Note regarding COVID-19 Protocols: As we consider our options for the 2021-2022 school year, many factors are still unknown. Though it is our hope to offer our typical full range of classes, programs and events, they may yet be impacted by State and County regulations. As such, throughout this handbook, a note has been made where COVID-19 protocols may affect a certain program or event. As soon as it is determined we can move ahead with offering a program, (aftercare, lunch, circus, festivals, etc.), the community will be notified by email, the Messenger newsletter and/or a posting on the Parent Portal. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we once again navigate unprecedented territory together.
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SUMMERFIELD BACKGROUND AND PHILOSOPHY

RUDOLF STEINER (1861-1925) AND ANTHROPOSOPHY

Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian philosopher, scientist and artist, was exceptionally active in the cultural and social life of his day. Schooled in modern science and philosophy, he developed Anthroposophy as a science of the spirit. Steiner was a prolific writer and sought-after speaker who gave over 6,000 lectures in his lifetime. Increasingly, he is recognized as a seminal thinker of the twentieth century.

Anthroposophy, the spiritual science founded by Rudolf Steiner, is an attempt to investigate and describe spiritual phenomena by means of “soul-observations using scientific methodology”. It aims to attain the precision and clarity approaching that of natural science’s investigations and descriptions of the physical world. Today, when many aspects of our culture are in crisis and people are easily drawn into cynicism and despair, the anthroposophical vision of human potential can be a source of hope and renewal.

WALDORF EDUCATION

At the end of World War I, Emil Molt, the owner of the Waldorf Astoria Cigarette Factory asked Rudolf Steiner to develop a new education for the children of the employees at his factory. He wanted an education that would allow children to grow up to be clear thinkers who could work with social situations in a complex world. In this way, these students could lead humanity away from choosing war as a way of dealing with conflict between peoples. Emil Molt funded the first Waldorf school that opened its doors in Stuttgart, Germany, in 1919, with a full school program through the grades. Interestingly, Waldorf schools in Europe are often called Steiner schools.

Central to Waldorf education is a recognition of and a respect for the child’s unfolding individuality. The curriculum is designed to meet the child’s specific developmental needs from the early years through high school. Rudolf Steiner maintained that “all education is self-education,” and therefore the task of the teacher lies in creating a learning environment in which the child can find age-appropriate nourishment and challenge.

In a world in which education is focused on normative, quantifiable outcomes, the uniqueness of the individual child’s gifts and challenges often has to take a backseat to the pressure of general societal expectations. Waldorf education values difference and strives to support developing children and adolescents in such a way that they can bring their gifts to fruition while, at the same time, learn to cope with their challenges. They should leave school with a strong sense of purpose based on a clear understanding of both themselves and the world.

All of Waldorf education is focused on challenging children in such a way that the emergent ability of independent thinking can lead to a true discovery of meaning. In the early years, children are led to an experience of meaning through a plethora of hands-on activities. In the grade school years, children are led to an exploration of meaning through awakening interest, enthusiasm and love for the subject at hand. In the high school years, students engage in the search for meaning through thinking as they approach an understanding of their unique individuality. As Steiner puts it, the experience that the world is good and worthy of imitation in the early years, followed by the cultivation of a deep sense of wonder for the beauty to be found in all things, becomes the foundation upon which the high school student learns to discover truth in the world.
SUMMERFIELD’S MISSION AND GOALS

Mission Statement

Based on a developmental understanding of the learning process and a view of the child that takes human spirituality seriously, Summerfield Waldorf School offers students a comprehensive learning environment designed to challenge and support them in strengthening their cognitive, emotional and intentional abilities. We strive to support the growth of social awareness and active tolerance, and give students the experiential background they need to meet new challenges in a creative and responsible manner.

School-wide Learning Goals

1) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have a clear sense of his or her strengths and weaknesses, gifts and challenges, and will have developed the tools to work with them.

2) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have a solid understanding of the methods of, and contemporary issues in the areas of science, mathematics, history, language and the social sciences. In addition, he or she will have attained basic proficiency in a foreign language.

3) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have explored various fields of artistic expression and gained a high level of proficiency in at least one of these.

4) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have gained a sense of contemporary social issues as well as a basic understanding of how they have come into being. Ideally, the two together have come to life enough within the student’s soul so that he or she has a sense of social responsibility and the tools to live accordingly.

5) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have had the opportunity to explore in depth those questions which lie at the foundation of human experience—life, death, friendship, spirituality, and vocation.

6) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have acquired life skills in interpersonal communication and conflict management, decision-making, parenting, time management, the art of entertainment, and the ability to play.

7) Each student who graduates from Summerfield will have gained the ability to form judgments independently. This means that they will not only have learned what to think but, more importantly, will have acquired the skills of thinking and can apply these to enhance their understanding. This thinking should be as richly textured and as individually colored as possible. Each student will have the feeling that s/he is now able to take on the task of self-education.

SUMMERFIELD HISTORY

Summerfield Waldorf School of Santa Rosa began in September of 1974. Begun as an initiative of a small group of parents who were convinced that they wanted a Waldorf education for their children, Summerfield opened its doors to eleven children. Some of those founding families are still active in the community today.

In our second year we were blessed with the arrival from England of Irene Ellis. Bringing with her a wealth of experience in Waldorf education, Irene remained with the school for five years as faculty advisor, establishing and teaching the school’s in-house faculty training.

Since June 1978, our school has been a member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America. In 1980, the school purchased a 32-acre horse farm, our current location. From the beginning there was an intention to have a working biodynamic farm as part of the school initiative. Through enthusiastic volunteer efforts, the front house was remodeled into four classrooms in which grades 5–8 were housed. In 1983, work was completed on road improvements and construction of a new entrance road and parking lot. In 1985 the
construction of a new classroom building was completed. This was brought about through the dedication, energy and volunteer construction work of the whole school community.

In December of the same year, the College of Teachers was founded with guidance from René Querido, who was then director of Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California, and Patricia Livingston, chairperson of the pedagogical section of the Anthroposophical Society in North America.

In the summer of 1987, a third building housing five classrooms and offices was completed. This building enabled us to at last unite the school on our property.

A third kindergarten and the pioneer ninth grade high school class were added in 1987. The High School graduated its first senior class in 1991. In 1993, a site plan for the remainder of the building needs of the school was drawn up and approved by the College and Board. The following year, the school entered a new phase of expansion. The high school building was completed in the fall of 1995. Construction of our long awaited assembly hall was begun in the summer of 1999, and completed in fall, 2000. A generous donation also made possible the construction of a track in 1999. The early childhood complex, consisting of a remodel as well as a new construction, was completed in the summer of 2002.

In the summer of 2003, the school purchased a six-acre parcel with a home on the south side of the Summerfield campus. The addition of this property made it possible for road improvements to be completed in 2012. As well as the new ingress/egress road to enhance student drop-off, major other recent work included structural repairs to the Farmhouse and a long-needed upgrade to the septic system, a significant milestone that allows additional building permits to be approved for future construction on campus. In the 2016-2017 school year, we installed a new fully-equipped, state-of-the-art mobile kitchen to enable a school-wide organic lunch program with Summerfield farm-sourced ingredients, bringing the farm curriculum full circle for the students – from planting to harvesting, and finally eating food right from the Biodynamic farm. We also completed Phase I of the ArtTech Building, which houses our blacksmithing, ceramics, fine arts studios, and more. Conversion of a former high school art room into a library and computer resource center with integrated tech curriculum for grades nine-twelve was completed in 2018.

**Diversity Statement**

*AWSNA Member Commitment* to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**, Approved by the Continental Delegates on June 24, 2019

Waldorf schools and institutes embrace respect for human rights and for the diversity of humankind, and we believe that valuing and supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion comprise a journey of both moral and educational importance. Through our commitment to social justice, we recognize the value of addressing the historical context and the endemic nature of racism and inequality. This commitment is supported by an anthroposophical understanding of the spiritual nature of all humans and the importance of the conscious development of human relationships, as described in principles 1 and 5 of both the AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Schools and the AWSNA Principles for Waldorf Institutes. These principles state, respectively: “The image of the human being as a spiritual being informs every aspect of the school,” and “The conscious development of human relationships fosters individual and community health.”

As cultural institutions rooted in our communities, we strive to strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion through healthy policies and practices. This commitment may look different depending on the community, location, and age of the school or institute, and may include elements such as: DEI committees and position statements; partnerships with organizations with expertise on diversity and equity; tuition models that support socio-economic diversity; admissions and employment practices that recognize and honor racial and gender diversity; curricular innovations; diverse perspectives in curriculum; activities to build bridges with broader communities; and specific education programs that suit the needs of the location, among other possibilities.
**A Member Commitment or Position Statement is an internal document establishing agreement between Association members on a particular area of focus. Members are expected to share their efforts towards this agreement in their self-studies. Peer input on these efforts comes in the form of recommendations rather than priorities, as it is not a criterion for membership.**

**Diversity is the range of human differences that can be engaged in the service of learning including, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, culture, place, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, cultural, political, religious, military, or other affiliations (adapted from Shining Mountain Waldorf School).**

**Equity** is fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people while prioritizing the identification and elimination of barriers that have prevented the full participation and equal treatment of people in marginalized groups (common definition found on many websites).

