers).

You may therefore need to arrange for a key from the office in order to do this. Please note that the lockup includes windows, fire egress doors and lobby doors.

8) FOOD, REST AND TOYS

In the Kindergarten, a morning snack is provided by the school, and lunch is provided for those booked into afternoon sessions. In Stepping Stones, children should bring their own packed-lunch. From Class One and above, children should bring in their own mid-morning snack as well as a packed-lunch. Food should be simple, balanced and nutritious. The school is supportive of appropriate diets for children as it has been

shown that many learning and behaviour problems arise from inappropriate diets. Recent research has again confirmed this.

Please avoid party food such as chocolate and crisps. Chewing gum, sweets, coffee, tea, fizzy drinks and energy drinks are not allowed.

Please note that we are a peanut-free school.

Birthdays are celebrated in the class and children often bring a treat, such as a home-made cake to share, at the discretion of the Teacher. Please discuss this with your child's Teacher first.

Children have growing bodies and busy school schedules and need regular and ample relaxation and sleep. Sleep is seen as being formative as well as restorative and is regarded as an integral part of the education at Ringwood Waldorf School because of its pedagogical influences. We ask parents to ensure that their children are in bed at a reasonable and regular hour. This routine also helps a child feel secure which in turn aids their confidence. The school feels strongly that arrangements for children to stay overnight with friends are only appropriate at weekends. Such visits often involve staying up late, which can lead to an over-tiredness that is disruptive to the child's school work.

Toys, electronic games, swap cards, skateboards, roller blades and so on should be left at home for pedagogical reasons. A comforting soft doll or soft toy could be an exception for younger children by arrangement with the relevant teacher. Any item brought to school may be confiscated until the end of the day or, in persistent cases until the end of term.

Balls and other play equipment are made available for the children to use at school during supervised breaks. This equipment is suitable for use in the school environment and we ask that you do not bring other balls onto the site.

9) DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY GUIDANCE

At Ringwood Waldorf School we aim to provide our students with opportunities to engage creatively and responsibly with digital technology. In the Waldorf Schools movement we believe that in order for this to happen, children need to be introduced to these technologies gradually and at an appropriate age. We recognise that in order for our students to develop healthy robust bodies, balanced and well-integrated brains, confidence in their real-world practical skills, and strong executive-function capabilities, it is imperative that students primarily interact with one another and their teachers, and work with real materials as much as possible. Our school intentionally develops students and their personal capacity for agency by exploring the world of ideas, participating in the arts, music, movement and practical activities. Their understanding

and mastery of technology develops from a solid foundation of hands-on activity and problem solving.

The role of digital technology is central in modern life, and growing research indicates that too much screen time is fundamentally affecting our children. Many of those effects are adverse, no matter how good or educational the content of the programme. Teachers observe that excessive exposure to television, mobile phones and other electronic media significantly shortens the attention span of pupils, stifles the imagination and reduces initiative, patience and perseverance. We therefore discourage young children from using mobile phones, watching television and using electronic games and media. We also strongly recommend that social networking sites are completely out of bounds for younger children and that no child, of any age, is exposed to electronic media in the morning before school or in the hour preceding bedtime as it negatively affects the quality of sleep. Electronic media devices should be kept away from the bedroom and not used alone, and instead used in a shared area of the home.

Electronic media use exposes children to the coercive use of advertising. When exposed too young, the child is unable to discern for themselves what is driving their feeling of need. There is a safeguarding risk in children accessing online games, chat rooms and communication via social media and messaging apps (TikTok, WhatsApp, Snapchat etc), many of which are rated age 16+. Everyone who works with or cares for children has an obligation to keep them safe. Children are not fully equipped to navigate this world of technology at a young age. They are vulnerable to cyber bullying, grooming and seeing inappropriate content which once seen cannot be unseen. In addition, the restricted interaction between a child and a screen, where a child is passively consuming content and not co-creating their reality, can undermine the child's own creativity. Computer games can be particularly habit-forming and draw the child away from real life experiences. In the context of the Waldorf curriculum, which works so strongly in the child's imaginative realm, the exposure to television and other electronic media is particularly counter-productive and works against the child's education.

We recognise that, whilst at home, a child's exposure to electronic and other media lies in the domain of the family. It is therefore parents and carers who must decide what role television and other media play in your children's lives. However, if the child's teacher or guardian considers that media use is significantly undermining the healthy development of the child, or the class, this will be brought to the attention of the parents or carers of the children concerned for discussion. Parents and carers should speak to their child's class teacher, kindergarten teacher, or class guardian - either privately or in parents evenings - about their questions and challenges related to media, so that together we can work out viable approaches. It is very much the wish of the school that parents who bring their children to our Waldorf School will understand and support the school's policy on media and technology.

Further to this, please also be aware that RWS is a Mobile Free Zone for parents, carers, and teachers as well as pupils. Please refer to our *Digital Media Devices (Staff, Volunteers and Visitors) Policy*.

Early Years

Children enrolled in the Kindergarten at Ringwood Waldorf School should be given the gift of a media-free childhood. Kindergarten children should not watch television programmes or films, play video games, or use electronic devices. Additionally, exposure to radio, audiobooks and recorded music should be limited and age appropriate. We encourage parents to keep an open and honest dialogue with their child's kindergarten teacher about their individual circumstances, and teachers are available and willing to assist with reducing screen time and transitioning to a media-free environment in a manageable way.

Lower and Middle School - Class One to Class Eight

The experience of electronic media can have negative effects on children's learning and development in the Lower School to Middle School. It can also have a detrimental effect on the class dynamic creating a 'those who do and those who do not' situation. Children bring their media experiences into the classroom where it can be quite overwhelming for others. Therefore we ask that access to screens and digital technology is avoided.

Activity on social networking sites and apps should be avoided as children may well become exposed to inappropriate material. It should also be noted that teachers are not permitted to be 'friends' with students on social networking sites nor be in contact through messaging services.

We understand that in some situations it can be difficult to avoid access to screens and digital technology. We propose the following suggestions for managing the children's use of television, games and other electronic media.

1. Access to electronic media should be avoided.
2. Arrange viewing limits, including what can be watched and for how long.
3. Parents/carers should, if possible, watch with the children.
4. Avoid screens in the child's bedroom.
5. Avoid use of portable digital devices (mobile phones, ipads) particularly with access to social networking and video sites e.g. WhatsApp, YouTube, TikTok etc.
6. The telling or reading of bedtime stories is a good way of preparing children for a healthy night's sleep, with no screen use in the hour before bedtime.

As children grow older, television and other media may play a gradually increasing, but hopefully modest part in their lives. It is therefore important to practise regulation with regard to the exposure of young people's minds and senses to modern visual and

electronic culture. We suggest that the use of electronic media should be agreed beforehand and take place in the company of family and friends, and not in their own room.

Upper School

RWS has a separate *Digital Media Devices in School Policy* within the *Online Safety Policy* for Classes Eight to Twelve which clarifies in specific detail how, what, where and when DMDs can be used at school.

RWS recognises that teenagers are eager to embrace the modernity of the world they will step into as adults. Our aim is to help them to develop the skills and understanding that provide for mature and discerning use of the new technologies. A familiarity with all the technologies that surround us and influence our lives is an essential part of a complete education. In the Upper School curriculum, Waldorf education embraces technology in ways that enhance the learning process, by using it as a tool, rather than replace the role of the teacher, and pupils quickly master the technology.

At Ringwood Waldorf School, digital devices and electronic whiteboards are not used in the classroom until Class Nine for similar reasons. In Waldorf schools generally, computer studies are regarded as an Upper School subject (starting in Class Nine). Classes Seven and Eight may use calculators and electronic spell checkers after the underlying processes have been understood. Children with learning differences may be supported with digital devices in the learning support lesson in the middle and upper school (Class Six - Twelve).

Parents should be assured that children are not disadvantaged educationally by this policy and, in fact, some ex-pupils have chosen to go on to successfully study computer sciences and also to follow careers in programming, graphic arts and web design.

The school has information available to support parents in understanding its position on this matter and periodic talks are given on the subject. While it is appreciated that these views may be seen to be at variance with some mainstream opinions, the policy we have adopted is based on informed educational experience and understanding of child development needs.

We therefore ask that parents support our educational aims by adhering to the school's recommendations in this area.

10) CLOTHING LIST AND GENERAL EQUIPMENT

All pupils must attend school with the following items:

Note: All items should be clearly labelled with the child's name.

Kindergarten

- Comfortable, practical clothing which is clean at the beginning of each day, in good repair, and appropriate to the season and activity.
- Jumper/cardigan: Needed in kindergarten all year round.
- Shoes/boots: Outdoor footwear should be practical, well-fitting and offer appropriate protection from weather and terrain; enclosed sturdy shoes and boots for winter, lightweight shoes for summer, with closed toe sandals permitted for dry summer days. If your child has lace up shoes, please support their learning process by modelling tying laces at home.
- Slippers: Please provide indoor shoes or slippers to be kept in kindergarten, which children will change into on arrival at kindergarten each morning. Slippers/indoor shoes must be well-fitting with heels and toes covered, and stay on as the child goes about their kindergarten day.
- Coat: A warm coat must be worn to and from kindergarten every day between October and April, and a lighter jacket or thick fleece must be available to be worn every day in warmer months.
- Waterproofs: A waterproof jacket with hood, and waterproof over-trousers or dungarees, are essential for outdoor play. They must be kept in kindergarten during term time, even in the summer months.
- Wellington boots: These are required in kindergarten all year round, and a pair must be left in kindergarten during term time.
- Spare clothes: A spare set of clothes needs to be kept in a bag on the child's peg in the lobby with spare socks/tights and underwear, bottoms and tops and an extra warm layer, e.g. cardigan or jumper.
- Hats: A hat is needed in kindergarten every day: Warm hats are needed in the colder months, and sun hats are needed in the brighter months. We suggest wide brimmed sun hats which cover the back of the neck.
- Gloves are required in winter, and extra warm socks can help keep toes warm in wellington boots.
- Smarter clothes for festivals: On festival days, we ask that children wear smart clothes that are suitable for the special occasion but also still practical for play.

