

WALDORF SUNFLOWER HOUSE PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024



WHOLE-CHILD PRESCHOOL THAT INSPIRES WHOLE-LIFE LEARNING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| WELCOME | 4 |
| Family Partnerships | |
| COMMUNICATION | 4 |
| Daily Communication | |
| ADMISSION & REGISTRATION | 5 |
| Children's Records | |
| Registration Procedures | |
| Code of Ethics | |
| HOURS OF OPERATION & SCHEDULE OPTIONS | 5 |
| Operating Hours | |
| Schedules | |
| TUITION POLICIES | 6 |
| Payment Schedule | |
| Current Tuition Rates | |
| Late Tuition Payments | |
| ATTENDANCE & SCHEDULE | 7 |
| Communicating Absences | |
| Schedule | |
| School Closures | |
| Inclement Weather Closures | |
| TRANSITIONS | 7 |
| Drop-off | |
| Pick-up | |
| Late Pick-up | |
| Sign-in & Sign-out | |
| BEHAVIOR & GUIDANCE | 9 |
| Philosophy of Behavior | |
| Behavior Practices & Policies | |
| TERMINATING ENROLLMENT | 10 |
| Withdrawal from Program | |
| Making the Decision for a Family to Leave the Program | |
| DAILY ROUTINES | 10 |
| Daily Rhythm | |
| Rest Time | |
| Bathroom Use & Toilet-training | |
| Food & Nutrition | |
| Nutrition | |
| Birthdays | |

Food Restrictions
Menus & Meals
Outdoor Activities
Special Activities Outside of Facility

| | |
|---|-----------|
| MEDIA | 12 |
| Media Policy | |
| Photos & Videos | |
| SUPPLIES | 13 |
| Appropriate Clothing & Equipment | |
| Personal Belongings | |
| VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS | 14 |
| FESTIVALS | 14 |
| HEALTH & WELLNESS | 14 |
| COVID-19 Guidelines | |
| Immunizations Policy | |
| Injuries, Illnesses, & Return to Program | |
| Illness Policy | |
| Reporting Communicable Illness | |
| Medication Administration Procedures | |
| Allergies | |
| Second Hand Smoke | |
| SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS | 18 |
| Safety Preparations | |
| Drills | |
| ADDITIONAL | 18 |
| Special Needs in Accordance with ADA | |
| Reporting Child Abuse | |
| Complaints & State Regulations | |
| Identifying Recalled Items | |
| Pet Policy | |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK | 19 |

WELCOME

Thank you for choosing the Waldorf Sunflower House Preschool, where children bloom to their fullest potential! Early childhood experiences serve as the foundation for the rest of your child's life. There is no other time that your child will so rapidly develop, physically, emotionally, and socially. I have experienced time and again the amazing impact of a healthy, holistic early childhood program in setting children on a lifelong path of curiosity, wonder, creativity, deep intellectual connections, social health, and success.

We have an authentic Waldorf early childhood pedagogy, with strong rhythm, outdoor play, cooking, painting, handwork (sewing, finger crochet, and finger knitting, weaving), seasonal crafts, celebrations, oral storytelling, puppet play, music, gardening, purposeful movement for fine and gross motor development, open-ended indoor play, rest, and so much more!

As a new family in the Sunflower House program, there is much information with which to become acquainted. In this handbook you will find policies, expectations, and explanations. I am so happy to partner with you in this sacred journey of raising healthy humans. What wonderful places we will go, together!

Family Partnerships

Family-teacher partnerships are essential for a child's continued successful developmental growth. We recognize that families are the child's first and most vital teacher and that partnering with families provides children with meaningful opportunities for healthy, successful whole-child development. I will provide a family-teacher conference following winter break to share a formal developmental snapshot of your child's development. If there are developmental concerns, I will request a conference prior to that. If you would like to meet with me individually at any point to discuss any aspect of your child or family, please let me know and we will definitely find time to meet.