**Inclusion** is the act of co-creating environments with an equitable balance of power in which individuals and groups are represented and participatory in an authentic way (common definition found on many websites).

**DEI (Diversity-Equity-Inclusion)** is a US-centric and ever-evolving term. In the US, sometimes just the terms “equity” and “inclusion” are used, or the term “social justice” is used. In Canada, much of the language in relation to this topic for First Nations communities developed from the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action. In the spirit of committing to take action now, the members of our Association have adopted the language “DEI” knowing that unique histories within a nation may call for specific language and activities for appropriate relevance.

We, the Summerfield community past, present and future do emphatically reject the racism of our world and institutions that has so impacted our past and present and, though differently, each of us. Our history and our current events strengthen our resolve as a school to educate young people to honor and respect the humanity of all people regardless of difference and to become able to recognize our differences can unite us and make us stronger, and that every human should have equal rights and freedoms. We strive for our education to develop the capacities in young people to imagine, transform and create the communities and societies where these ideals can become real. Our hearts join in mourning with all those who have suffered and died at the hands of injustice, prejudice and racism here in our county, our country and throughout the world.

—Ignacio Garat, Jason Gross and Rachel McGarva, The Governance Council

**ENVIRONMENTAL LAND ETHIC OF THE SCHOOL**

The Summerfield community wishes to enter into a true relationship with the land it has purchased. We feel that this land is a living part of the whole earth, which should not be bought or sold as a commodity. Rather, we wish to free it from this bondage and place it under our careful stewardship, entering into a loving relationship with its needs and potentials.

Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm is committed to responsible stewardship of our environment. We appreciate and respect the interdependence of complex human and ecological systems and are committed to maintaining and improving their health, wholeness, balance and diversity while advancing sustainability on the Summerfield campus in several areas of operation: resource use and recycling, energy consumption and generation, land use, farming and landscape, education and student involvement, built environment, transportation, water, and food. In the course of our activities, we shall:

- Maintain the biodynamic practices of our farm;
- Reduce our use of natural resources;
- Support the sustainable production of the resources we must use by purchasing renewable, reusable, recyclable, and recycled materials;
- Minimize our use of toxic substances, seek safe alternatives, and ensure that unavoidable use is in full compliance with environmental regulations;
• Reduce the waste we generate and promote strategies to reuse and recycled those wastes that cannot be avoided;
• Seek locally sourced materials and goods;
• Protect, maintain, restore and experience the natural wildlife areas of our school;
• Protect the neighboring Laguna de Santa Rosa: an internationally recognized Ramsar Convention wetland;
• Reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
• Reduce the impacts of transportation to and from school by promoting activities like car-pooling and bicycling.
• Integrate knowledge of and stewardship of our environment into the curriculum at SWSF.

Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm is committed to sharing information about sustainability practices, especially those that are replicable, within our school and with other school communities; and when appropriate, to share with local, regional, national and global organizations in order to foster widespread environmental stewardship and sustainability. We are committed to learning the best practices from other schools and organizations as we work to continually improve our own sustainability efforts.

The finalized Land Trust Agreement, called the Deed of Conservation Easement, preserves farmland and wildlife areas in perpetuity upon the school property. This deed states in part, “...the combined use of the Property is dedicated to fostering a responsible land ethic by demonstrating and practicing integrated, mutually beneficial relationships with nature, education and farming using biodynamic or similar methods.... to preserve agriculture and natural beauty in the area and to serve as a model to the larger community for consciousness toward the School’s living relationship to the earth. The Summerfield School community recognizes that this land bordering Santa Rosa Creek and the Laguna nature area is a living part of the whole earth, and that it has unique potential for integrated, mutually beneficial relationships among the respective pursuits of nature, agriculture, and education.”

ACCREDITATION

Summerfield is fully accredited by the Western Association for Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). The process of accreditation in all schools is ongoing, requiring review and monitoring every few years by the accrediting teams.

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SCHOOL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

THE COLLEGE

The College of Teachers is a body of faculty and staff who study the philosophical underpinnings of Waldorf pedagogy based on the work of Rudolf Steiner. The College is charged with the oversight and teacher development of the pedagogy of the whole school. Collegial support and development is also the purview of the College. The College serves as a consultative body to the Governance Council and Board of Directors. New College members are invited by standing College members and consensus agreement.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors is responsible for the legal and financial aspects of Summerfield. Specifically, the Board focuses on long-range planning, strategic development, and fundraising. Day-to-day management of the school is mandated to Governance Council and Section Core Groups. The Board meets the third Monday of each month, and meetings are public. There is an annual Corporation meeting in May. Visit the Parent Portal for a listing of Board Members.
**GOVERNANCE COUNCIL**

The Governance Council (GC) was created as a mandated management team through the combined efforts of the College and Board. Comprised of individuals with both insight into the educational life of a Waldorf school and proven skills in business management and organizational development, the Council is responsible for overseeing, coordinating and finalizing decisions in all matters concerning the day-to-day administrative and educational life of the school. In addition, the members of the Council have been requested to take a proactive stance on all matters concerning the short-, middle- and long-term development of the school. Visit the Parent Portal for a listing of Governance Council Members.

**THREE SCHOOL SECTIONS**

The faculty and staff at Summerfield meet weekly in subgroups called “Sections”, in addition to attending monthly all-school meetings. The faculty sections are the Early Childhood Section (Kindergartens, Preschool – Rosebud, Blossoms and Sweet Pea—Roots and Shoots), the Lower School Section (grades 1-8), and the High School Section (grades 9-12).

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**

Our office personnel handle the bulk of the school’s administrative needs:

**The Main Office** is located in the middle of our Lower School wings and houses our Receptionist, Lower School Coordinator and Lower School Secretary, Admissions Director, Registrar, and Development Director and Associate, and a small staff lounge with desks, phones and computers. The main office is also where injured students receive basic first aid and where ill students may lie down until picked up by a parent.

**The High School Office** is located near the high school classrooms and houses faculty offices and a reception area staffed by our High School Secretary. It is also the meeting space for the High School Core Group and Governance Council.

**The Finance Office** is located in the portable building closest to Sophia Hall and houses our Business Manager, Finance Coordinator, HR Coordinator and Administrative Assistant.

**COMMITTEE WORK**

Both standing and ad-hoc committees play an integral role in the daily functioning of the school and offer great opportunities for parent involvement in the school. Membership on committees is varied, depending on their function, and usually consists of a variety of College, Core Group and Board members and interested parents. New members may be solicited through announcements in *The Messenger* newsletter.

**SCHOOL LIFE**

**MORNING VERSES**

*Given by Rudolf Steiner.*

Every morning, in every class in every Waldorf school around the world, the following verses are spoken:

**Grades One through Four**

The sun with loving light
Makes bright for me each day,
The soul with spirit-power
Gives strength unto my limbs.

In sunlight shining bright
I reverence, O God,
The strength of humankind
Have planted in my soul,
Which thou so graciously
That I with all my might
May love to work and learn.
From thee come light and strength,
To thee rise love and thanks.
Grades Five through Twelve

I look into the world
in which the sun is shining,
in which the stars are sparkling,
in which the stones repose,
Where living plants are growing,
Where feeling beasts are living,
and the human being, ensouled
give dwelling to the spirit.
I look into the soul
That lives within my being.
The World-Creator weaves,
in sunlight and in soul light,
in heights of worlds without,
in depths of soul within.
To Thee, Creator-Spirit,
I will now, seeking, turn
to ask that strength and blessing
for learning and for work
In me may live and grow 

 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Catherine Schlager, EC Core Group Contact

Our early childhood programs provide children, infants through kindergarteners, with a calm, joyful environment filled with warmth and reverence. Each child’s developmental journey is met with love and interest, and the overall environment nourishes the children physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Play is the true work of the child. Playthings are made from natural products, such as wood, wool, cotton and silk, and can become whatever is needed in the course of play. The simplicity of form invites imaginative and creative play.

A sense of beauty and love of nature are cultivated. Caring for the animals on the Farm also helps the children develop habits of care and service. Opportunities to do real work include cooking, baking, sewing, cleaning, woodworking, and gardening.

A predictable, rhythmic environment is central to Waldorf education, as it gives children a strong and secure foundation that fosters healthy growth and development. The yearly rhythm is marked by celebrating the seasons and festivals. Daily rhythms include story time, circle/movement time, snack and lunch time, outdoor play, indoor play, and seasonal projects. Weekly rhythms include baking, artistic activities, crafts, farm visits (weekly Farm visits enable the children to experience fully the turning of the seasons) and eurythmy. Stories and fairy tales are told by heart and may be presented as puppet shows or acted out by the children. Verses and songs with accompanying movement assist speech development and promote a rich vocabulary. Fostering the magic of childhood in the learning environment builds a foundation not only for creative and flexible thinking later in life, but also helps preserve the joy and awe inherent in a young child’s soul.