Clothing must be fit for purpose, washable, and suitable for play and kindergarten activities.

Classes One to Four

- Wellington boots
- Warm waterproof coat with a hood or separate rain hat
- Waterproof trousers
- Warm hat during winter
- Sun hat and suitable sunscreen for summer

- Pair of indoor shoes – plimsolls not slippers
- An extra complete set of clothes in a bag to be kept at school
- Cloth drawstring bag, clearly named, for Eurythmy shoes
- Painting shirt
- Crayon case
- Water bottle and lunch/snack bag

Classes Five to Eight

- A fountain pen. Please await your teacher's instructions before acquiring this.
- A corrector pen. Please await your teacher's instructions before acquiring this.
- 12 Derwent or Caran d'ache soft quality, coloured pencils (not water soluble).
- A cloth drawstring bag, clearly named, for Eurythmy shoes.
- Wellington boots
- Warm waterproof coat with a hood or separate rain hat
- Waterproof trousers
- Warm hat during winter
- Sun hat for summer
- Water bottle and lunch/snack bag

Games Kit - Classes Three to Ten

Note: Please speak to your child's Teacher about games kit requirements.

- T-shirt
- Sweatshirt
- Tracksuit bottoms
- Shorts
- Trainers (from Class Five upwards)
- A bag (not plastic) to keep the games kit in and not too big please.
- Classes Five - Eight and Upper School – a gum shield is compulsory for playing hockey.

Please also refer to Section Two: School Rules for further information on the dress code.

11) CELEBRATING THE FESTIVALS

It is the custom in Waldorf Schools, and an integral part of Waldorf life, to celebrate! The new morning is celebrated daily; Mondays and Fridays are celebrated as is the beginning of a new term and the end along with birthdays, seasons, festivals, and much more.

To celebrate is to awaken awareness to the specialness of a particular moment and to bring light and joy into the lives of the children; a very, very vital part of the teachers' task. When we celebrate something ostensibly mundane like the morning, we bring joy

to the start of the day and we can remember that every day is a new beginning and a fresh start. Some children more than others need to experience this! Birthdays should also be more than fun as they celebrate the life of each uniquely special child.

Wonder, awe and reverence are moods we bring to the celebration of the festivals. These are moods every child needs to experience, particularly our modern children who live in a world where there is so little of any of these.

Talk of festivals brings up the subject of religion which can arouse quite strong feelings. Although Steiner embedded his education in Christianity, and we celebrate the Christian festivals, we are also free to celebrate other festivals such as Diwali, the Indian Festival of Light. Steiner believed that his philosophy 'Anthroposophy' could embrace all beliefs and many experience this to be true.

Festivals through the year include:

Autumn Term

- Michaelmas
- Martinmas
- Diwali
- Advent and Christmas

Spring/Summer Terms

- Candlemas
- Holi
- Spring/Easter Festival
- Whitson
- Ascension
- St John's Festival

Friday Assemblies are also held throughout the year. Details are sent out via the school Newsletter and the Class Parents.

Festival Dress

For many of the festivals, we ask that children wear 'festival dress' (unless otherwise specified) which is a white top and dark trousers or a skirt. Please check with your Class Parent or the office if you are unsure.

Please see Appendix Two for some extracts from earlier school magazines which give further information on specific celebrations and how the teachers work with the festivals. However, the best way to find out is to participate and most festive events are open to parents. Dates and times will be found in the weekly Newsletter.

12) LEARNING SUPPORT

Ringwood Waldorf School has a Learning Support Department which considers the individual learning needs of each class and of each pupil. The group is coordinated by the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator).

The Learning Support Group coordinates the following provisions:

Remedial

The Learning Support Teachers are able to offer some individual remedial lessons. This is limited however by the overall needs of the whole school. In addition, Learning Support Classroom Assistants may work with individual children in the classrooms or in small groups for literacy and numeracy. Referrals to learning support lessons are through the Class Teacher. Parents with any concerns should first approach their child's teacher rather than the SENCo directly. In some instances, the school might also advise a parent to seek additional support outside the school

Parents of children joining the school after Class One may be asked to arrange separate private learning support lessons as a condition of admission if their child has specific learning needs.

Therapies

There may be occasions when Learning Support will recommend additional curative or therapeutic work for a child in consultation with the SENCo and Class Teacher. In this case, parents will need to arrange this privately or, if there are a number of children who will benefit from a particular therapy, the school will endeavour to arrange this and pass the cost on to parents. Parents will always be consulted first. The therapies that may be considered include Art Therapy, Speech Therapy, or Curative Eurythmy.

Assessments

Whole class assessments are carried out in Classes Two, Four and Six each year and this information informs both individual learning needs as well as the needs of the class as a whole. Where additional individual assessment is indicated this will be advised to parents by the SENCo. Reviews occur annually for Classes Three, Five and Seven.

13) PARENT EVENINGS

Regular contact between parents / carers and their child's teacher is vital to Waldorf Education. Parent evenings are held at least once a term for the parents of each class and, because of their importance, and at least one parent from each family is expected to attend these meetings as part of their commitment to the education.

The school considers your attendance at these meetings to be of the utmost importance to the educational process and for this reason attendance is a condition of admission.

Please ensure that you plan well in advance for these meetings so that you can attend. The Parent Evening dates are published in the calendar (in the office), in class emails and in the school newsletter. If you are unable to attend your child's Class Parent Evening for any reason, please let the Class Teacher know not to expect you.

At these meetings, parents will be able to hear what their children have been learning and how this links to the developmental stage of their child. They will also be able to look at their child's work. Questions and issues relevant to the whole class can also be on the agenda.

Individual meetings may also be arranged to discuss your child and these can be initiated either by the parent or the teacher.

14) SCHOOL REPORTS

Children from Kindergarten to Class Twelve receive a written report at the end of each academic year. This report endeavours to give both parent and child a full picture of the child's academic and social development.

Teachers keep running records of pupils' progress and both formative and summative assessments are carried out periodically to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress for their cohort. Some tests may be introduced from Class Five or Six during Main Lessons as a good and appropriate challenge for the children

Teachers at Ringwood Waldorf School are also uniquely aware of the needs of individual pupils because they stay with the pupils as they progress through the classes.

Pupils in the Upper School receive two reports a year; a half year report in March and an end of year report at the end of the academic year. Pupils in Upper School are also regularly assessed and graded. Please see the Upper School Diploma Qualification (available on the school website) for further information.

15) MODERN LANGUAGES

Learning at least one second language is an integral part of Waldorf Education and this is introduced in Class One. At Ringwood Waldorf School the languages currently taught are French and German. Waldorf language teachers are in short supply and parents are asked to appreciate this fact in the knowledge that the school will use every endeavour to ensure that there is continuity in at least one language throughout the school.

Parents of children who join the school in Class Five or above, and who do not have an elementary proficiency in the language(s) being taught, may be asked to arrange private lessons for their child so that they can settle into the class more smoothly.

16) OVERSEAS/VISITING STUDENT PROGRAMME

We have a Visiting Students Programme so that students from Waldorf Schools abroad may spend a term or more as participating students in the school. This is generally in the Upper School classes and is arranged through the International Visiting Student Programme in partnership with the Lewis School. School families and teachers may offer accommodation to the visitors and anyone wishing to become a host family should contact Alistair Walker at alistair@lewis-school.co.uk A DBS check is required in such instances.

Any families wishing to arrange a visit for their own Upper School child to spend time in a school abroad should start making plans in Class Eight and consult with the Upper School Faculty for advice on the most appropriate and beneficial times for a student to undertake such a trip.

Periodically, overseas Waldorf pupils and au pairs contact the school wishing to arrange a private exchange/stay with a family in this country. If you are interested in such an arrangement, please look for details in the school newsletter or speak to the Office.

17) MUSIC

Music is a strong feature of Ringwood Waldorf School's curriculum. In addition to music lessons in class, in which all children learn to play the recorder and, from Class Four, learn to read music, the school wishes to support and encourage children to learn an additional musical instrument. School facilities are made available after school on a no-charge basis for private instrument lessons in order to keep costs to a minimum for parents. The cost of individual private music tuition is the responsibility of parents as are the contractual arrangements. The availability of spaces is limited and these are only made available when they are not needed by the school and are therefore subject to change.

From Class Four onwards all children take part in recorder ensembles and class orchestras, as well as the school choirs. This may involve some evening and week-end activities. Parents are asked to support their children by ensuring regular practice at home.

Parents are often invited to watch and hear the childrens' progress during Friday assemblies, and concerts are often held at the end of a term. Sandi Weir (sandi.weir@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk) coordinates the music curriculum in the

school and you are welcome to speak to her for advice on choosing a suitable instrument for your child. There are pedagogical indications as to which instrument would be appropriate for each child and playing a musical instrument can also aid overall development in many other areas.