COMMUNICATION

Daily Communication

Clear and consistent communication is vital for the success of the family-teacher partnership, and never more important than in an early childhood development program. I will make every effort to respond to texts, emails, and phone calls, but please know that unless it is an emergency situation, follow-up communication will be done outside of program hours.

Time sensitive communication will be sent via text throughout the day, At time of pick up, I will occasionally share anecdotes from the day, but I also must ensure my attention is always focused on the children in my care. Finally, I will email a monthly newsletter that shares an overview of the upcoming month's curriculum, special events, and any pertinent general information for our families. Lesson plans and celebration dates are also sent at the beginning of the year and will be posted on on the bulletin board by our sign-in tablet.

ADMISSIONS & REGISTRATION

Admissions Process

Our program is primarily a first come, first serve program for those seeking a Waldorf experience for their 2 1/2-6 year old child. Those who complete the following steps first get first consideration, unless

we have other arrangements, such as sibling priority or returning family priority. All enrollment paperwork may be submitted at a mutually agreed upon timeframe.

1. Submit request for information to waldorfsunflowerhouse@gmail.com or call Stacie Warren at 729-352-4209.
2. Meet me and tour the school to determine if it is a good fit between the program philosophy and your family.
3. If we each determine that this preschool program is a good fit for your family, then you will receive an invitation to fill out registration paperwork or a waitlist form through our administrative platform, Brightweel.com. You may also request paper copies of the registration packet if you prefer.

Registration & Children's Records

The completed registration packet is required prior to the child's first day of care, which includes the following:

1. Medical information with doctor's signature
2. Current Immunization Record or signed personal or medical waiver
3. Parent Handbook Agreement, signed
4. Registration Form

All forms and contracts are subject to renewal every year and must be kept up-to-date according to state law.

Code of Ethics

Our program follows the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment. The code may be electronically reviewed at the following website: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct>. Our staff is trained annually on the Code of Ethical Conduct.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Operating Hours

Program operating hours are from 8:15 AM to 12:00 PM for half-day children, and 8:15 AM to 3:30 PM for full-day kiddos. Your registration form outlines the days of the week that your child(ren) will be attending our program and the associated rates.

TUITION POLICIES

Tuition Schedule

Tuition payments are outlined in the Registration Form that each parent/guardian signed upon enrollment. Tuition is due the 1st of every month, with your first month prorated for the start date to the end of that month. Each following month, the full amount is due on the 1st.

All costs of operation are averaged for the calendar year and divided equally between the operational months. Therefore, monthly tuition rates are the same each month regardless of scheduled school closures. The only month not included is August because it varies year to year and is so short. August is charged per day for your child's schedule. I calculate the "per day" cost by taking the total tuition paid between September and May, and then divide it by the total number of days attended during that time

frame. That is the amount charged for the days attended in August or refunded for reimbursed days (see reimbursement policies below in the Missed Days section).

Tuition includes two healthy snacks per day for full-day children or one healthy snack per day for half-day children and all materials used during the time your child is at school. The only additional fee that is possibly accrued is if you are late paying your tuition or late picking up your child. See **Late Payments** and **Late Pick-Up Fees** below for details. Payments can be made through Brightwheel as an ACH bank transfer or with a personal check.

Current Tuition Rates:

Half-Day Preschool, 8:15 AM to 12:00 PM

5 half days, \$800 monthly

4 half days, \$700 monthly

3 half days, \$600 monthly

2 half days, \$500 monthly

Full-Day Preschool 8:15 AM to 3:30 PM

5 full days, \$1,200 monthly

4 full days, \$1,050 monthly

3 full days, \$900 monthly

2 full days, \$700 monthly

1 full day, \$500 monthly

*There is a 5% sibling discount for the youngest child enrolled when siblings attend concurrently

Late Payments:

A late fee of \$25 will be charged for any late payments. Payment is late when it is received after the first day of the care period. If late payments become a pattern, the family will receive communication from myself, and we will aim to resolve the situation together. If the late payments continue to be a pattern, I may terminate the contract per my sole discretion. The family must pay for the remainder of the month's invoice and any late fees that may have accrued. If you need a different payment date beyond the 1st, please let me know so we can find a day of the month that meets your needs. I can be flexible when plans are made in advance.