LOWER SCHOOL

Andrea Jolicoeur, Lower School Secretary

The curriculum of the elementary school is rich and diversified, offering humanities, mathematics, science and the arts. Mastery of the traditional academic disciplines is interwoven with artistic and practical activities to provide a deep and varied educational experience for every student.

Each morning begins with the Main Lesson, which lasts for two hours and is taught by the class teacher. During this uninterrupted time, the class teacher leads the students in a rhythmic component of the lesson, then presents the current academic subject which the children contribute to with questions and discussion. The teacher engages the students with a variety of approaches: scientific, literary, historical and artistic. Each student creates a record of Main Lesson work in books that are filled with compositions, observations, maps, diagrams and illustrations. These colorful Main Lesson books are carefully crafted with attention to detail and artistic presentation. They are a unique and vital part of Waldorf education.

A recess and several shorter periods follow the Main Lesson, with subjects such as Math, Language Arts, Spanish, etc. Thus, the rhythm of the day alternates between the work that requires intellectual focus and physical activities that engage the body and hands.
LOWER SCHOOL CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The following is a brief summary of the language arts, mathematics and science curriculum presented in Main Lesson, grade by grade.

First Grade: Fairy tales, folk tales and nature stories; pictorial introduction to letters; preparation for reading through writing; qualities of numbers; introduction of the four operations in arithmetic. Form drawing begins in first grade and continues through fifth grade.

Second Grade: Legends and fables; stories of saints; continued work in writing, reading and arithmetic; introduction of cursive writing.

Third Grade: Old Testament stories; composition and grammar; study of practical life (farming, housing and clothing); time, weights, measures and money in arithmetic.

Fourth Grade: Norse mythology and sagas; local geography, and map-making; California history; study of the animal kingdom; fractions and decimal fractions.

Fifth Grade: Ancient history and mythology from India, Persia, and Egypt; Greek mythology and history; American geography related to vegetation and agriculture; botany; decimals, ratio and proportion in math.

Sixth Grade: Roman and Medieval history; astronomy; geology; physics (sound, light); beginning algebra; geometry and geometric drawing; business math (interest, percentage).

Seventh Grade: The Age of Discovery; Renaissance history; American history and geography; physics (electricity and magnetism); elementary chemistry; human physiology (health and nutrition); algebra; geometry; business math (profit/loss); poetry.

Eighth Grade: Modern history; world geography; Industrial Revolution, French and American Revolutions, U.S. Constitution; physiology (human skeleton); physics; algebra; geometry; elementary chemistry; meteorology; English grammar.

HIGH SCHOOL

Amelia Miller, High School Secretary

Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. —Rudolf Steiner

The SWSF high school curriculum engages students in a comprehensive study of a variety of academic and artistic disciplines, including drama, the arts and music. The courses offered meet the University of California’s requirements for high school graduation. High standards of writing, critical thinking and independent research serve to help students acquire the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in post-secondary education at a variety of levels. The curriculum as a whole is considered to be life-preparatory, which includes social and emotional development, artistic expression, and a rigorous academic focus.

Although the four years of high school together form an integrated whole, the curriculum of each grade is tailored to address key stages in adolescent and post-adolescent development. The content of the courses offered each year focuses on giving students an increasingly in-depth understanding of the subject at hand, and providing them a context to work with the awakening questions of the emerging self.

In general, the ninth grade is considered to be an apprentice year in which students learn how to tackle the various disciplines. The focus is on skills.

The tenth grade can be compared with the early stages of a journeyman’s training; less emphasis is placed on acquiring skills, more on the application and exercise of the same.
In the eleventh grade, greater emphasis is placed on individual style and learning to do independent research, as well as beginning to explore the parameters of individual expression in the arts.

In the twelfth grade year, students become proficient at working independently. At the same time, they experience the value of learning from each other and from their wider communities. One major part of the twelfth grade year is the student’s thesis which is presented to the public.

In keeping with the developmental focus of the curriculum, the courses each year revolve around a given theme. The question of polarities gives the focus for the ninth grade. In the tenth grade, students are challenged to understand how things come about and a greater emphasis is placed on synthesis. This builds the basis for the eleventh grade’s exploration of style and transformation. In the twelfth grade, students deal with questions of evolution and integration, learning to know themselves as human beings who are responsible for the world in which they live and work.

**The Summerfield Farm**

*Dana Revallo, Farmer*

The Farm at Summerfield Waldorf School is an integral part of our community and school. It is farmed using the principles set forth by Rudolf Steiner in his Agriculture Course. In the early years of the 20th century, a group of farmers and health practitioners observed a decline in food quality and animal health and reproductive capacity, and they approached Steiner for advice. He gave insights that led to the creation of the system of Biodynamic agriculture. It is the oldest form of organic agriculture. The various components of the farm are viewed as part of a living organism. Behind the Biodynamic movement lies the desire to reinvigorate the earth. Today Biodynamics is one of the fastest growing farming practices in Sonoma County.

**Biodynamic Apprentice Program**

The Biodynamic Apprentice Program is a ten-month apprenticeship in Biodynamic farming methods, carpentry, machinery use, animal husbandry, and academic study in Biodynamic practices. The Biodynamic Apprentice Program meets the increasing demand for training in Biodynamic farming and increases education and awareness of the benefits of this type of farming. The apprentice works alongside the Farmer and lives on the Summerfield Farm from March 1 - December 31.

**Biodynamic Certification**

Summerfield’s Farm is Biodynamically-certified through Demeter, an international Biodynamic organization that supports and oversees these practices worldwide. Biodynamic certification is a type of accreditation for the Farm.

**Vegetable Sales**

Produce from the Farm, grown in mutual cooperation with the farmer, apprentices, the children, and volunteers, is harvested fresh and offered for sale to our parent body at a the Farm Stand. Our produce is also used in our hot lunch program and for special events.

**After-School Care (ASC) Program (C-19)**

Students who have music lessons and only need supervision for a short period of time must also check in.

The program offers an afternoon of outside play, craft activities, rest, story time and a snack for children from first through eighth grade. Information about fees for the after-school program is available in the office. Fees are subject to change at any time throughout the school year.
**Circus Program (*C-19)**

Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm is one of the few Waldorf schools in North America with a full circus arts program, *Circus Waldissima*. We are also fortunate enough to have our very own European big-top circus tent. The program is led by experienced Waldorf and circus arts instructors.

Summerfield students in grades three through eight participate in circus arts classes as part of the physical education program during part of the school year. Students learn circus skills including juggling, clowning, tumbling, trapeze, aerial and more. They also prepare for and perform all the skills they have learned in a Circus Show in the spring.

Additionally, *Circus Waldissima* offers after-school Circus Club classes available to students in third grade and up. Club classes are open to non-Summerfield students as well. Classes include Circus Skills, Aerial, Unicycle, Juggling, Tumbling and more. Circus Waldissima has an advanced performance group that puts together their own show every spring. There are two sessions of Circus Club during the school year: Fall Session runs from September through December and Spring Session runs from January through March, ending with the spring performance.

**Parent Enrichment (*C-19)**

Choosing a Waldorf education for our children is a journey we travel together. In an effort to support that choice and enrich our experience, Summerfield recognizes the importance for parents to learn and grow as well.

The Parent Enrichment Group at the school consists of a number of interested volunteer parents who work with a faculty member to plan and help present lectures and workshops to help nourish the parent body intellectually, practically and spiritually—their goal is to strengthen the community as well as build parental knowledge of Waldorf education and child/human development.

The group works with the Governance Council to bring relevant topics from local, regional and national speakers and from our own esteemed teachers. And they welcome and need parent suggestions—please feel free to reach out to any of them individually with your ideas. You can email the group at parented@summerfieldwaldorf.org.

**Ombuds Circle**

Upon request, the Ombuds Circle will work with individuals and groups within the school community who are in need of dialogue or support in structuring such processes, with the goal of helping people develop new ways to solve problems themselves. They can be reached at ombuds@summerfieldwaldorf.org.

The Ombuds Circle consists of trained faculty members and parents who work together to ensure that the social fabric of the Summerfield community is strengthened through healthy communication. Members are chosen by a process whereby faculty recommend parents, and parents recommend faculty to participate. All members went through extensive listening and facilitation training, and have long experience with listening and a strong dedication to Summerfield.

The group’s work will focus on cultivating and nurturing communication within the school community. They provide an impartial, yet caring listening space for individuals within the community who feel they are not being heard. They may also initiate conversations that can serve to prevent differences from evolving into conflicts. With the Governance Council, they may facilitate and witness in conflict situations between employees, employees and parents and between parents.

**Summer Camps (*C-19)**

Summerfield usually offers a range of camps during the summer. Farm Camp is a summer day camp for groups of children ages 4-5 years and 6-10 years, beginning in mid-June and runs for six weeks. A one-week Camp,
with varying themes, including Earth Ecology, Fiber Arts and Natural Arts, etc., is also offered to students 10-14 years of age. Children have a “hands-on” experience of a working farm through animal care, gardening, harvesting vegetables, cooking, baking, crafts, stories, games, music and signing. Online registration opens in mid-February. Early registration is recommended, as spaces fill up quickly. Information about Farm Camp is available on the Summerfield website.