18) SCHOOL TRIPS AND CAMPS

Most classes have trips, walks, camps and other outings during the year and, as these are seen as an important and integral part of the Waldorf curriculum, all pupils are accordingly required to attend. Parents are advised of arrangements and any costs by their class teacher well in advance of the event. Any costs involved need to be pre-paid and parents will be invoiced directly. All trip payments should be paid to the office. Please ask for a receipt.

Teachers follow the guidelines and policies, including risk assessments, for all trips and these can be seen in the school office on request. Parents will be asked to sign and return a consent form for all trips not covered by the annual parental consent for fixed outings, such as walks along the trailway.

Parents are asked to respond to requests from Class Teachers for parental assistance with trips to keep costs down and to ensure adequate adult supervision. Please be aware that school rules apply on all trips and that only approved parents may accompany class trips or outings. This is at the absolute discretion of the Class Teacher/Class Guardian.

DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks are required for all parent helpers accompanying classes on overnight trips and these should be arranged early in the year as Safer Recruitment paperwork can take some time to complete.

19) HOMEWORK

Homework is introduced progressively from Class Four and parents are asked to give this their active support. Ideas for ways in which support can be given can be discussed and agreed at Class Parent Evenings. Some classes, for instance, use homework diaries.

Ideally the child should have a quiet space where homework can be done at the same time each day so that it becomes part of the day's rhythm.

Homework becomes increasingly important as the children move up the school and deadlines may also be used for the completion of projects. Children who have not completed their homework without good reason may be expected to do so during the break(s) on the following day, or may be required to stay after school as a detention. Where this happens, 24 hours notice will be given.

20) PUPILS AND MONEY

Generally, children below Class Eight should not have money at school unless they have been asked to bring money in by their teacher or the office.

Upper School pupils may have the privilege of being able to make purchases from the Lantern Shop at their teacher's discretion.

Where children do need money for after school reasons it should be handed to the office in the morning and collected after school.

21) DOGS

Some children are frightened of dogs and some are allergic to them. Dogs are therefore not allowed on site at any time (including the school car park).

Our insurance company has advised us that any claim made against the school (regarding an injury inflicted by a dog) will be directed to the dog owner.

22) FOUND PROPERTY

The school does not accept responsibility for any loss or damage to clothing, personal possessions (except when formally on loan to the school for educational purposes) or loss of money (see 'pupils and money'). The school does provide a service for found property. It will be kept in the general office for a limited period of time (half a term) after which, if it is not claimed, it will be donated to a charity or may be sold. This will usually happen at half and end of term periods.

23) HOT LUNCHES

On some days of the week hot lunches (for example baked potatoes or pasta) are available to book for Classes One and above. Further information is sent out via the school newsletter and the Class Parents at the beginning of the academic year and parents are asked to book and pay for these termly in advance.

SECTION TWO: THE SCHOOL RULES

Rules can be seen conceptually as common understandings and agreements that allow each individual to participate in the purpose of the school, which is the education of the children.

Having clear behavioural boundaries supports children in feeling secure. Rules at Ringwood Waldorf School are pedagogically based and are the result of many years of experience. In addition, rules support your own family by helping with the inevitable peer pressures that arise as part of growing up.

Above all, rules are intended to support children on their educational journey towards freedom. (See 'Education Towards Freedom' by Frans Carlgren, Floris Books) by teaching them about responsibility, always, of course, in an age appropriate way.

It is very important that the family and school work together with common and agreed values, and we earnestly seek your support in the application of the school rules. In particular school rules should not be questioned or discussed in the presence of younger children.

1) BEHAVIOUR EXPECTATIONS

The school expects every member of the school community to behave in a considerate and respectful way towards others and to take responsibility for their actions.

2) GENERAL RULES (Whole School)

Applies to the school premises at all times and to school outings

Arriving and leaving

- All children in Class One - Twelve are expected to arrive by 8.25am, ready to start the school day. Supervision starts at 8am. Kindergarten starts at 8.30am. Latecomers must sign in at reception.
- After school, Classes Five and below must stay with the teacher in the entrance area, 1,2,3 garden, or kindergarten until they have been collected. After 3:40pm (or 1:10pm) pupils will be accompanied to the Office - see Late Collection Policy
- Classes One - Eight: No children may leave the school grounds during school hours without the permission of a teacher.
- Classes Nine - Twelve: If leaving the school grounds during break times (Lantern Centre only for classes Nine and Ten), pupils must sign out and back in at reception. This privilege may be rescinded if abused.

Snacks and lunch

- No peanuts, or foods with peanuts listed in the ingredients, are permitted in school. There are children and staff in school with severe and life threatening reactions to nuts. Dietary restrictions may apply across the school depending on serious medical conditions or allergies. The school will keep parents informed.
- Chewing gum, sweets, coffee, tea, fizzy drinks and energy drinks are not allowed.
- Our recommendation is that children drink only water during the school day.
- Please avoid chocolate, crisps and similar foods. Provide healthy, balanced meals instead. For guidance and ideas, speak to your teacher. For further information see for instance [British Nutrition Foundation](#).

Belongings

- Belongings are to be carried in suitable bags, satchels or rucksacks. Plastic bags should be avoided.
- Please keep children's belongings (school bags, lunch boxes, pencil cases, caps etc) as plain or as discreet as possible - free from brands and big companies logos.
- Toys, both indoor and outdoor, and other potentially distracting items should not be brought to school. Exceptions can be made by prior arrangement with the class teacher.
- No Digital Media Devices, including mobile phones. If pupils bring in digital devices they must hand them into the office at the beginning of each day.
- Medication should be handed in at reception at the beginning of the day.
- Aerosols are not allowed at school.

Prohibited items

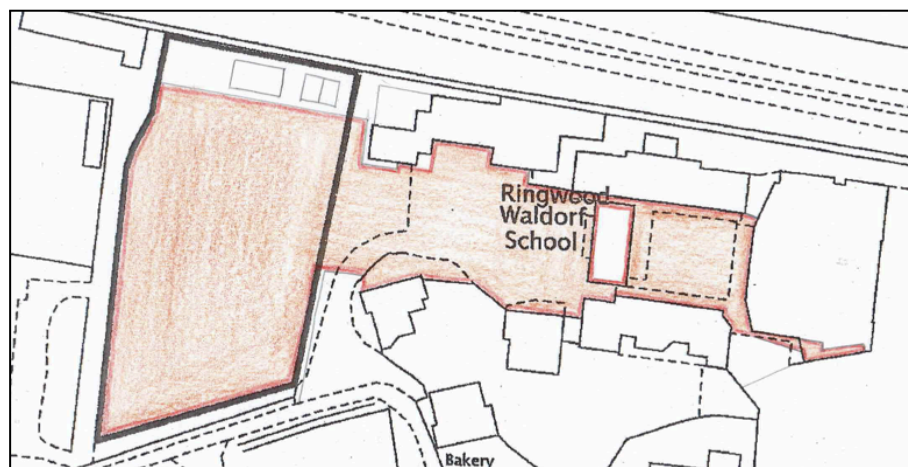
- Knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen goods, tobacco products including vapes, pornographic images, fireworks, lighters and matches, anything that has been, or is likely to be, used to cause injury or commit an offence. Possession of these will be regarded as serious misbehaviour and may be reported to the police.

Code of Conduct

- Class or classroom rules/codes of conduct may be discussed with pupils and implemented at the beginning of each school year or as required. These must be observed and followed.

3) BREAK TIME RULES

applies to Courtyard, Main Playground and Field



- All games and play to be respectful and inclusive.
- Pupils must stay within boundaries at all times (orange area on map).
- During morning and lunch break time, pupils may only go indoors with a teacher's permission.
- If it is raining, waterproof coats and hoods or hats are to be worn in uncovered areas.
- Only trees with a clearly visible white marker may be climbed – up to the white marker.
- Other trees may only be climbed with a teacher's permission and supervision.
- Basketballs are to be used with an awareness of others playing in the same area. No more than two balls may be used at each basketball net.
- All balls are to be collected and returned to classrooms at the end of both break times.
- No kicking
- No rough games that involve any form of wrestling, take down, pulling clothes etc.
- No eating or drinking
- No playing on the outdoor staircases and balconies.
- No throwing of hard objects
- No climbing on buildings or fences
- No retrieving balls from roofs
- No ball games between 3.30pm and 3.45pm
- The Courtyard is a quiet zone:
 - Static ball games only (eg. Four Square) in the Courtyard
 - No hard balls, such as basketballs.
 - No running in the walkways or swinging from the overhead bars\

4) CLASSES ONE, TWO AND THREE PLAYGROUND

- Running is allowed on the wood chips and grassed areas only.
- The sandpit space and all other areas are 'no run areas'.
- Sand must stay in the sandpit.
- No rough playing (wrestling, barging, hitting or kicking) allowed.

Additional rules may be implemented as required.

Note: Parents supervising children after school when cleaning are particularly asked to be aware of these playground rules and to ensure that they apply them in order that there is consistency for the children.