ATTENDANCE & SCHEDULE

Communicating Absences

Please let me know about planned absences (e.g. family trips, doctor's appointments) as soon as possible for planning purposes. If the absence is unplanned (e.g. illness), please contact me via text or email as soon as you can the morning of the absence. I have to keep attendance records for liability purposes. It is also nice to have the ability to offer make-up days for other children when there is an unexpected opening any given day.

Missed Days

There are no refunds for missed days of school due to illness, vacation, or personal days off in your schedule. For days where I am sick or in need of a sub, I do my best to schedule a substitute teacher who has been fully vetted with background checks from Colorado Bureau of Investigators and the Colorado Department of Family Services as well as holding a current First Aid/CPR certification. If I am

unable to secure a substitute teacher with these criteria for when I am out, I will close school and credit your account for the missed day(s). If I am able to provide a vetted and First Aid/CPR certified substitute teacher and you choose not to bring your child, you will not be refunded for the missed day(s).

I do not typically take days off for snow days because my program is in my home. Please make the safest choice for your family but understand that no refund will be provided if you choose to stay home due to inclement weather. If it is a serious storm that shuts down most of the city, I may choose to close the school. If this is the case I will refund the day(s) tuition to your account. This decision is based on my sole discretion.

You will be notified of unexpected closures via a text message from me as early as possible.

You will be notified of scheduled closure dates within each school year with the publication of the annual calendar which is created prior to the upcoming school year. If there is ever a need for to change dates in the annual calendar, you will be given at least one month's advance notice. Please see the following chart for planned closures in 2023:

| Reason for Closure | Dates Closed |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Labor Day | September 4 |
| Thanksgiving Break | November 20–24 |
| Winter Break | December 18–January 3 |
| Family–Teacher Conferences | January 4–5 |
| Martin Luther King Day | January 15 |
| Presidents’ Day | February 19 |
| Spring Break | March 25–29 |

TRANSITIONS

Daily transitions can be challenging for both parents and children. It can be difficult to leave your child in a new environment, and it is very normal for your child to feel anxiety when you leave. It is their way of saying they love spending time with you, but I have seen children with significant separation anxiety quickly acclimate to me and my classroom. We can work together to create a plan that helps you and your child feel reassured about making the morning transition. In general, here are a few suggestions to establish a successful drop-off routine for parent and child:

- Be excited for your child and talk about the positive aspects of preschool, such as playing with friends, making playdough, building sandcastles, feeding the bunnies, etc.
- Set a simple routine for drop off and make time to do this each day, such as 2 hugs and a kiss, a special high-five, etc., and be done. It is best not to renegotiate the routine each day.
- Be consistent with times and routines getting ready at home and at drop-off time. Try to avoid rushing or stressful running late situations.
- While it can feel completely counter-intuitive, it truly is better for your child if you give hugs and kisses and then let me embrace them while you leave. I will give your child so much love and support and will send you pictures and texts throughout the day to help you feel better about it as well. I have helped many parents and children through this transition with great comfort, resulting in a very nurturing preschool experience.

Drop-Off

Drop-off is between **8:15-8:30 AM**. To keep our morning running smoothly and to ensure your child has the richest preschool experience, please drop off between this 15-minute window. I understand that sometimes things happen unexpectedly, but arriving after 8:30 should be infrequent. Come through the sunroom to drop off. In the sunroom, help your child change into indoor shoes, hang coat up, put lunch on top of cubby, sign in on the tablet, and say good-bye at the kitchen door.

Pick-Up

Pick-up time for half-day children is at 12:00 PM. Please be punctual, as it impacts lunch time for the full-day children. The assistant or I will bring your child to the back sunroom door at dismissal time. This prevents difficulties that sometimes arise during end-of-day transitions, and it keeps the process seamless so you can get on with your day and we can begin lunch for those who stay.