Summer Circus Camp is usually offered in June for three weeks to children ages 6 to 8, and a 2-week long camp is offered for children ages 9 to 14. An afternoon advanced camp is also offered for previous circus students. Children learn a wide range of circus skills that are showcased at the end of each week of camp in a performance. Summer Circus Camp also hosts a full size Flying Trapeze camp for children ages 8 and up. Online registration opens in mid-February. Information about Circus Camp is also available on Summerfield’s website.

**Festival Life at Summerfield (**C-19**)**

Like other Waldorf schools, Summerfield does not seek to teach a particular religious view. Students from a wide range of religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are welcomed at Summerfield, and differences are respected.

Seasonal festivals are observed in the classroom and at school assemblies. The curriculum itself, through the Old Testament studies, Norse, Indian, Egyptian, African, Roman and Greek mythologies, as well as comparative religion lessons in the high school, provides many opportunities to share other religious and cultural traditions in the classroom.

We acknowledge and share the religious customs and celebrations enjoyed by our families. If you are interested in celebrating special holidays in your child’s classroom, we encourage you to give suggestions to your child’s teacher. Parent participation helps to make these festivals meaningful and special. Parents are also welcome to keep their children home in observance of their own religious holidays.

We strive to bring a universal nature to our festival celebrations through their connection with the rhythms of the earth and the cosmos. We feel that the ceremonies and rituals associated with them help reveal the deeper significance in many everyday occurrences. The living rhythms of the year, though taken up in each class in different ways, help provide a common foundation for the children.

Children love preparing for festivals by decorating the room, baking, and singing. Nature stories, songs, poetry, and special tales help bring deeper significance to the children.

**Festival & Event Coordination & Staffing (**C-19**)**

Seasonal festivals renew our awareness of the rhythms of the year and foster the children’s relationship to the seasons, the world, our community and other cultures, as well as developing in them a sense of gratitude.

Festivals are coordinated by faculty and staff, with parent support from the classes designated below, and by parents who have indicated their interest on the Parent Participation form. Your Class Representative is a source of information regarding your class’ participation needs. The festivals we celebrate at Summerfield include:

**Michaelmas (workday, pageant & community picnic)**

**Grades Seven and Eight support**

Archangel Michael is mentioned in the Bible, Apocrypha and Koran. He appears as a spiritual figure and protector of humankind, inspiring strength, will, and courage throughout history. The motif of a conqueror of the dragon can be seen in much Chinese art, in Apollo and the serpent, in Krishna slaying demons, and in the familiar story of Saint George and the dragon.
Michael overcoming the dragon with his sword of light is an image that calls us all to be brave, to take command of the ‘dragon’ and transform it. Each of us has our own inner dragon of fear, greed, thoughtlessness or apathy. Michael’s qualities of courage, compassion, and steadfastness can be an inspiration to us all. The festival includes a workday in which students from 2nd through 12th grade work side by side on projects around the campus and farm. The workday is followed by a pageant (play) and a community picnic supper on the grassy fields behind the Lower School buildings.

**Sprites Night**

*Grades Three and Four support*

A pumpkin-lit path, enchanted scenes from fairy tales and themes from the curriculum, simple natural treats, a bonfire, live music, and a homemade meal make up this magical evening.

**The Advent Gardens**

*Class Advent Walks by the First, Second and Third Grade parents and teachers; Community Advent Spiral by school-wide parent volunteers*

Advent is a time of anticipation, preparation, and waiting. This event for the young child from K through 2nd or 3rd grade is a walk along a spiral of greenery where the child lights his/her own candle and then finds a spot on the spiral to place the candle beside others. Gradually, a spiral of light illuminates the darkened room. With this warm light and gentle harp music, a mood of reverence envelopes the children at this special time of year. Kindergarten Advent Garden will take place in the classroom during a school day. First through third graders will walk the Advent Spiral in the Eurythmy Barn during an evening event.

**Winter Faire**

*The Kindergartens, Grades Five and Six support*

This holiday event includes hands-on craft activities such as gingerbread cookie decorating, beeswax candle dipping, and potpourri making; live music; a puppet show; and a delicious meal with homemade goodies. Local vendors sell a variety of lovely quality gifts: dolls, silks, candles, calendars, crafts materials, classic books, and handmade items.

**Epiphany Bonfire**

*Parent volunteers (no specific grade)*

On the evening of January 6th (weather and burn-day policies permitting), community members are invited to bring their Christmas trees and greenery to campus, to watch them burn in a glorious bonfire. Songs, hot cider and sometimes baked potatoes and cake are shared.

**May Day/Faire**

*Early Childhood*

The Preschool and Kindergarten teachers host May Day celebrations in their play yards each year, complete with festive maypoles and flower crowns for each child.

*Lower School: Grades 1 and 2 support*

May Faire is an event carried by both teachers and parents as a celebration of spring and the beauty it brings to our campus and our lives, in moving through the cycle of the seasons. The event includes maypole dancing, flower garland making, a procession with a May Queen and her court, a meal, strawberry shortcake and games. It takes place on a regular school day.

**Eighth Grade Commencement Ceremony and High School Graduation**

*Grades 6 and 7 support 8th Grade; Grades 9, 10 and 11 support 12th Grade*
Commencement is coordinated by the lower school secretary and 12th Grade graduation by the Class advisors with support by the classes assigned.

**Family & School in Partnership**

Any questions not covered in this Handbook may be directed to your class teacher or class advisor (in the High School). If further assistance is needed, please follow the Channel of Communication listed below:

**Parent-Teacher Partnership**

As Waldorf parents and teachers, we are joining together in a partnership for the care and development of children. As partners, we need to be in close touch. You are the “eyes and ears” at home, just as the teachers are the “eyes and ears” at school. We encourage you to share your insights, questions, and goals regarding your child’s development with us. Regular parent meetings, parent-teacher conferences and visits with the teacher help maintain the communication so vital to our work together. In Early Childhood and the Lower School, parent/teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year. These conferences are held to discuss the development and well-being of your child. The teacher will present a progress report and provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and questions. In the Lower School, the End-of-Year Report is a detailed narrative prepared by your child’s class teacher describing your child's academic and social progress over the course of the year. This report is the official transcript of your child’s elementary Waldorf education. In the High School, progress reports and report cards go home at the end of each trimester. Additionally, special conferences are held with 9th grade parents in the fall, and with 11th graders and their parents in the spring.

One of our shared goals as parent and teachers is to ensure that children are well prepared to receive the full benefits of a Waldorf education. Home life is as essential to the growth of the children as the quality of education they receive at school. We request your cooperation in the following areas.

**Channel of Communication**

**Parent-Teacher Avenues of Communication**

If you have a question or concern about your child’s classroom experience, speak directly to your child’s class teacher or advisor. Your child’s teacher or advisor will communicate his or her preferences for parent-teacher conversations:

**Telephone**

Teachers’ preferences vary regarding the most convenient times for school-related telephone conversations. Each staff member has a voice mailbox at school, unless their voicemail or the *Directory* specifically states otherwise. Please save telephone calls to a teacher’s home at other-than-requested times for bonafide emergencies. Any personal concerns that require a lengthy discussion should be addressed in a pre-arranged conference.

**E-Mail Protocol**

We utilize this protocol to hold the well-being of the students and their privacy, the clarity of communication between the school and parents, and the integrity of the communication.
• No bulk or group mailings should be sent from individual parents through the mail or e-mail using Directory lists. We ask that individual e-mail use be limited to school communication and not be a forum for other issues. We ask that you refrain from sending out group e-mail with individual concerns to parents in any class.

• ECE and Lower School: All communication should go through the Class or Lead Teacher. Any e-mail directed to the entire school must be approved in advance by the Governance Council.

• High School: All communications to class members and their parents should be managed by the High School Secretary, who is the only one, besides Class Advisors, authorized to send out bulk class e-mails. If you have appropriate high school class information you would like sent out via e-mail, please forward it to the High School Secretary at amelia@summerfieldwaldorf.org at least one week prior to the desired date of sending, as it may need prior approval.

• Teachers who are open to receiving e-mail communication list their email addresses in the Directory.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held in each Section throughout the year to discuss a student’s work and progress. At any time of year, however, teachers are happy to answer a parent’s request for a conference.

Parent Evenings

Every teacher or advisor schedules a Parent Evening at least once per term—fall, winter and spring. Together, parents and teachers discuss student work, curriculum, child development, class and school events, field trips, and other pertinent topics.

The relationship between teacher and child develops through shared experiences that embody trust, wisdom, beauty and love. From the handshake at the door in the morning to the verse at the close of day, a mood of mutual trust is built through which education takes place. Any observer also becomes a member of the class!

Our guidelines are:

Home Visits (*C-19)

Teachers realize the value of seeing the child in his or her home environment and so may arrange home visits as often as busy lives and circumstances permit. Please feel free to invite your class teacher or advisor into your home for a visit or a meal together.