5) DRESS CODE

There is no formal uniform at Ringwood Waldorf School. However, as our learning environment seeks to support both individual voice and community spirit, in addition to the safety of pupils, the following expectations apply:

Kindergarten Dress Code

A child's early years forms the foundation for their future learning and development, and at Ringwood Waldorf School we acknowledge the importance of appropriate clothing and footwear in allowing children to freely play, work, develop, and learn. Our education often requires lots of movement and activity both indoors and outdoors every day; comfortable, affordable, durable and warm clothing and footwear will enable the children to make the most of the learning opportunities offered in our setting, contribute to the ethos of the school, and help to foster the appropriate mood in kindergarten.

Clothing and footwear

- Simple repeating patterns on fabrics, or plain colourful clothes are welcomed.
- Clothing or footwear with pictures, writing or logos larger than a small matchbox are not permitted. Camouflage and army print are not permitted. We ask that party-type dresses, sequin and sparkly items are saved for home. All these items can be distracting and lead to peer pressure. In the kindergarten we strive to create a mood of wonder and beauty, in which original expressions of a child's imagination are encouraged, and with this in mind we ask for your support in this endeavour.
- Clothing must be suitably warm for the season, preferably with layers and long sleeves, to support the child's developing sense of warmth and growing bodies.

Legs should be covered with long trousers, warm leggings or tights in winter. Please note that very long skirts can hinder play.

- We ask for summer clothes to be lightweight (eg. cotton, linen). When the sun is strong, loose fitting long sleeves can help children regulate their temperature, and covered skin is the best protection from the sun. Tops should cover the chest, abdomen, and shoulders to protect the child from the sunshine. No crop tops or thin straps should be worn except as underclothes.
- Crocs, open-toed sandals, and backless shoes such as flip flops and sliders are not suitable for kindergarten.

Hair and accessories

- Hair should be secured away from eyes, and long hair should be worn tied back every day.
- Hair should not be dyed.
- Make-up, nail polish and tattoos (including visible skin art / temporary tattoos) are not allowed in kindergarten.
- Earrings must be limited to one pair of studs.
- Other jewellery must be simple, safe, and discreet, and not inhibit play.

6) LOWER SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Clothing

- All clothing should be clean at the beginning of each day, in good repair and appropriate to season and activity. 'Ready, Respectful and Safe'.
- Clothing should be without pictures, writing or logos larger than 10cm

Outdoor Footwear

- Shoes must be worn at all times. They need to be suitable for all kinds of movement, so no raised heels, crocs, flipflops, sliders or similar.

Hair and accessories

- Subtle makeup can be worn by previous arrangement with class 7 & 8 teachers only.
- Nail varnish and skin art is discouraged
- Earrings must be limited to one pair of studs.
- Other jewellery must be simple and discreet.
- Hair should be tied back and jewellery removed in some lessons, as directed by the teacher. Hair should not be dyed.

7) UPPER SCHOOL DRESS CODE

Clothing

- All clothing should be clean at the beginning of each day, appropriate to the season and activity.
- Nothing should be worn that causes distraction, intimidation or may give offence to members of staff, visitors or fellow students. Items bearing language or images that are explicit, violent, overtly political, or that relate to sex, drugs or alcohol are not allowed.
- Clothing worn at school should be appropriately modest for a working and learning environment. Underwear should not be visible.
- Crafts such as blacksmithing and woodwork require sturdy, closed footwear.
- P.E. lessons require a games kit as requested by the teacher.
- Students should wear smart white shirts and smart trousers or skirts on festival days. T-shirts, jeans, hoodies and clothing with logos are not acceptable for assemblies and festivals.

Footwear

- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- Pupils should wear sensible shoes appropriate for school.

Hair and accessories

- Upper school pupils are permitted to wear dangly earrings but may be asked to remove them for laboratory work, physical activity or for other health and safety reasons.
- With the exception of a discreet nose-stud, facial piercing, body piercing and tattoos may not be displayed. This includes body art such as henna and temporary transfers.
- Any hair dye should fall reasonably into the 'natural' colour range for class 9 and 10.
- Only discreet make-up, including nail polish, may be worn in Upper School.
- Hair should be tied back and jewellery removed according to the demands of particular lessons, such as P.E., Science and Crafts

10) PUPIL CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Rudolf Steiner, in a lecture (Berlin 01/02/1916) distinguished between two facets of discipline: Discipline to control and discipline to enable. The Waldorf Teacher tends towards the latter, that is, discipline to enable the class to work fruitfully, to enable the harmonious inter-working of the many activities of the school and discipline to support

the development of the child. Disciplinary measures taken by the teacher will depend upon, amongst other things, the age and temperament of the child and the nature of the misdemeanour. Measures taken will often include active parts of the lesson and the curriculum.

Any discipline aims to engender a spirit of mutual respect.

The school expects that children show a willingness to take part in lessons, to be properly equipped, to show respect for their peers, the teacher and staff as well as the buildings and school facilities. The school asks that parents support the school by building respect in the home for the education and its aims with the children (this is a condition of admission on the Admission Agreement). When active support is present in parents, experience shows that the children benefit more fully from their education and matters of discipline are lessened.

In most cases disciplinary problems can be immediately solved by the teacher. Other sanctions are used for more serious matters.

11) SANCTIONS

If a child misbehaves he, she or they will be dealt with appropriately in accordance with the deed and the age of the child. This may be a task or a detention and in serious or persistent cases (continual or gross disobedience), a suspension or exclusion.

Where deliberate or malicious damage is involved the school will seek compensation or repair and parents will be liable for any costs involved.

Parents are advised that the following may result in suspension or expulsion as instances of gross misconduct or continual disobedience:

- Aggressive or violent behaviour.
- Abusive behaviour and reactions.
- Overt and repeated swearing and bad language.
- Persistent teasing and bullying whether overt or not.
- Smoking and the possession and use of drugs or alcohol.
- Continued absence or lateness from school without permission or notification
- Persistent failure to fulfil work requirements.
- Persistent failure to co-operate with lessons and given instructions.
- The school has a Behaviour Policy which outlines the processes followed when a formal discipline procedure is instituted. A copy can be obtained from the school website.

Please note that you may be asked to collect your child from school in the above instances and you should therefore ensure that your contact details are current.

SECTION THREE: HOW THE SCHOOL IS ORGANISED

Ringwood Waldorf School reflects in its organisational structure the Threefold Social Order out of which the founding impulse for the Waldorf School movement arose. Parents can learn more about this by referring to the recommended reading list or by attending periodical talks that are offered on this subject.

The form of organisational structure can, in simple terms, be viewed as a flat republican management model.

Education is seen as a cultural deed within the Threefold Social Order and the organisational structure is arranged to serve this and, for this reason, is seen as an integral part of the education itself.

The collaborative leadership and management structure consists of three groups:

- The Board of Trustees
- The School Leadership Team
- The School Management Team

1) THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees is responsible for governing the legal aspects of Ringwood Waldorf School in accordance with the laws governing educational institutions in the United Kingdom and the requirements of the Charities Commission. It upholds the ethos of being a Waldorf School as a matter of principle.

The Trustees vet school policies, processes, guidelines and procedures for legal compliance and hear regular reports from various bodies in the school. The Trustees approve the Annual Plan for the school and ratify all staff appointments. The Trustees have a supportive role in the strategic direction of the school. The Trustees are bound by the ethos and social indications given by Rudolf Steiner appropriate to a Waldorf School and the arbiter of this is vested with the School Leadership Team. The Trustees are therefore bound to consult with the School Leadership Team before making any significant decisions.

Members of the Board of Trustees

Adrian Dunford - Chair of Trustees, Quality of Leadership, Finance, Early Years, Estates, Compliance, Assessment and Progress Tracking, SEND

Anna Mantzouratou - Safeguarding, Anti-bullying

Gustav Patrick - Data Protection, Legal

Harry Vekria - Finance, Fundraising

Steve Crook - Upper School, Visiting Students, HR, Health and Safety, Diversity

Davina Samann - Communications, Marketing/PR, Health and Safety, Estates

2) THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM

The School Leadership Team (SLT) is accountable and responsible for the overall vision, management and decision making for the school.

The School Lead carries responsibility for the whole school.

Leadership accountabilities in the three phases of the school - Early Years, Lower School, and Upper School - lie with the phase leads. Together with the School Lead, this group is the SLT - School Leadership Team. The leads provide a channel of support and represent their phase in management and strategic decision making. SLT report to the Trustees.

Members of the School Leadership Team

Geli Patrick - *School Lead*

Suzanne Borton - *Acting Early Years Lead*

Jenny Drake - *Lower School Lead*

Marika Bjerström - *Upper School Lead*

3) THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

The School Management Team (SMT) is responsible for the management and administration of the school on a day to day basis. The SMT meets weekly or more often if needed. The SMT mandates a number of individuals and groups to carry out the various day to day tasks.

Key areas (portfolios) include:

- Statutory Duties including Safeguarding
- Quality of Education
- Behaviour
- Administration
- Finance
- HR
- Public Relations
- School Community
- Compliance

Members of the School Management Team

Geli Patrick - Chair
Marika Bjerström
Laura Carvalho
Lucy Cooper
Yvonne de Leeuw
Jenny Drake
Hajnalka Hernadi
Suzie Hornby
Ben Houghton
Pankaj Sulodia
Louise Tiley
Liz Tomkins

4) MANDATED GROUPS

The Administration Group

This mandated group meets once a week to deal with urgent and routine administrative matters. This group monitors admissions, expenditure, Health and Safety and property matters. This group also administers the Financial Contribution System (see Financial Matters). The group reports to the SMT.