Afternoon pick-up time for full-day children is between 3:00-3:30 PM. For afternoon children, please come in through the back sunroom door to pick them up if we are not outside.

Early Pick-Up

If you need to pick your child up earlier than the scheduled times, no problem! Just please text me if possible so I can have your child ready without disrupting the other children's routine.

Late Pick-Up

If a child has not been picked up within 15 minutes of scheduled pick-up time and I have not heard from you or been able to get in touch with you, I will begin to call listed emergency contacts. If no one can be reached within 30 minutes after the scheduled pick-up time, according to state licensing regulations, I will need to contact the authorities.

Late Pick-Up Fee

My contracted program day ends at 3:30. It is understandable that unplanned things happen once or twice per year, but it is my experience that there are some families who are repeatedly late while most families are quite dependably on time every day. My suggestion is to plan on being here by **11:50** for half day pick up and **3:20** for full day pick up to provide a cushion for unexpected traffic.

Late fees as follows: From 12:01-12:10/3:31-3:40 the late fee is \$1.00 per minute. From 12:11-12:20/3:41-3:50 the late fee is \$5.00 per minute. From 12:21-12:30/3:51-4:00 the late fee is \$10.00 per minute. Last year I had a few 4:00 appointments that had to be canceled last minute because of perpetually late parents, which resulted in me having to pay fees for my missed appointment and wait even longer for rescheduled necessary doctor's appointments.

Sign-In & Sign-Out

All children must be signed in and out on a daily basis when they arrive and leave. Any person picking up a child must be approved as a pick-up person in writing or on your Registration Form. A text from parent/guardian is an acceptable authorization for a change of pick-up persons as long as they are listed in registration paperwork. The approved pick-up person must present proper identification upon request. You acknowledge and agree that for the safety and security of your child(ren), I will refuse to release your child(ren) to anyone failing to show proper identification or to whom you have not specifically authorized to me in writing.

If someone who is not authorized attempts to pick up a child, you will be contacted immediately. If the child's parents are divorced/separated or if a parent is legally not allowed to pick-up their child, copies of official court custody and/or visitation documents are required for compliance.

If any person arrives to pick up a child and appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or appears incapacitated, we will call emergency contacts. If the incapacitated person persists in attempting to pick up the child, I will immediately call 911.

BEHAVIOR & GUIDANCE

Philosophy of Behavior

A child's behavior is nothing more than communication. I do not see a child's behavior as good or bad, just a means of communication. Children may have an impressive vocabulary, but that does not mean they are capable of understanding and verbally expressing themselves, especially when emotions run high. Many adults are very similar, such as getting angry at other drivers, etc. When we feel strong emotion, we struggle to remain in the logical side of our brain where we can verbally express our emotions rather than being overcome by frustration or anger. Children are even less capable of calming down in a moment of high emotions and discuss the situation at that time due to the immaturity in development of their frontal lobe.

This is my area of expertise in child development, understanding behavior as communication, determining what is being communicated by the behavior, and helping the child find healthy means to have his or her needs met. There is so much I can share on this subject as we progress on this journey together. Much of what I have learned has been from my experience managing a classroom of up to 30, 3 to 9-year-old children in a group setting. I have also learned much by trial and error as a parent, as my own children could definitely attest to 😊.

I do not give time-outs, I do not punish or condemn children for their behavior. A child that is throwing a tantrum, lashing out, crying, biting, or acting out is disoriented and looking for reorientation. That is where calm adults come in to help children find their way back to feeling safe and okay in their bodies and within their environment.

I could write volumes on this subject, but for the sake of this handbook, I just want to reassure you that I meet every child exactly where he or she is, and I will have ongoing conversations with you regarding any challenging behaviors so we can be partners in developing a plan of growth that works for each of us, but primarily, one that works your child. This is so very important in establishing a sense of self-awareness, self-regulation, and is more indicative of successful adulthood than any early academic achievement.