Life Rhythms

Rhythm is a fundamental principle of life. We experience the rhythm of the year in the cycle of the seasons, the rhythm of the month in the cycle of the moon, and the rhythm of the day in the passage of the sun across the sky. Our bodies are also attuned to the rhythms of our breath and our heartbeat. Young children are very sensitive to the inner and outer rhythm of life. Establishing a sense of continuity and order in their daily lives gives them a deep sense of security and wellbeing. In order for children to come to school rested and refreshed, we encourage you to maintain a calm, orderly rhythm for going to bed in the evening and rising in the morning. Many parents find a regular nightly routine of story, song, or quiet conversation eases the child’s transition into sleep.

Media Policy

Modern science is validating what Waldorf teachers have known for a long time: the consumption of media by infants, children and young people inhibits their healthy development.

In today’s world, educational and technological tools are in the same apparatus as social media access and entertainment. It is easy and convenient for adults and children to be consumers of media, and we acknowledge there are positive uses of electronic devices and social media for adults. As Waldorf parents and
teachers we must embrace the world of technology, and many of us choose to use electronic media ourselves. However, early media consumption by children hinders the educational foundation of inner picture building and transformation, and the strengthening of the will that are essential to Waldorf education. It is therefore critical that parents make careful and conscious decisions about when and how media is introduced to their children.

As Waldorf educators, Summerfield teachers are actively guiding the students to build inner imaginations based on true stories and real world sense experiences. These are the foundation of our children’s education; they are moral, beautiful and true. Students take these images into their sleep and come back the next day ready to build the concepts of their education from these pictures, which they have transformed and made their own. Media and virtual images take away from or damage these pictures. The media images consumed by children are not necessarily good, beautiful or true. These images are not chosen by a loving parent or teacher for the educational, moral and spiritual development of the child or young person consuming them.

As a school, we place an emphasis on direct human interaction and authentic experience. Studies show that a direct experience, as opposed to a virtual one, has a measurable positive impact on brain development throughout childhood and adolescence. Further issues associated with media that are adversely impacting child development are well documented, including Continuous Partial Attention, early consumerism, and the premature sexualization of children.

In this light, the faculty of Summerfield have formulated a media guideline that reflects the culture of our school community.

**Media Guideline for Parents**

The Summerfield community works hard to foster authentic human experiences each day. We feel strongly that a screen and electronic media-free childhood is a significant factor in creating a nourishing environment at school and at home. We maintain and strengthen this by engaging in conversation within our class communities, to gain perspective on how media exposure relates to each age and stage of development. From this understanding, we forge our agreements each year to renew our commitment to the healthiest possible childhood.

**Families joining our community should understand that we hold an ideal and expect that all of our students are screen and electronic media-free until at least 6th grade, and further, that it is beneficial to keep them screen and electronic media-free well beyond this age.** In grade 6 and up, teachers and class communities will discuss, craft and update agreements to shape the measured introduction of media when developmentally appropriate.

**Cell Phone-Free Campus**

It is requested that kindergarten through eighth grade students avoid bringing cell phones to school. If there is a pressing need for your child to have a cell phone, the phone must be given or handed over to the class teacher at the beginning of the day and retrieved when school is let out. Cell phone use (including text messaging, computers, iPods, pagers, video games, etc.) on campus is not allowed. If students are seen using any of these on campus, the electronic device will be confiscated and may be picked up in the office by a parent at the end of the school day. The entire campus, including the farm, is included in this restriction. In the parking lot, calls only regarding pick-up may be made, but other uses of electronic devices are not permitted. Urgent calls during the school day may be made from the office phones during the hours of 8am-3:30pm.

We request that adults, as well, turn cell phones off when visiting Summerfield’s campus. Being totally present on campus and relating to the children in a human way is the challenge to which we all need to attend. Although we realize that modern life is quite busy and often necessitates multi-tasking, we respectfully ask that, at the time of dropping off and picking up children, parents refrain from using all electronic devices while driving and on campus.
**High School**

High school students are allowed to keep their cell phones turned off during the day. However they may be used to make essential cell phone calls at lunch and after school in specifically designated areas. Cell use during class is strictly prohibited. Collecting cell phones at the beginning of each class is at the discretion of each teacher.

**Lower School: Personal Device Check In Policy**

Students in grades one through eight are not permitted to bring any personal electronic devices to school, such as phones, tablets, music players or e-readers. In the case that it is necessary for a student to transport a phone through school, parents may submit a permission request form, available in the Office. Any unpermitted devices will be collected and held in the Office until the students’ parents can pick it up.

- Phones will be checked in to the Office directly upon arrival to Campus
- Phone will not be accessible to the student throughout the day
- Phone may be checked out after dismissal time
- Phone is to remain powered off and put away while while being transported to/from the Office

As teachers, parents and visitors, we are all striving to be models for the younger generation, so feel free to ask others to put away their cell phones while visiting Summerfield’s campus to support this goal. Please strive to support our policies around electronic media to enhance your child’s development and learning experience here at Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm.

**Sunday Evenings**

Every Monday morning, the lesson given by the teacher lays the foundation for the week’s work. The old adage – early to bed and early to rise makes one healthy, wealthy and wise – holds true here! Please plan your weekends to allow for some “settling-in” time on Sunday evenings.

**Reports and Grades**

Teachers and parents work together in conferences and Parent Evenings to be aware of the children’s learning needs and to generate an understanding of child development in relation to the Lower School curriculum. This work together is our goal, and we do not give grades at this level; rather, the class and special subject teachers prepare a end of the year written report for parents that are included in a child’s permanent school record. Grades 7 and 8 also get a mid-year written report, usually available in January.

In the High School, students are graded in all classes. Parents are provided a report card at the end of each trimester and a cumulative transcript at year-end. Summerfield Waldorf High School includes a full college-preparatory curriculum with National Scholarship Testing opportunities and is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). All high school course descriptions meet the UC requirements. Student conduct is outlined in the High School Handbook, and students and parents sign an agreement to help support the learning environment.

**Lower School Dress Guidelines**

As a faculty, we have developed shared values regarding the importance of clothing in creating a thriving learning environment. The following guidelines are based on the need for clothing to be simple, functional, safe, and warm, meeting the body’s needs and minimizing the distracting influences of dress as a social statement. This is particularly important for children in grades one through six. It is our request that students come dressed to play! To run, jump, skip, race, dig, climb and be actively engaged in movement as children’s exploration of the world is an essential component of each day’s work. A sturdy pair of comfortable play shoes (not necessarily athletic) is essential year-round for every child. We recognize how difficult shopping for simple, comfortable children’s clothes can be. Thank you for your efforts to preserve childhood!
Specific Guidelines, Grades One through Six

Dress in layers for our variable climate. In grades one through four rain gear, extra socks, boots, jackets and hats need to be available in order for the students to enjoy outdoor play and return to the learning environment dry and ready to work.

- Minimize clothing that includes advertising, logos, pictures and writing.
- No camouflage-patterned clothing.
- No clothing that is ripped or torn, excessively baggy, tight or revealing.
- Clothing may not reveal undergarments.
- Shorts must extend at least to the mid-thigh. Skirts and dresses must extend at least to above the knee.
- Sturdy shoes with backs and without high heels need to be worn throughout the eight grades to ensure safety when participating in farming and movement activities both indoors and out. Shoes must be worn outside at all times, except with the teacher’s permission.
- No tattoos (even temporary) and no extreme hairdos, dyed hair, gel or hair spray.
- Hair should be well secured off the face.
- No make-up, nail polish, perfume, dangling earrings or jewelry.

Additional Guidelines for Students in Grades Seven and Eight

As students enter adolescence in grades seven and eight, dress guidelines are relaxed to allow the students to take more responsibility for their appearance, therefore they may wear the following:

- Hair spray and gel
- Nail polish
- Earrings that dangle below the ear
- Writing, logos and pictures on shirts (minimized and in good taste)
- Subtle, appropriate make-up

Not Allowed in any Grade

The following are not allowed in any grade:

- Spaghetti straps or halter tops
- Necklines must not be lower than the armpits
- Extreme hairdos or dyed hair
- Exposed midriffs
- Visible undergarments
- Flip flops
- Cell phones, iPods or other electronics

High School Dress Guidelines

Appropriate student dress is an integral factor in creating a healthy environment. Just as in any office or work environment, appearance has a definite influence on productivity and the social atmosphere. The High School Student Handbook provides further discussion regarding dress-related issues. Please note the following specific restrictions:

- No sunglasses in the classroom
- Shirts and footwear must be worn at all times
CONCERT AND FESTIVAL ATTIRE

Concerts and festivals are held throughout the year to celebrate special occasions and the seasons. Students are required to wear appropriately festive attire. Concert attire of black and white may be requested by the music teacher; white or pastel-colored clothing is the correct May Faire attire.