The Staffing/HR Group

This is a mandated SMT Group responsible for staffing and HR matters. This includes staff appraisal, mentoring and advising, professional development, staff advertising, interviewing, appointments and employment contracts.

5) THE COLLEGIATE MEETING

This group comprises all teaching staff at Ringwood Waldorf School. The Teachers Meeting meets weekly as a faculty for educational work including Professional Development, Child Studies, Curriculum Review, Planning and Policy Consideration, as well as discussing and coordinating whole school activities such as festivals and assemblies.

The Kindergarten, Lower/Middle School and Upper School groups all meet separately in addition to, or as part of, the weekly Teachers Meeting.

6) QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS

We welcome and value feedback in order to learn and improve.

If you have a concern about any aspect of the school, you are warmly encouraged to speak to the person directly responsible for the subject of your concern. We have found that direct communication is often the most constructive way of resolving issues.

For concerns about teaching or other educational aspects, please speak to your Class Teacher or Class Guardian in the first instance.

Where the circumstances mean that this may not be possible or appropriate, please contact the School Management Team and ask for an SMT Conversation. Ask the office staff or complete an SMT Conversation request form also available in Reception.

It is useful to indicate what the question is so that we can consider who would be the best person to speak to you. A member of SMT will contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time. In most cases, there will be two members of the SMT present at a meeting.

It is our aim to deal with any issues informally, However, if the matter cannot be resolved informally, you can raise it as a formal complaint by putting it in writing following the complaint's procedure available on our website.

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Member of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship
Folly Farm Lane, Ashley,
Ringwood
Hampshire, BH24 2NN
Telephone: 01425 472664
Email: liz@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk

SECTION FOUR: GETTING INVOLVED WITH SCHOOL LIFE

We are a community school and ask families to take on additional tasks around the school with enthusiasm and goodwill. These are contagious qualities and we encourage parents to wholeheartedly be part of a positive and responsible parent body which, together with the teachers and staff, creates a warm, enthusiastic and empowering environment for the children. Your willing participation and support in the life of the school also supports the children in their own personal development.

1) THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY GROUP

The social and cultural activities of the parent community are coordinated by the School Community Group. The School Community Group works in the social and cultural realms. These include publicity, meeting support/refreshments, fundraising support, talks and education Support. Please talk with a member of the Community Group if you would like to be involved with any of these activities. The Community Group liaises with Finance and Administration.

Some of the areas that the Community Group are involved in are:

- The Annual Christmas Bazaar
- The Annual Summer Fair
- Fundraising initiatives
- Gardening
- Maintenance
- Class Parents Group
- Craft Groups
- Occasional Preparation for Events

All parents are expected to help with the Christmas Bazaar and the Summer Fair. Allocated class tasks for both events will be shared by Class Parents. Ideally parents should set each day aside but helpers are also needed for advance preparation, setting up and clearing up afterwards so you will all be able to help in some way. Please be prepared to offer your support to these fundraising events. Your class parents will be able to offer more information and instruction during Parent Evenings.

Examples of Class Tasks

Kindergartens:	Gnome Garden and the Fairy Tea Party
Class One:	Restaurant
Class Two:	Publicity, traders, entertainment

Class Three:	Craft stall
Class Four:	Café and Cake Stall
Class Five:	Presents for parents, signage and decoration of school
Class Six:	Children's activities
Class Seven:	Off-site signs and parking
Class Eight:	Waffles, Chestnuts and punch. Ice cream
Upper School:	Raffle and BBQ

Events vary from year to year and new initiatives are welcomed.

We like to offer wholesome, home baked food and cakes at all of our events. When we have festivals and events we ask parents to make cakes (rather than buy shop bought ones) and we hope that you will support us in this. If you cannot make something perhaps you could offer to buy ingredients for someone else or you could bring in juice or offer to help in another way.

There are other groups and activities that you can join throughout the year. Look out for details of these groups in the newsletter or enquire in the office.

Other ways in which you can support your child(ren), many of which are organised or supported by the Community Group, include:

Attending certain evening or weekend meetings:

- The New Parent Coffee Morning/Evening meeting.
- Class Parents Evening (3 or 4 times a year) as per Admission Agreement.
- Whole School Community Meetings which are held once a term.
- Educational and other talks.
- Buying a book and reading about Waldorf education (recommending it to others or borrowing a book out of the Parents' Library in Reception).
- Educational Open Days.
- Busy Bee/TLC days to help with maintenance around the school (organised termly).
- Fundraising by helping at the Christmas Bazaar, Easter and Summer Fairs and more.

2) GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING

Caring for and improving the natural environment around the school is an important contribution to the wellbeing of the whole community. It also sets a good example for the children and provides them with a natural beauty that will have an enduring presence for them. There are many opportunities for parents to contribute in this area. This can be on a one-off basis or on-going by joining the group itself. Watch out for requests in the newsletter.

It is always much appreciated when a parent notices a task needs doing and they just come in and do it – new plants in the flower pots, sweeping up the leaves, a quick burst of weeding.

3) CRAFT GROUPS

Many parents find their way into the fabric of the school through participating in craft groups. No experience is normally required, however parents with skills are certainly welcome as well. Groups normally focus on 'Waldorf type' crafts such as making soft dolls, some of which may then be donated to the annual Christmas Bazaar.

The groups tend to be informal and quite social and can meet at any mutually convenient time. There may be a nominal charge to cover the cost of materials. For convenience some groups meet at school and the Keir Hall foyer may be used for this purpose. Groups should check on its availability.

4) ADULT EDUCATION COURSES AND STUDY GROUPS

The school, in recognising the importance of supporting and deepening parents' understanding of the pedagogy and principles of child development, uses its best endeavours to arrange suitable courses, seminars and talks on topical matters of interest to parents.

In addition, study groups may be formed on an ad hoc basis when sufficient interest is shown in a particular subject.

Notice of such events will be given in the school newsletter and parents are encouraged to avail themselves of such opportunities because they empower parents to work with their children in ways that enhance the educational experience of the children.

5) PARENTS' LIBRARY

The school has a library for parents, which is currently situated in Reception. This library holds a range of books on the philosophy and curriculum of Waldorf/Steiner schools and related subjects such as health and illness, diet and cooking, playing and games, festivals, musical instruments and so on. All parents in the school are welcome to use this library. Full instructions for taking out books can be found on the library shelves and the issuing of books is a self-help system.

Please ensure that borrowed books are returned so they continue to be available to other parents. The library is looked after by the teachers.

Books can also be purchased at the Lantern Centre and in addition books are often available for purchase at many school events.

6) ONE DAY SEMINAR AND WORKSHOPS

The school sometimes hosts a One Day Conference or a series of Parent Workshops in which certain aspects of the education are explored in more detail for the benefit of interested adults. This is usually related to the study theme of the year. Please watch the school newsletter for details. Places are limited and early registration is advised.

7) EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY GROUP

An inclusive diversity group consisting of staff, parents and caregivers meets regularly to address issues, research resources, and bring new initiatives.

The EDI Group provides updates through teachers' meetings and the school newsletter, ensuring our whole community is involved. We strive for honest communication and authentic listening to support our collaborative work and inner self-reflection.

It is important for us to acknowledge the need for more discussion around questions such as representation and underrepresentation, working through implicit biases, being open to new perspectives, and widening the breadth of our curriculum.

We welcome all voices, so please get in touch via the office if you have any questions or concerns, or if you feel motivated or inspired to join us in this ongoing work.

SECTION FIVE: COMMUNICATION

Ringwood Waldorf School is committed to ensuring that the learning needs of each child are met and that their educational potential is fulfilled and supported.

To be successful in this task requires the active and ongoing support of the family working with the school in positive and constructive ways. The importance of this cannot be overemphasised. Accordingly, the school places considerable emphasis on achieving a positive working relationship with each family and asks in return that parents respond to this by ensuring that the appropriate communication channels are used and school policies and procedures are followed.

1) THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Working as a community enables the strengths and resources of each to be utilised and available for the benefit of everyone.

The Social Ethic verse which is said before many meetings reads:

"The healthy social life is found

When in the mirror of each human soul

The whole community finds its reflection, and

When in the community

The virtue of each one is living"

2) THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEETING AND AGM

Whole School Community Meetings are held at least once each year and offer the whole school community an opportunity to be informed on issues and matters of interest within the school. Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are hosted by the Board of Trustees, and other Whole School Community Meetings are hosted by the Management Team or Community Group.

Agenda items may include:

- Financial Report
- Voting in new Trustee members
- Community – ways to develop and enhance the sense of community.
- Communication – a focus for different parts of the school to share information.

- Consultation – to provide opportunities for consultation and involvement in various aspects of policy and decision making where this is appropriate.
- Groups – to hear reports and offer support for the various groups within the school.
- To hear Anthroposophical and wider educational topics.

The meetings are announced in the newsletter and attending parents often comment on how their understanding and connection to the school has been strengthened by attending these meetings.

3) CLASS PARENTS

A Class Parent supports the Class Teacher with the practical and social running of the class.

This may include helping organise camps and trips, cleaning rotas as well as festivals and social events, sometimes liaising with other Class Parents from across the school.

The Class Parent may act as a liaison between parents of a class and the teacher on general issues relating to the class as well as the school as a whole. Matters concerning the whole class are often best discussed initially with a Class Parent, who can then take the matter up with the Class Teacher or help to find a solution.