Behavior Practices and Policies

I provide a variety of methods to promote positive relations with families. Positive guidance is modeled for the children and then they are encouraged to develop their own problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills through authentic situations they encounter with their peers. In this environment, children are able to learn at their own pace based on their individual temperaments and developmental levels. Children will be taught and encouraged to express themselves, understand the feelings of others, and how to communicate their wants, needs, and feelings.

The core components of positive guidance are:

- Environment: Consistent routines, warm and welcoming, appropriate choices of activities, and a calming area for recollecting with the support of a loving adult.
- Guidance: Modeling and teaching children the expectations; direct and indirect teaching about feelings and self-regulation; direct and indirect teaching of social skills with care and kindness toward one another.

Regular communication with parents via messages or verbally at pick-up time is critical to supporting children in all aspects of learning, including social and emotional development. Conference meetings can also be scheduled to better support the teacher-parent-child relationship. My goal is to foster positive relationships between families to create a sense of community that allow for open communication should a challenge arise.

If you ever have a question about the goings on at school, please ask! Children have a very different perspective of friendships and relationships than do adults, and we must keep open communication about things that might be concerning you so that you can feel absolutely comfortable with your child attending our program. Your child's safety and your assurance are of the utmost importance to me.

Managing Conflict

1. Facilitating problem solving strategies, such as positive supports and preventative strategies
2. Ongoing observation and documentation of concerns and/or progress
3. Set up a meeting with parents/guardians to discuss behavior and to develop a plan moving forward
4. If challenging behavior persists or escalates to the point of endangering the safety and wellbeing of other students and teacher(s), thus diminishing the integrity of a healthy Waldorf early childhood program, terminating the enrollment contract may occur

TERMINATING ENROLLMENT CONTRACT

Family Withdrawing from the Program

You may withdraw your child from the program at any time, I request that you give me a 30-day written notice for withdrawing your child(ren). If I receive the 30-day written notice, tuition will be prorated to charge only for the days your child attends within that billing period. If I do not receive a 30-day written notice, you will not receive refunded payment for the time you have already been invoiced for and paid. You may submit the written notice in person or via email: waldorfsunflowerhouse@gmail.com

Making the Decision for a Family to Leave the Program

I will make every effort to resolve difficult conflicts between children or family members within the program setting. I will conduct observations and documentation of ongoing concerns and progress and follow the above process for challenging behavior. However, I reserve the right to remove a child from the program temporarily or permanently in response to inappropriate conduct by the child or a family member, or if the safety of others or the child is at risk. I reserve the right to define inappropriate conduct in any given situation within or without of the school setting. In the unlikely scenario of Sunflower House Preschool terminating enrollment, I will refund any unused tuition for days that were pre-paid. There will be no refund for days your child has already attended during the invoiced and paid timeframe.

DAILY ROUTINES

Daily Rhythm

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 8:15–8:30 | Drop off |
| 8:15–9:30 | Creative indoor play Snack food preparation |
| 9:40 | Morning circle with movement & music |
| 9:55 | Art expression: Painting, drawing, fiber arts, clay, seasonal crafts |
| 10:15 | Library time |
| 10:20 | Snack |
| 10:45 | Outdoor play & gardening |
| 11:45 | Storytelling or puppet story |
| 12:00 | Half-day children go home |
| 12:15 | Lunch |
| 1:00 | Storybook & harp, then rest time (quiet time is about 40 min) |
| 2:15 | Afternoon snack |
| 2:30 | Child's choice: Art, play, sewing, weaving, finger-knitting, purposeful work |
| 3:00–3:30 | Full-day children go home |

Rest Time

Children are not required to sleep, but we will rest a minimum of 45 minutes, with some children sleeping longer. Rest time is the time children learn to calm their bodies, promoting self-regulation, healthy digestion, and the ability to be comfortable with their own thoughts. In all my years of nannying and teaching I have never had a child who didn't come to genuinely appreciate rest time, and I have had my share of energetic, busy children.