STUDENT CONDUCT

Clear boundaries and expectations regarding conduct are necessary in any community of learning. At Summerfield, the primary expectation is that students show respect for self and others, and for the classroom learning environment. In addition, the following guidelines apply:

- Behavior that violates the person or possessions of another is unacceptable.
- Students are expected to use respectful and kind language to all faculty, staff and students.
- Foul, derogatory, or rude language will not be tolerated.
- Gum chewing is not allowed.
- All school buildings, equipment and grounds, including lawns, trees and flowerbeds, are to be treated with respect.
- Teachers will give their students clear outdoor boundaries agreed upon among the faculty. Students are expected to stay within these boundaries at all times. High school boundaries and off-campus policies are detailed in the High School Student Handbook.
- Lower school students may not bring personal items to school, such as skateboards, skates, hardballs, toys or trading cards, electronic equipment such as iPods, games, beeping watches, cell phones or calculators.
- Weapons, drugs, alcohol or tobacco products are not tolerated anywhere on the school campus.

For a full description of high school culture and agreements, please see the High School Handbook.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

(See each Section handbook for further details.)

In general, each teacher is responsible for classroom management and discipline. For minor infractions, the teacher will decide what action shall be taken.

Serious misbehavior or repeated minor infractions will be overseen by the High School Core Group and discussed with colleagues during faculty meetings. The teacher will then notify parents regarding this behavior, as well as the consequences, both verbally and in writing. He or she will make a written record of the incident and of subsequent conversations and meetings. Either teacher or parent may request a parent conference in regards to this. At this conference, more than one faculty member may be present.

If, following consultation and work among the teachers, faculty and parents, a child’s behavior continues to show no improvement, suspension or expulsion may be considered. Teacher and parents will meet before any final decision is made. In extraordinary circumstances, primarily involving extreme violence, immediate suspension or expulsion may be appropriate.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Summerfield is committed to providing an alcohol-, drug- and tobacco-free learning environment for its students. The un-prescribed use of controlled substances as well as alcohol and tobacco (i.e., cigarettes, vaping apparatus, rolling papers, lighters and related paraphernalia) is not allowed. This applies both to on- and off-campus school-sponsored activities. Any transgression of this policy will result in disciplinary action and may be grounds for expulsion.
Consequences for use of controlled substances are looked at individually under the high school agreement, and the process is outlined in the High School Handbook.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

**Photography on Campus**

Please refrain from shooting photos at school or school events. An official photographer will be designated for major events so that parents may truly be present and electronic devices do not become a distraction.

**Recording of School Events**

Performances by students are significant events for them. To help protect the quality of the experience, we ask that you speak with your child’s teacher in advance about recording an event. It may be possible to arrange for just one person from a class to take pictures or record and then make copies for others.

Performances, lectures, workshops, presentations, etc. by adults are to be considered differently according to the presenter. Some presenters may welcome recording, while others may find that it interferes with their work. Please inquire before making such a recording.

**Toys and Pets**

Students should leave their personal toys and animals at home, except by teacher approval. With the exception of those assisting the handicapped, dogs are not allowed on campus at any time, even on a leash.

**Birthday Invitations**

If your child wishes to invite all of the children in his or her class to a party, you are welcome to distribute invitations at school. Invitations for a specific group should be distributed outside of the school setting.

**Campus**

We strive to be a cell phone free campus. Smoking is not allowed anywhere on campus. Dogs are not allowed on campus without prior approval.

**The Memorial Garden**

The Memorial Garden was created by parents in honor of loved ones who were part of the school community and are no longer with us. Many traditions recognize the view that those who have crossed the threshold are still with us. We can use our loving, life-filled thoughts to nourish them, and they, in turn, can be of very real help to us on earth. When a community member has died, a candle is lit in the office for three days, to remind the community to keep the family in our loving thoughts.

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**PRACTICAL & DAILY MATTERS**

The Governance Council is mandated to oversee many of the policies in this section of the Handbook. If you are not able to resolve an issue or communicate a point by following the Channel of Communication or the Quick Reference Guide, please feel free to make an appointment to meet with the Governance Council. The appointment process can start with the school Receptionist.

**MAIN SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS (**C-19**)**

The school’s Main Office is open from 8am to 3:30pm during the week when school is in session. During summer and other vacation periods, office hours are 9am to 1pm, or as posted. The High School office is generally open on weekdays, 8am to 3:15pm.
Requests for Early Dismissal

Please inform your student's class teacher and the main office if your student will be absent or will be leaving school early. If leaving campus and/or arriving back during normal school hours, you are required to sign your student out, and back in, in the Main Office. Once signed-out, a staff member will collect and escort your student from class to you in the office.

High School families may refer to the *High School Handbook* for early dismissal procedures.

**IN-SERVICE/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS**

While the faculty and staff have numerous in-service days in the summer, there are also a few days during the school year when in-service days are scheduled. There are no classes on these days, and childcare is available for a fee. Please note that although the staff is on campus, they will be unavailable. Check your calendar for the dates of the in-service days for this school year.

**PUNCTUALITY**

One of the greatest gifts we can give one another is the practice of punctuality. It is a gesture of deep respect for others and a virtue that will hold children in good stead throughout their lives. When we are habitually late, we create a sense of lack of appreciation for the others who are ready to begin on time. Beginnings in life are significant. An agreement to begin on time, when kept, strengthens discipline inside the individual and creates a community of mutual support and commitment. Parents, we appreciate your efforts to get your children here on time to begin the day together. Those first ten minutes at the beginning of each day set a mood and tone of inclusion and mutual commitment to the day ahead that can’t be made up later.

**ABSENCE POLICY (*C-19)**

**School Activities, Illness, Vacations, Medical Appointments**

Students are expected to present themselves promptly for all lessons throughout the day. Attendance is required at all festivals and assemblies, whether scheduled during the day or on the weekends. If specific circumstances make a lengthy absence necessary, early consultation with the class teacher or high school advisor is essential. Parents are asked to schedule family holidays and vacations during school holiday times only; for any exceptions, please notify the class teacher at least 14 days in advance. Please try to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours.

Excessive absences, even if excused, can become highly problematic and may be grounds for dismissal. Total unexcused absences of more than five days in a month and more than a total of 25 in a year are unacceptable and will require a parent-teacher conference within a week.

**When Your Child is Absent**

On days your children is absent, please call the Main Office for ECE and LS students, and call or email the high school office within the first hour of the day.

**When Your Child is Tardy**

Students in grades one through six are expected to be on campus and ready to enter their classrooms by 8:30 a.m. Teachers will close their classroom door after shaking the hand of the last child in line. Seventh and eighth grade students need to arrive early enough to be in their respective classroom, the Barn or Sophia Hall by 8:00 a.m. Students who arrive late need to get a late slip from the office after the class has completed the opening exercises and then will be admitted to class.
**Accumulated Tardiness**

Parents whose children are late to school three times in a month will receive a letter from the Lower School Core Group. If the child is late the fourth time, parents will be contacted by the LSCG and/or the class teacher.

**Exemption from Physical Activity**

(For Grades Seven through 12)

In order to be excused from participating in games, spatial dynamics or eurythmy due to physical injury, students need to present the teacher with a written note signed by their parent. Any excuse of more than one week in length requires a doctor’s note.

**Class Field Trips (*C-19)**

Signed parental permission for off-campus field trips is required. If you agreed to the Permission to Transport Students section of online enrollment, then you have given your permission. You will also be asked to agree to the appropriate activity release forms. The Class Representative works with the Receptionist/Secretary to make sure all appropriate paperwork is complete prior to the trip.

The cost, if any, of field trips varies by activity. Prior to departure, a parent who drives on a field trip must fill out a driver form and provide the school office with copies of his or her driver’s license and automobile insurance policy declaration in order for the school’s umbrella liability policy to provide coverage. All drivers must have medical coverage limits of $5,000 per person, property damage minimums of $50,000, and bodily injury limits of $100,000 per person and $300,000 per incident. A Volunteer Application form must also be completed.

**Parking at Summerfield**

Our main parking lot is our primary parking location—the County expects the school to have everyone park inside the campus. This means absolutely no parking on Willowside Rd., and dropping-off or picking-up on Willowside. Although we highly encourage early and orderly drop-off in the morning using our two drop-off areas, we recognize the need for the younger children to be walked to their classrooms. Therefore, it is important that we utilize the parking lot as efficiently and safely as possible at all times. Once all of the parking spots are taken, it has become the practice to double-park cars on the right (field) side of the parking lot. Obviously, this requires driver patience and goodwill. During the dry months, we have the ability to park some staff and faculty cars near the basketball court, however, double-parking, unfortunately, can be the norm for a good portion of the year. Past the parking lot is a fire lane which goes by the Farm and the Eurythmy Barn and runs through the middle of the campus, then by the track and out the service entrance—no one is to ever park in this fire lane.

**Dropping Off and Picking Up**

There are now two separate drop-off and pick-up locations on campus: the lower circle and upper driveway. We encourage all families of 3rd through 12th graders to use the upper driveway for drop-off and pick-up to help ease congestion and request that it also become a habit to use this upper driveway for pick-up for families of students in grades 6 through 8. If your family also has a younger sibling, then he/she may be picked up from the lower circle.