The Class Parents liaise with the other parents about school related matters in the class via an official email group or Whatsapp Group. Please see our school - home communication policy for more information.

4) THE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

This is published weekly during term time and sent out by email on Thursdays or Fridays. The newsletter contains information on day-to-day events and important notices. Please ensure you receive a copy. There will be some printed copies available in the hall foyer or from the office.

Written copy is accepted for inclusion up to 12.00 noon on the Monday prior to publication. If of a private nature we ask for a contribution of £1. Any advertisement must include the full name and telephone number of the advertiser. This service is for parents at the school only. The right to edit or refuse copy is reserved and publication does not imply endorsement by the school.

All new families to the school are automatically subscribed to the newsletter emailing list by Admissions. If you find that you are not on the mailing list (or wish to unsubscribe from the mailing list), please contact kate.pursglove@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk.

5) THE PARENTS' HANDBOOK

You are now reading this publication. It is reviewed and updated periodically and is available to view on the school website. It contains much useful information and is a source book that answers many common questions.

6) HOME VISITS

The teachers in the lower classes aim to visit each family at least once during their time in the lower school. In addition Kindergarten Teachers also arrange for home visits from time to time. Home Visits are informal and are aimed at supporting the relationship between the family and the school which is so important to the child's education. There is no set agenda and any concerns or questions that a parent may have can be raised but not in the presence of children please.

Often a family will choose to invite their Class or Kindergarten Teacher for a meal and then have a discussion after the child has gone to bed. Please discuss preferences with your child's teacher.

7) NOTICE BOARDS

There are several notice boards at the school. One is the chalk board in the car-park outside the office and this is used to remind parents of imminent events. There is also a school notice board that contains school or Waldorf Education related information such as courses, events and matters of possible interest to parents.

There are also class notice boards in the foyers outside classrooms that contain information and rotas for that class. Please check these regularly.

There is general information available in the lobby of the office including brochures and leaflets. Please feel free to help yourself to these, unless they have Office Copy written on them.

Notices may not be placed around the school without permission from the Administrator and this will not be given for events not related to the school. Where possible, please use 'blu-tack'. No sellotape on the windows, please. Anyone placing a notice is responsible for its removal after the event, including removing any pins or blu tack.

SECTION SIX: FINANCIAL MATTERS

'Money is will made manifest'.

Ringwood Waldorf School, as an independent school, is reliant on parents for its financial and material needs and the financial organisation of the school reflects this fact. The school endeavours to ensure that the education is available to all those parents who wish it for their children while at the same time recognising that the school needs to be financially viable and responsible. Financial Contributions are used to educate all the children in the community and are not applied on an individual basis. All financial contributions are received as a gift to the whole community.

The school offers the highest quality Steiner Waldorf Education it can within the resources available, and the provision of those resources is the responsibility of each individual within the community.

1) MINIMUM FUNDING CONTRIBUTION

The Minimum Funding Contribution, which covers all salaries, property and administrative costs, is the main component of the Finance Policy. The figures are based on the Community Development Goals for the school, and parents are reminded that the minimum contribution is the minimum amount needed per child in order for the school to operate.

There is the opportunity, and expectation in the spirit of the policy, for those who can contribute more to do so in order that the social aims of the school can be maintained and further extended. These extra contributions will add to the financial stability of the school in all areas.

Contributions to the Community Support Fund will qualify for Gift Aid if you are a UK taxpayer making it more possible for the school to realise the pedagogical goals. Please see the school Bursar for details.

2) ANNUAL FINANCIAL PROCESS

All financial agreements with the school are for one year and are subject to annual review and renewal. Around Easter each year parents will be asked to complete and return a Minimum Funding Contribution Form for the following academic school year. The Contribution Form is the family's understanding, commitment and acceptance of the annual contribution that is applicable for their child's place in the school.

Parents who contribute by standing order are reminded that any changes should be notified to their bank before September each year.

3) CHANGE OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Parents are asked to keep the school informed of any changed circumstances by contacting the Bursar. In particular, if parents unexpectedly find difficulty in paying their contributions, they should contact the Bursar as soon as possible in order to reach an amicable solution. If non-payments accrue with no adequate explanation, a family may be asked to leave the school because of non-cooperation with the community Finance Policy.

4) WITHDRAWALS

In the event of a child being withdrawn, the parent(s) should first inform the Class Teacher. They should then give three month's notice in writing addressed to the School Management Team smt@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk.

If a child is withdrawn before the end of the notice period the full financial contribution to the end of the notice period is expected.

Parents who are making contributions under a twelve month standing order are reminded that when a child leaves the school at the end of the Summer Term, the July and August monthly contributions need to be paid in order to complete the year's contribution promise.

Parents withdrawing children, or whose children complete their education at the school, will be asked to complete an exit questionnaire in order that the school can monitor feedback from families as well as to request details on the pupil's next school and/or progression pathway. The latter part of this exit questionnaire is a statutory requirement for all pupils under the age of 18 who are leaving. Parents may also request an exit interview.

5) MATERIALS

Most materials such as crayons, books and handwork materials are included in the contribution amount. However, some items, such as recorders, are charged separately and become the property of the student. Items not covered by the materials charge include class annual trips and camps, fountain pens, geometry/compass sets, personal coloured pencil sets, GCSE exam fees. This list is not exhaustive.

6) NON FINANCIAL GIFTS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The school was founded, and continues to rely, on parental goodwill. The on-going and continued ability to be able to offer a quality Waldorf Education is largely dependent on this good will. This also allows parents to be involved and contribute to many aspects of school and community life and this expectation is part of the social culture of the

school. The welfare of the children depends on the working together of school and home, parent and teacher.

Non Financial Contributions, in the form of gifts of time and skills, also allow the school to 'redeem' parts of the budget and better apply financial resources to student learning and educational outcomes.

There are many events and activities during the year where parents, either as a personal initiative or as part of a group, can contribute socially and culturally as well as materially to the community.

If you have some spare time and would like to support the school in a practical way by 'volunteering' please speak with the Administrator, the Bursar or the Community Group.

Areas parents may volunteer to assist in include:

- Cleaning: Each class has both a weekly and half-termly cleaning rota. In addition, there are groups of parents who help clean the communal areas, such as the school hall. In doing this, the children are provided with a clean environment which is cared for by their parents, thus encouraging them to care for their environment too.
- Class trips, camps, outings and transport.
- Classroom assistance
- Graphic design
- Fundraising, fairs and events
- Festivals and open days
- Website
- Handwork assisting
- Maintenance
- Busy Bee/ TLC and gardening days are regularly organised within the school where families can help maintain the fabric and improve the surroundings of the school.
- Office assisting
- Newsletter collation
- Gardening
- IT maintenance
- Learning Support assistance
- Costume Cupboard

Please note that it is expected that all parents will assist in the cleaning of the classrooms. This not only helps to redeem the budget it also sets a good example to the pupils in caring for their environment.

7) FUNDRAISING

The proceeds of fundraising are applied to capital costs and improvements in the school and/or meeting the servicing costs of capital loans. We welcome involvement from

everyone and, whilst some might not prefer to get involved with the organisation of events, they may wish to contribute to the success of fundraising initiatives by joining or assisting with particular projects.

It is expected that all parents will find some way of helping in the annual major events such as the Christmas Bazaar and the Summer Fair. Parents are also encouraged to take their own initiative and to organise clothing, book and plant sales, coffee mornings and so on. Community fundraising is coordinated by the Community Group.

8) PARENT COLLECTION FOR GIFTS & CLASSROOM SUPPLIES

This part of the handbook outlines the procedures and principles governing the collection and management of funds at the start of each school year by individual classes for the purpose of purchasing gifts and covering classroom expenses.

Although the money collected is not part of the school's finances, we believe that clear guidance is required to support parents.

Considerations

A few years ago some classes decided to collect one lump sum of money at the start of the year to facilitate the purchase of gifts and classroom essentials. This system was initiated to simplify the process of collecting small amounts of cash year round. The outcome has been positive in most classes with parent's liking only giving once a year. It also offered the option of contributing via transfer rather than cash. However, as more classes decide to opt for this approach, challenges arise. It is essential that all parties feel that there's honesty and transparency in the system, and that there's a procedure in place for addressing concerns.

Guidelines

- All communications with class families regarding fund collection must emphasise that participation is entirely voluntary, with no obligation for any family to contribute.
- A detailed breakdown of the purpose and the use of funds must be provided and any changes to this breakdown should be communicated clearly to the involved families.
- Encouraging the appointment of a consistent, long-term class treasurer is recommended to ensure stability and adherence to this policy, ideally separate from the class parent. In cases where a treasurer change is necessary, a thorough handover process should be followed.
- Clear communication protocols should be in place to ensure that all parties have the opportunity to be involved in decisions regarding spending and to address surplus/deficits.

- Money should preferably be kept in a separate bank account with statements available upon request.

Participants who are uncomfortable with the current system or its management are encouraged to contact the class treasurer via private message.

- If preferred, contact the class parent, to address concerns.
- Opt not to contribute at the start of the year and manage their own gifts and expenses during the year. Contributions are entirely voluntary.

Please contact School Trustee Davina Samann for any further queries:

davina.samann@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk.