After lunch, we clean up food items and the children will use the restroom before settling into their individual cots with a fitted cotton sheet, blanket, and pillow that is provided for them. Once everyone is tucked in, I or my assistant will sit in the teacher's chair, read them a book, and then play the harp or sing lullabies for a few minutes. By 2:00, any kiddo not sleeping can get up, put their bedding away, and enjoy an afternoon snack. Then they can choose their activity and play while the sleeping children wake up gradually. If they all wake up in time and weather is decent, we will go outside again.

Bathroom Use and Toilet Training

Children should be independently using the bathroom before enrolling. Of course, children have accidents or situations where they need assistance, and I am here to support them as they continue to become independent in this area. They have full access to the restroom whenever they need, and we also have regular restroom breaks to ensure consistent access. Sometimes little ones don't recognize the need to go when caught up in play, so I create times to try during natural activity transitions. If you have concerns or questions regarding this policy or eligibility of your child because of frequent accidents, please call me and we can create a plan together. If your child is not fully toilet trained before school begins, let me know so we can have a conversation regarding a plan forward.

Food & Nutrition

The program includes two snacks each day that the children help prepare. We also all work together to set the table, serve our food, and clean up like a family. Food served will be nutritious, delicious and

meet your child's daily nutritional requirements for the meal and snacks served. Children also have access to water all through the day. If you would like your child to have organic milk (cow or plant-based), please let me know and I will offer it at lunch time.

I will accommodate true food allergies and most lifestyle food choices (vegan, etc.). Most children love the food we have, even if it takes some getting used to. It always amazes me how versatile their tastes become when they see their friends eating the same foods and when they help prepare it for everyone. If your child has food allergies or lifestyle food choices, please discuss them with me during the enrollment process to ensure we maintain the safest eating environment possible.

Snack

The snack plan is on our website at <https://www.waldorfsunflowerhouse.org/our-rhythm-1-1> but may be adjusted occasionally to accommodate seasonal fresh ingredients or general preferences. Afternoon snacks vary, but morning snacks are integral to Waldorf early childhood education.

Lunch

Full-day children bring lunch from home each day. Your child has access to the class refrigerator for items that need more than a cold pack, and the assistant or I can help them microwave anything that might need heating up. Please send healthy lunches with no candy or juice. We are happy to heat things up as needed. There is no need to send silverware, as we have plenty here that we don't have to keep track of and getting them back into the correct lunchbox.

Birthdays

Birthdays are very special at our school. I will collaborate with you prior to your child's birthday to develop a special birthday story for your kiddo based on unique life events. The day we celebrate their birthday you will be invited to come during circle time to participate in their special birthday story. I understand this does not always work for some family's schedules, so we will send pictures and a short video for you to share with your child later if you are unable to attend.

To keep it allergy-friendly, healthy, and equitable, we make chocolate chip muffins for birthday celebrations. The children look so forward to this special snack on birthdays! They may also bring a few photos of their life and a special show and tell item to share with the class during their birthday circle.

Outdoor Activities

Time outdoors is an essential component of Waldorf education and a healthy childhood. We will play outside in all types of weather, down to 17° F. I use the "Feels Like" temperature in determining how the weather feels to the children. We might not spend the entire hour outside when it is very cold, but we will go out for a while. This calms their nervous system, allows for gross motor movement that is more challenging to accomplish indoors, and gives them a healthy dose of sunshine and fresh air. Please send weather-appropriate clothing and outerwear.