The following Guidelines provide further details about what is expected of drivers on campus.

**Cars**

- NEVER park on Willowside Road.
- ALWAYS drive slowly and carefully and obey the school speed limit of 5 MPH.
- NO STOPPING in flow of traffic to talk or drop-off or pick-up students.
• DO NOT BLOCK OR PARK IN: 1) the entrance to the lower gravel lot, 2) the emergency entrance/exit at the upper drop-off area (this area is clearly marked with DO NOT PARK), 3) the handicapped zones unless you have a DMV issued placard or license plate, 4) the areas marked with red posts or red striped pavement (this marking means that it is a fire or driving lane and must remain unobstructed), 5) in planted areas, planters, or off the paved and gravel areas.

• LOADING ZONES are clearly marked with yellow and are meant for loading and unloading. DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAR UNATTENDED IN THE YELLOW ZONE.

• DOUBLE PARKING IS ALLOWED IN THE GRAVEL LOT ONLY. Fill all available parking spaces in the circular and gravel lot before double-parking in the gravel lot. Please do so as close as possible to the parked cars on the north side of the lot. Remember to leave your keys in the car if you double-park so the driver you've blocked can move your car if necessary.

• DO NOT TRIPLE-PARK: this makes car flow impossible and obstructs access for emergency vehicles.

• THE UPPER DROP-OFF/PICK-UP AREA is for students in 4th-8th grades. You must stay with your vehicle. This is a drop off/pick up zone only – NO PARKING.

• No stopping/parking on the left side and no double parking on the right side of the exit driveway in the upper drop-off/pick-up area.

• Never use the fire lane that goes through the middle of the lower school during school hours without prior permission.

If a driver fails to follow these guidelines, they may be given a written warning.

Best Practices

• When you know it is going to be a busy day at school, such as the first day of school, please plan ahead and expect to spend more time on your ingress and regress.

• Please try to have extended conversations somewhere other than the parking lot when it is crowded.

• Please consider not walking up the path to school every day with your children who are 3rd grade and above – perhaps only once or twice a week. Consider even getting your 2nd graders out of the car (and parking lot) and onto the pathway leading up to the classroom, then saying goodbye and allowing them to walk the rest of the way on their own. There will be an adult staff member outside on yard duty every morning from 8:15 to 8:30am, prepared to watch out for and supervise unaccompanied children.

• Please come early in the morning to drop off your child so as to miss the peak congestion time. Coming early to pick up is also less stressful.

• Should you wish to CARPOOL, use the Directory in the Parent Portal and click on Nearby Families for a list of families living near you.

Illness, Health and Safety

Medication at School

You will need to make a copy of your physician’s instructions regarding the dispensation of medication as well as give your own written request that we participate in the administration of any medication to your child. All medication must be brought to school in its original container and labeled with the child’s name.

Every year, parents must complete the online (re)enrollment, which includes agreements that gives the school legal permission to give your child certain medication (specified in online (re)enrollment) remedies in case of injury or illness. It is the parent’s responsibility to keep the school up-to-date with current medical information, including insurance info and/or health issue/medications.
**Head Lice Information and School Policy**

Our school has a no-nit policy, which requires that children remain at home until all nits (lice eggs) are removed. If lice or nits are discovered at school, the parents will be called to pick up and treat the student immediately. This policy must be enforced, as it is virtually impossible for us to distinguish treated, dead nits from live nits. The number of cases and degree of infestation in the past has made this strict policy necessary.

**Communicable Diseases at School**

Guidelines pertaining to the outbreak of communicable disease as provided by the State Department of Health are strictly followed at SWSF. Children with any communicable diseases, including but not limited to the following, may be asked to present permission slips from a doctor or a registered health professional before returning to school: chicken pox, pink eye, diphtheria, pin worm, German measles, hepatitis, meningitis, measles, mumps, head or body lice, whooping cough, polio, ringworm, scabies, streptococcal infections (strep throat), tuberculosis, impetigo, staph infection of the skin, and giardiasis.

The Main Office is responsible for calling the Dept. of Health at the first notice of any symptoms of a communicable disease, and as such, must be notified by the faculty member as soon as they notice or are told of a case in his or her class. The following information was provided by the Dept. of Health:

**Definition of Outbreak:** Two or more confirmed cases (including at least one laboratory confirmed case) clustered in time (e.g., occurring within 42 days of each other) and space (e.g. in one classroom) in a school where transmission is suspected to have occurred in that setting. The outbreak case definition, as reported by a health professional, may be used to count cases during an outbreak if at least one case has been confirmed.

**Definition of Close Contacts and Contacts at High Risk for Severe Illness:** Close contacts include those who have had: direct contact from a symptomatic case; face-to-face contact, regardless of duration, with a case who is symptomatic, or shared a confined space in close proximity for a prolonged period of time, such as about 1 hour, with a symptomatic case.

**Identification and Notification of Contacts:** Close contacts of highly suspected and confirmed cases should be identified and notified of their exposure. If additional infectious cases are identified, they should be referred for treatment.

**Exclusion of Cases and Cases/Contacts who do not take Antimicrobial Treatment:** Symptomatic persons should be excluded from school for the first 5 days of a full course of antimicrobial treatment. Symptomatic persons who do not take antimicrobial treatment should be excluded from school for 21 days from the onset of cough. Asymptomatic close contacts who elect not to take antibiotics, or persons who are not up-to-date with their immunizations will be considered for exclusion from school for 21 days after their last exposure.

**Note regarding exclusion:** In the past, the Sonoma County Dept. of Health Services has recommended that all un-immunized students who have been in close contact with a confirmed case should be excluded from attending school. SWSF was asked to make a list of all un-immunized students, as per the information on their California State Immunization card, and provide this list to the County Dept. of Health Services. (Refer to the Dept. of Health Services for the determination of days.)

**COVID-19 Protocols**

For the latest schools guidelines regarding COVID-19, visit the Parent Portal where they are posted and updated as necessary.

**IMMUNIZATIONS**

*Mandatory vaccinations are still required during the COVID-19 pandemic.*
Summerfield Waldorf School and Farm follows the California School Immunization Law for grades Preschool through 12th. The law mandates that all students be immunized before attending school. It also requires that schools complete an annual report on immunizations that gets submitted to the State. Student information is always kept confidential. For the latest immunization requirements for school entry, please go to www.shotsforschool.org.

**Emergency Procedures**

In the case of an emergency, the school has an Emergency Response Plan, which is updated and reviewed yearly with the faculty and staff, and which can be found in its entirety on the Parent Portal. The plan includes policies and procedures in the event of a large earthquake that involves loss of power and an inability to leave the grounds. In the most severe scenario, all employees are equipped and ready for a 72-hour stay on campus with your children. We also have detailed procedures to respond to fire, flood and active shooter events.

Parents are asked to understand that, in case of an emergency of this magnitude, no students will be allowed to leave campus (high school included) until released and checked out by parents or designated alternates, and phones, if working, will be used only to report conditions or request assistance. The care and well-being of your children will be paramount in our efforts.

**School Closure**

Should it be necessary to cancel school due to a natural disaster such as lack of heat or electricity, flooding, severe storm, earthquake, etc., the following procedures will be used to notify school personnel, parents and students:

By 7 a.m., KSRO (1350AM) will be asked to publicly announce the closure of our school. A notice will be sent to parents by email and text message and, if possible, posted on our website and social media platforms. Parents may also be called through class phone trees. Parents should call their class representative if they are unsure of school being open. Please do not call the office! All phone lines will be needed to call out.

**Flooding Protocol**

In heavy rain the school’s parking lot may flood. In that case or if it is a risk of flooding, we institute a drop and/or pick up protocol. This means that there is very limited parking and most will need to drop off or pick up from the car. Faculty or staff will be present to escort young children. The school will send an email and a text if either or both of these protocols will be necessary. The protocol will be emailed in the event of flooding, and is located on the Parent Portal.

**The School Store**

Books, toys, and gift items supporting Waldorf education are available for purchase in the school office/store during normal business hours.

**Lost and Found**

A trunk for lost-and-found items stands outside both the Main and High School Offices. Please check the box when something is missing. The contents are given to charity at the end of every term (much fine clothing has been donated unwittingly by parents). Found valuables are held by the receptionist in the office. Lost items may be advertised, for free, as missing in the Messenger.

**Recycling**

The goal of our school’s recycling efforts is to recycle 100% of our recyclable materials. We recycle paper, cardboard, glass bottles, aluminum and plastic containers, etc.
FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

The Finance Office, located in the portable building nearest the Sophia Hall steps, administers tuition agreement contracts, billing, financial assistance, payment of fees, reimbursements and general financial matters. Finance is generally open from 8am to 3:30pm. For any extended discussion regarding financial matters, please call the Finance Office to schedule an appointment.

Tuition Policies

As an independent, private school, the majority of our income comes from tuition payments. The tuition agreement you signed with the school is regarded as real funds and budgeted to cover our monthly fixed-costs and other seasonal expenses.