SECTION SEVEN: SAFEGUARDING & HEALTH AND SAFETY

Ringwood Waldorf School is committed to ensuring a safe physical and emotional learning environment for all pupils and ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all who work in the school. This includes the principles of equality of access to educational opportunities for all. The general medical care of children is held to be primarily the responsibility of parents.

1) SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for Ringwood Waldorf School is Liz Tomkins.

The Trustees and school staff of Ringwood Waldorf School place the utmost importance in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all our students. If you are concerned about yourself or a member of our school community, please get in touch so we can support you.

The school has an appointed DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and deputies for the main school and the Kindergarten. Their task is to ensure that safeguarding children procedures are met in accordance with the statutory regulations, the statutory safeguarding guidance for schools 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and the guidelines set by our Local Authority and Social Services. The procedures are set out in the school policy on safeguarding children. The policy is available to download from the school website or you can ask for a copy from the School Office. All staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children are subject to Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) searches.

In all safeguarding matters the child's interests are considered paramount and the school will adhere to the statutory guidelines which may require referral to Social Services.

2) HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The school has a Health and Safety Policy and a Health and Safety Officer. This policy meets the statutory requirements with regards to Health and Safety and sets out the areas that require guidelines and procedures to be followed. Reports on Health and Safety are tabled regularly in Teachers and School Management Team meetings. The policy and the guidelines are subject to regular review.

All staff and those on the school site for lawful purposes are bound by the provisions of the Health and Safety Policy including contractors, parents, visitors and volunteers.

Parents with questions and concerns about Health and Safety should contact the Health and Safety Officer through the office.

3) HEALTH SERVICES

There are no routine health services in the school, such as dental, hearing or vision tests although if there appears to be a learning problem caused by one of these factors it will be brought to the attention of the parent(s).

The school does not arrange for children to be vaccinated for childhood illnesses, however it does maintain a file of information on this subject for the use of parents.

4) RELATIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND BULLYING

Ringwood Waldorf School's vision statement includes that 'young people can develop into capable, confident adults who want to contribute positively to society'. It embraces restorative approaches to support the maintenance and repairing of relationships and actively promotes emotional literacy. It aims to uphold Rudolf Steiner's intention that education should support the development of our fundamental humanity in a supportive and age-appropriate learning environment. Everyone at Ringwood Waldorf School has the right to feel welcome, secure and happy.

Social, emotional and academic growth is optimised in an environment free from feelings of humiliation, distress, fear and despair. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent any kind of bullying or harassment, and to promote an ethos of respect, trust, caring and consideration for others in our school. All forms of bullying, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious consequences for mental wellbeing.

By its nature bullying is often done secretly and the dynamics involved can be complex and progressive over a period of time. The School Management Team have studied bullying with a view to better understanding these dynamics and have a number of strategies to deal with any incidents that occur. Parents should also be aware that children's behaviour can often be different at school to what it is at home and they may be surprised when they hear that their children have been involved in unkind behaviour. In addition, it is not uncommon for children to report 'their version' of incidents to parents in order to avoid criticism or punishment and to enlist parents' support. Please keep an open mind on this matter.

All staff have a consciousness about bullying and work to ensure that there is adequate supervision at all times throughout the school day. In addition, play spaces are arranged

so that younger children have separate spaces. There is a Relational Behaviour Policy, Anti-bullying Policy and Exclusions Policy, which include discipline, exclusions, anti-bullying and harassment as well as a code of conduct following up all incidents promptly whenever they are noticed or reported. Normally, the teacher will be able to resolve the matter on the spot. For the older classes there are periodical discussion periods during which pupils or teachers can raise any concerns.

Persistent and repeated occurrences will follow the procedures set out in the policies above.

Parents with concerns, or who become aware of incidents of bullying, are asked in the first instance to inform the child's Class Teacher immediately.

5) HEAD LICE

Head Lice are mentioned here separately because they are a perennial problem in all schools. Please check your child's scalp and hair roots once a week with a fine-toothed comb after shampooing and conditioning (lice may be hard to detect).

Teachers have an awareness of head lice and they will advise parents if head lice have been found.

Treatment should begin immediately and continue until the hair is free of the lice. The office or your class parent may be able to offer suggestions as to the latest methods (alternative and conventional).

6) TICKS

Ticks are small, blood-sucking arthropods related to spiders, mites and scorpions. There are many different species of tick living in Britain, and some are found in the wooded and grassy areas of Ringwood and New Forest. Ticks are most abundant in the late spring and summer, and they cling on to and feed from a wide variety of mammals and birds.

Lyme disease is a tick-borne bacterial infection that can be transmitted to humans when they are bitten by an infected tick. Parents should monitor their child and seek medical advice if they have any concerns. Parents will be asked if they wish to consent for a teacher or member of staff to remove any ticks found on their child during school hours as part of the school's Emergency and Accident Consent protocol.

7) SMOKING, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Smoking is not permitted by staff or visitors on the school premises. Smoking or the possession of tobacco products by pupils on the school premises is not permitted at any time and any breach will be considered as a disciplinary matter.

Illegal drugs and legal highs are not permitted at any time, and any breach will be considered as a disciplinary matter.

Alcohol on the school site is forbidden which means that it cannot be brought in, stored, or used on the school site, except when a specific exemption for staff and parents outside of school hours has been approved by the School Management Team. This will only be given for special events and then subject to conditions.

This policy extends to parent supervisors and staff on class trips where smoking, illegal drugs, legal highs, and alcohol are not permitted.

8) FIRST AID

Most staff members have undertaken first aid courses and the school has an appointed First Aid Officer.

First Aid supplies are available in every classroom and kits are taken on all trips. No internal remedies will be administered as these are regarded as medication.

9) MEDICATION

Prescription and over the counter medicines will only be administered at school when it would be detrimental to the pupil's health or school attendance not to do so and where we have parents' written consent.

Parents who have children with chronic medical conditions requiring prescription medicines are advised to complete a 'Parental Consent for the Administering of Medication' form and the school will give consideration to accepting responsibility for supervising the administering of the medication.

10) PARTICULAR HEALTH RISKS

If a child has a chronic health condition such as asthma or other forms of allergy, diabetes, epilepsy, parents should notify the school on admission of the child.

The condition should be discussed with the Kindergarten Teacher, Class Teacher or Guardian, and if deemed appropriate, an emergency supply of any medication will be kept at school. (There are guidelines for this.) All teachers will be made aware of the child's condition and measures required.

Prior written consent is required in all instances and parents should ensure they have done this and informed the school of any changes. The school will endeavour to contact parent(s) before any emergency medication is administered.

Where training is required (for example to avoid injury during epileptic seizures) the school should be notified so that the necessary training can be obtained.

11) ILLNESS

When children are ill, whether with an infectious disease or otherwise, please keep them at home until the condition has passed and notify the school office.

Children should not return to school if they are unwell and should have a period of at least 48 hours before returning if they have had diarrhoea or vomiting. The government publishes an exclusion table which sets out the time period an individual should not attend school to reduce the risk of transmission during the infectious stage of various illnesses.

You are asked to notify the school of particular childhood illnesses such as Mumps, Measles (German and English), Chicken Pox etc. Please note that some infectious diseases are notifiable and where this is the case, the advice of the health authorities will be followed. The school reserves the right to exclude pupils with notifiable infectious diseases in consultation with the Health Services (TB, Meningitis etc.).

Parents must also phone or email the school office each day that the child is absent on: registers@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk.

12) PHYSICAL ACCESS

The school is committed to ensuring access to facilities for staff and pupils in accordance with its Equal Opportunities and Accessibility Plan (copy available on request). Please contact the Administrator if you have any questions or concerns about this.

13) WASTE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

Children are taught to care for the environment as part of their lessons. All food leftovers should go into food bins, paper into paper bins, and other waste being kept separate to this. Plastic waste should be taken home where practicable. Uneaten food should also be taken home if possible.

SECTION EIGHT: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

We are very fortunate to have a supportive and friendly parent body. Our parents recognise that educating children is a process that involves a partnership between parents, class teachers and the school community. As a partnership, our parents/carers will understand the importance of a good working relationship to equip children with the necessary skills for adulthood. For these reasons we continue to welcome and encourage parents/carers to participate fully in the life of our school.

This code complements the school's 'Concerns and Complaints Procedure' which is designed to handle parental concerns or complaints in a sensitive and mutually supportive manner (see the school website, or contact the school office).

1) AIMS OF PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to:

- Work in partnership with parents to support their child's learning.
- Create a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for students, staff and parents.
- Model appropriate behaviour for our students at all times.

To help us do this, we set clear expectations and guidelines on behaviour for all members of our community. This includes staff (through the Staff Code of Conduct) and students (through our Behaviour Policy).

This Code of Conduct aims to help the school work together with parents by setting guidelines on appropriate behaviour. We use the term 'parents' to refer to:

- Anyone with parental responsibility for a student
- Anyone caring for a child (such as grandparents or child-minders) and
- Anyone representing the parent of a child.

2) EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTS, CARERS AND VISITORS

We expect parents, carers and other visitors to:

- Respect the ethos, vision and values of our school
- Work together with staff in the best interests of our students
- Maintain reasonable expectations for staff to respond to general communications
- Treat all members of the school community with respect – setting a good example with speech, behaviour, dress and manner
- Seek a peaceful and reasonable solution to all issues
- Seek to clarify a child's version of events with the school's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue

- Correct their own child's behaviour (or those in their care), where it could lead to conflict, aggression or unsafe conduct
- Approach the right member of school staff to help resolve any issues of concern, following up if an appropriate response has not been received. Any educational enquiries should always be directed to your class teacher/guardian in the first instance. If you have not been able to resolve your issue, you are welcome to email SMT smt@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk Any other enquiries should be addressed to the office staff on 01425 472664 or mail@ringwoodwaldorfschool.org.uk

3) BEHAVIOUR THAT IS UNACCEPTABLE

- Disrupting, or threatening to disrupt, school operations. (including events on the school grounds)
- Swearing, or using offensive language
- Threatening behaviour of any kind to a member of school staff, visitor, fellow parent or student, regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence
- Damaging or destroying school property
- Abusive or threatening emails or text/voicemail/phone messages or other written communication
- Unreasonable demands upon school staff to respond to a parental query, or expectations for staff to communicate outside of normal working hours
- Making serial and unreasonable complaints (please see Concerns & Complaints Policy)
- Posting defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the school, its staff or any member of its community, on social media platforms
- Any aggressive behaviour (including verbally or in writing) towards another child or adult
- Smoking or drinking alcohol on the school premises (unless alcohol has been allowed at a specific event)
- Possessing or taking drugs (including legal highs)

4) BREACHES OF PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

If the school suspects, or becomes aware, that a parent has breached the code of conduct, the school will gather information from those involved and speak to the parent about the incident. Depending on the nature of the incident, the school may then:

- Send a warning letter to the parent
- Limit contact by allocating one key staff member to communicate with the parent
- Invite the parent into school to meet with a member of the School Leadership Team

- Contact the appropriate authorities (in cases of criminal behaviour)
- Seek advice from the local authority's legal team regarding further action (in cases of conduct that may be libellous or slanderous)
- Ban the parent from the school site
- In the case of a fundamental breach of contract by the parents, pupils may be excluded from the school.

A FINAL WORD

Education is a journey filled with wonder and discovery - for both children and parents, as each grows and learns along the way. Though childhood passes quickly, it lays the foundation for a lifetime.

Waldorf Education strives to work in partnership with families to enrich and maximise each child's learning experience. This handbook is offered as a resource to support that shared journey.

At its heart, Waldorf Education seeks to awaken and nurture what it means to be truly human, guiding each child towards autonomy, self-direction, and purpose. Through this, they become individuals capable of offering their unique gifts to the world. This vision—Education Towards Freedom—is the essence of Waldorf Education, a lifelong gift that continues to unfold as each person walks their own path.

Journey well.

We would like to share with you the verse we recite together as a faculty before each Teachers' Meeting:

*“May there reign here, spirit strength in love
May there work here, spirit light in goodness
Born from certainty of heart
And from steadfastness of soul*

*So that we may bring to the young human beings
Bodily strength for work (willing)
Inwardness of soul (feeling)
and clarity of spirit. (thinking)*

*May this place be consecrated to such a task
May young hearts and minds find here
Servers of the light endowed with strength
Who will guard and cherish them.”*

(Rudolf Steiner 1861 - 1925)

Appendix One

Tv, Screens and Electronic Games - Additional Information and Recommended Reading

As a school, we take the following approach:

- Screens and other electronic aids are not used in the classroom before Class Nine. Any exceptions (e.g. projection, learning support) must be approved by the School Management Team.
- Screen exposure and alternatives will be part of our parent education and parent information meetings.
- Our standpoint on screen exposure will be specifically mentioned in the admission process.
- Regular reminders will be included in the school newsletter

There are some fundamental understandings around child development that amplify the detrimental effects of screen time on young children, in comparison to adults.

Children's brains and bodies are still being formed during the first seven years. It is not the case that this work is complete when they are born and they just become larger. They are actually finishing the work of building their brains and organs that began in the uterus. Additionally, research studies have linked early exposure to the fast-moving, ever-changing images of digital screens to challenges with brain development, behaviour, attention, coordination and vision.

Children learn through direct experience. In the first seven years, children learn primarily through their limbs, through their will, through their experiences and through all that involves moving. It involves practising fine and gross motor skills. Movement in early childhood prepares the way for later intellectual development. Television and screens immobilise children's bodies and eyes and separates them from direct experience.

Children learn through sensory experiences. During the first seven years of childhood children's senses are exceptionally open. They 'absorb' everything around them. For them, there is no choice 'not to listen' or 'not to see' as there is no filter and no protection. Everything goes in and has an effect on their developing minds, social skills, feeling lives and will. Moreover, before seven the ability to distinguish between fact and fiction, reality and fantasy is not fully formed.

Children learn through imitation. Interacting with real people has an entirely different effect on development when compared to interacting with a computer game or

television programme. Recent research reveals, among other things, a loss of language skills.

Process

It is now generally recognised that the first issue around television and digital screen viewing is not the content but the medium itself. The Emery report (Australian National University) established that, regardless of what the program is, human brain wave activity enters uncharacteristic patterns. Data is 'received' at a rate that nerve pathways cannot manage and this is particularly true in the case of young children. The result is a deadening of thought life and the viewer becomes relatively passive or 'spaced out'. Active attention and the critical faculty are suppressed. After constant exposure to this process, the capacity of the organic system is dulled.

Content

Much modern digital content portrays violence (physical, emotional, social, racial and verbal). This provides negative role modelling and a view of a world which is anything but 'good'. Children can be burdened with a flood of images and facts beyond their capacity for healthy assimilation and inner transformation.

Stereotyping, body image and advertising. On television and social media, actresses are on average 23% thinner than the average woman. A mixed message of 'thin is in' and 'eat, eat, eat' during advertising breaks is a dangerous combination for young people. The portrayal of what is considered 'normal' behaviour has widespread ramifications particularly when we look at sexual attitudes and behaviour in teenagers. Advertising also drives a materialistic youth culture whether the viewer is 3 or 18.

In this respect, selective viewing, discussion and training in discrimination are not enough to fully eliminate difficulties. The young child lacks the critical faculty and inner detachment and it is natural for children to be affected by the images they take in. The young child's brain acts like a sponge and the exposure to television programmes, films, advertising and social media can raise unreal expectations and unnecessary social challenges.

Imagination - fixed and free

One of the key aims in the Waldorf method of education is to help the child toward developing the faculty of free imagination. For example, stories are generally told without offering printed pictures; allowing the words to provide the raw materials of the story and enabling the child to 'clothe' it with their own images. Television hinders the development of free imagination and the images become reality for the young child as they cannot yet separate what they see from what they internalise. The natural development of the child's imagination is therefore inhibited. This may have long term repercussions for it is the imaginative child who, later in life, will become creative and develop individual initiative (see Rudolf Steiner's lecture 2 'Kingdom of Childhood').

Curriculum delivery

Our teaching involves a three-day rhythm: telling a story one day, recalling it the next and writing about it on the third (or a similar progression over three days in other subjects). Sleeping on what they have received during the day, and returning to develop it, can be fruitless if there has been screen interference. Children need to regurgitate screen images they have received in order to process them and this can manifest through their artwork, movements, speech and deeds. As well as creating stumbling blocks for healthy physical development, screen exposure can hamper children's ability to live into what they have learned (experienced) at school.

Brain hemispheres, left and right

The process of screen viewing interferes with the development of harmonious communication between the two brain hemispheres and the left hemisphere, which deals with conceptual and logical skills, is particularly weakened.

Time robbery and childrens' play

Children's play patterns have changed dramatically in recent years; children in general play less and play is often chaotic and sometimes violent.

Play is a child's 'work'. Free play develops faculties of creativity, imagination, and initiative. Play is the key factor in the development of the lower senses (i.e. touch, movement and balance) and a sound development of the lower senses is required before the higher senses may healthily unfold (refer to The 12 Senses as described by Rudolf Steiner for further information).

Lack of play experience may cause organic dysfunction such as underdeveloped senses, retained reflexes and neurological disorders between left and right hemispheres. Rhythmical movement, as exercised in healthy play, assists in the building of nerve myelination, essential for bodily and mental functioning. Play is an integrating process for the child, both bodily, psychologically and socially and television, computer games, and films rob children of the time to play. Screen time can also be noted in a child's behaviour and learning patterns as they may become nervous, easily fatigued and develop a low attention span.

There are of course social (family) circumstances involved in the issue of television and screen time. What can be done when a teenage sibling insists on viewing something inappropriate for the younger child? What happens when they visit friends and neighbours? These questions need to be considered in light of the age of the child, the information here, and other factors affecting the child's development.

The school is able to help, provide support and suggest strategies if required.

Issues of televisions and screen time at school and in our school community

Many parents have chosen a Waldorf education for their child because of the emphasis placed on recognising and working with child development in a healthy and beneficial way. Our whole curriculum and everything we do is specific to the developmental needs of the child at particular ages. Screen exposure not only has an adverse effect on the child but, indirectly, on the other children in the class. Many parents endeavour to limit or avoid screen exposure and it can be disheartening when other children talk about their electronic experiences, or when screen-free children are inadvertently exposed to such media when playing with their friends.

Some useful references and recommended reading: (available from the Parents Library in Reception)

Remotely Controlled – Dr Aric Sigman

Fools Gold – Alliance for Childhood

The Plug-in Drug – Marie Win

Endangered Minds – Jane Healey

Who's bringing them up? – Martin Large

After the Death of Childhood – David Buckingham

Amusing ourselves to Death – Neil Postman

Set Free Childhood – M. Large