VCPay Tuition Management Service

Our school employs a tuition management service to handle monthly tuition collection. VCPay offers a simplified approach to increase the effectiveness of tuition collection. Payment options offered through VCPay include automatic deduction from your bank account (EFT) or credit card account. If you choose a credit card as a method of payment, there will be an additional cost, 2.85-2.95% per transaction charged by the credit card company. VCPay is accessed by logging into the Parent Portal where you can set up and manage your account(s). Contact the Finance Office for questions and assistance. Choosing to pay tuition in one payment directly to the school eliminates the need to set up VCPay. The Placeholder Deposit (collected annually during (re)enrollment) and Annual Fees are non-refundable.

Failure to Make Payments

In the event of a failure to make a payment pursuant to the Enrollment Agreement and it becomes necessary for the school to take legal action to collect any amount due, the signer(s) of the enrollment agreement will be charged all reasonable costs and attorney fees incurred. Should an account be 60 days overdue, and there is a failure to keep an adjusted agreement, you may will be asked to withdraw your child(ren) until the account is brought current.

Late Charges and Bank Fees

If VCPay is unable to withdraw a tuition payment from your account on the day designated, the missed payment will automatically be added into your next month's tuition payment and VCPay will attempt to withdraw the both payments on the next payment processing date (either the 5th or 20th of the month). Adjustments to your payment amount can be made by notifying the Finance Office three business days prior to your arranged withdrawal day and no late fee will be assessed. In the event of a returned check to SWSF, a Non-Sufficient Funds charge will be assessed by SWSF.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

20-Day Trial Period

For a child new to the school or a child entering a class with a new teacher, there will be a 20-day trial period, during which time either the parent(s) or the school can terminate the tuition agreement without further obligation, after meeting costs for the time attended.

Early Withdrawal

In the event of a withdrawal from Summerfield Waldorf School families are responsible for 40 instructional days following receipt of written notice of withdrawal. Written notice may be via email and made to either the finance office, Registrar or Admissions Director. There is no discount or refund for absences or school closures.

Dismissal

The school reserves the right to dismiss a child if the teacher, with the consent of the Governance Council, deems it necessary for the welfare of the child or the school. Tuition will be prorated through the date of
dismissal. Any further obligation to the agreement will become null and void. Refer to the Contract Enrollment Agreement for legal responsibilities.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

Summerfield Waldorf School admits students of any race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin or economic status to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Summerfield does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin or economic status in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

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**Development: Volunteering & Fundraising(*C-19)**

*If you have any questions or concerns regarding any topic in this section of the Handbook, please contact the Development Department.*

**A Guide to Parent Involvement**

It is through parents’ involvement in their child’s classroom and in the daily life of the school that we are able to provide a rich and varied curriculum. The academic, practical arts, gardening, movement and music programs at Summerfield are a direct result of the dreams, labor and donations of all the parents and teachers who have contributed to Summerfield over the past 42 years. Teachers appreciate parents volunteering for specific tasks such as plays, field trips, special projects, etc. Lower school handwork teachers are happy to have helping hands assist them in their classes. A commitment to work alongside the teachers in the teaching tasks is essential.

**Volunteer Participation**

Parent feedback indicates that most families volunteer an average of 50 hours per year. As Summerfield parents, you can:

- attend all class meetings and provide support for the class and its activities as requested by teachers
- implement and staff school fundraising and outreach events assigned to specific classes (see below)
- serve on the Board and on committees
- serve as a *Friend of Summerfield* by supporting SWSF through gifts of their professional services

**Development Committee**

The Development Committee is a Board-mandated committee charged with advising and guiding the Development Office in planning and producing events, and in supporting fundraising programs as well as volunteer, donor, public and alumni relations. Grant research and outreach are other activities supported by the committee. Development Committee members are Board and parent community members or alumni with a specific interest in the communal and economic well-being of the school.

If you feel you have skills, enthusiasm, and vision you would like to share, please contact the Development office.

**Donor-Advised Gifts**

Tax-deductible donations and grants can be directed toward specific school programs that match the donor’s areas of interest, such as site improvements and maintenance, farm equipment, scholarships, and teacher development. The Development and Finance Offices can assist with these gifts.
**FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

All independent schools, and many public schools, rely on support above and beyond tuition and fees. This is because the real cost of educating our children—of giving them a solid cultural, emotional, moral and academic foundation—is more than the cost of tuition. In order to provide the vibrant and diverse education offered at Summerfield, generous tax-deductible gifts are necessary. In fact, only 90% of the school’s over $5 million operating budget comes from tuition and fees. The remaining 10% is achieved through fundraising.

At Summerfield, we raise money each year for the education of our children through events, programs and campaigns in the following ways:

**Annual Giving Campaign (AGC)**

The AGC is a school fundraiser whose mailing reaches over 6,000 households, foundations and businesses from both inside and outside the school. Tax-deductible gifts of cash, pledges and/or equity investments are requested. Parents are asked to contribute approximately one month’s tuition, but all gifts large and small are welcome. Your participation in the AGC is necessary to attract outside funding sources to further enhance our financial picture. Our parent team of volunteers has helped make it possible for 100% of board members, faculty, parents and staff to participate and reach our goal for the past few school years. Our campaign launches in October of each year and ends in May when pledges are due.

**Farm to Feast® on the Summerfield Farm**

Farm to Feast is Summerfield’s annual Biodynamic, organic food and wine fundraiser and a Sonoma County signature event. The event is planned and implemented by a volunteer committee consisting of parents, with support from Development staff. Farm to Feast serves as Summerfield’s opportunity to broaden our fundraising efforts to include a larger giving base, and connect with donors nationwide. The event highlights Summerfield’s educational approach and our continued relationship and commitment to Biodynamic farming and sustainable living.

**Grandparents’ and Special Friends’ Day**

This event is held annually before Thanksgiving. It is a gift from the students and faculty that allows grandparents and special friends to tour campus, visit classrooms, enjoy performances, and learn more about our school. Early childhood through high school students participate.

**Annual Alumni Event**

Summerfield graduates, former students, alumni parents and faculty come together to share stories and memories, and reconnect. Started in 2009, organized by the Development Office and volunteers, approximately 100-150 guests gather in celebration and help support the growth of the school.

**$hop $avvy**

Parents, teachers, friends and families are encouraged to participate in Summerfield’s $hop $avvy program. All of the following programs donate a portion of purchases back to our school.

1. Oliver’s Market: sign up for a Community Club Card in the Development Office and use it at checkout.
2. Shop at AmazonSmile, and choose Summerfield as your beneficiary.
3. Benefit Mobile: Purchase retail gift cards to use while shopping online or in-store. There are hundreds of merchants to choose from.
4. Sports Basement: Join the Basemesteer Program and you’ll receive 10% off of your purchases as well.
THE SCHOOL DIRECTORY

A directory of students and households are available to parents on the Parent Portal (www.portals.veracross.com/swsf/parent). You may update your household information through the Parent Portal with any changes during the year.

FACULTY AND STAFF MAIL BOXES & VOICE MAIL

Most employees of Summerfield have a mailbox located in the main office. To hand-deliver a message, please check in at the front desk in the Main Office. Most employees of Summerfield have a voice mailbox accessed through the school phone number, 707-575-7194. The extension numbers are listed in the Directory on the Parent Portal, and there is a directory within the voice mail system.

BULLETIN BOARDS

There are two bulletin boards on the school campus on which public, parent and student notices are posted. The Receptionist, oversees the board outside the main office. Please show her your notice prior to posting and be sure to date it. The other is on the wall of the high school building outside the physics lab. The High School Secretary, oversees the high school board, so please give all desired submissions to her.

SUMMERFIELD’S MESSENGER

The Messenger is a newsletter designed to inform the parent body about the operations and community activities of the school. It is a multi-page publication of articles and classified ads published and sent out on the third Thursday of every month. In addition, the mini-Messenger is an email newsletter with more current news and updates on school notices and events. The mini is emailed to parents every Monday, except for the week the monthly Messenger comes out. The school relies on parents keeping themselves informed, and so we ask you to please look out for and read our primary school publications. In turn, the school will endeavor to minimize the number of extra communications that are sent out.

Should you prefer to receive the monthly Messenger via email rather than by post, please email messenger@summerfieldwaldorf.org. A printed version of the Messenger is handed out at youngest-child classrooms at drop-off or pick-up by class parent representatives. Any not distributed in person are then mailed later that day.

Members of the Summerfield community are encouraged to submit news, letters, ideas for improvement and other items of interest to the newsletter; however, The Messenger is not a sounding board for the parents to express their opinions about, or to debate, school-related issues or concerns. All submitted articles and inserts will be scanned for appropriateness and suitability for inclusion. Summerfield reserves the right to edit for length, content and grammar. Articles will be included as space allows. The newsletter editor may be reached through the school’s office, or by email at messenger@summerfieldwaldorf.org.

Advertising Guidelines and an Ad Request Form, can all be found on our website, in addition to the current edition of the Messenger (and an archive of past editions going back several years).