MEDIA

Media Policy

We have no media at our school. Screen-based media usage has a negative impact on a child's brain development <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2754101> There is so much research coming to light warning of the dangers of exposing young children to screen-time too early. I personally have seen the impact of children who have spent their mornings on media. Their self-regulation is significantly decreased, and they struggle to settle into imaginative play. It is as if they had

a Red Bull for breakfast. It also interferes with their sleep at night:

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Daniel_Seguin2/publication/283185566_Just_five_more_minutes_please_electronic_media_use_sleep_and_behaviour_in_young_children/links/56a5031d08ae232fb2078cb9/Just-five-more-minutes-please-electronic-media-use-sleep-and-behaviour-in-young-children.pdf

I strongly recommend that your child refrain from media usage during the week. Save it for special weekend time or family movie night. Just like you wouldn't give your child candy for breakfast, lunch, and dinner because of negative health implications, please give them a very selective media diet for the greatest health outcomes.

Photos & Videos

I will occasionally post pictures of children to a private Google Drive which you will be invited to access. I also take pictures for the school's website and social media page. You may decline to have your child's photo or video used for our website and social media page on the media release section in the registration paperwork. Photos that do not show personally identifiable attributes of the children (location, name, etc.) may be used for the purpose of the Waldorf Sunflower House website and official social media pages unless declined by the parent/legal guardian.

SUPPLIES

- **Appropriate Clothes:** We have a media character-free clothing policy. Our classroom is free from commercialized media-related toys and bedding, and ask that you comply with this policy when your child is at our program. I do not villainize media characters with the children, but I tell them that we leave our media-character friends at home. It impacts the quality of their play, their interactions with each other, and their overall behavior. It minimizes the integrity of a holistic Waldorf program. Bike shorts should be worn under dresses and skirts.
- **Extra Clothes & Indoor Shoes:** Please send two sets of extra clothing (shirt, pants/shorts, underwear, and socks). Indoor shoes should fasten onto their feet, meaning no flip flop or mule style slippers. This keeps our indoor area free from outdoor debris while still providing traction on the slippery wood floors. Plus, if we were to ever have to leave the house in an emergency, such as a potential gas leak, the children's feet would be protected outside. Something like these below are perfect:



- **Water bottles:** Please do not send water bottles, as the children have access to water all day with their own cup at school. Water bottles tend to get left behind and unwashed, carried into the play area and spilled, or accidentally used by a friend. Having our own cups at school keeps things very consistent and easier to manage.
- **Outerwear:** Waterproof boots, mittens/gloves, and snow pants that stay at school. I have rain suits for all children. I also have sun hats for each child but you are welcome to bring one your child prefers. **If you send them dressed for the day's weather, that would be wonderful!** ☺ We go outside in all weather, except below 17° F, so proper coats, jackets, snow pants, winter hats, jackets, etc. are all necessary.

- **Bedding:** I will provide the bedding for rest time. Each child has his or her own cot, sheet, blanket, and pillow that is stored separately from the other children's bedding. I wash them every week. Your child may bring one NON-MEDIA related stuffed animal or special blanket for rest time, but it would be great if it could stay at school rather than go back and forth so that it doesn't get forgotten in the car or at home, potentially causing tears at rest time. It can be changed out of course whenever your child likes.
- **Backpacks:** We really don't have a need for backpacks. I've found that toys tend to hijack their way to school in backpacks. Our cubbies are just too small to accommodate both backpacks and winter coats. If there is a need to carry an EpiPen or anything of the sort, then of course we will accommodate. Don't hesitate to discuss any special circumstance with me.
- **Keep Toys Home:** In order to keep the classroom aligned with the Waldorf pedagogy and to keep consistency within the classroom, outside toys or items from home are better left at home. In the case of separation anxiety, we can create a plan together surrounding special items. Otherwise, they should stay home or in the car. If any home toys travel into the classroom via a child's pocket or such, I will keep it safely in my cupboard until the child heads home for the day. Also, if some of my little toys find their way into your home, just send them back, please. I will have a conversation with the children about how my toys love one another very much and are so worried when they are taken from their home and their family here at school. I don't single children out when this happens. It is totally natural that a preschooler become attached to a specific toy or simply forget it is in their pocket. Sometimes children like to show me a special toy at drop off time and then send it out with their parent. This is completely fine. Children have very special bonds with their toys and naturally want to share that with their teacher.

VISITORS & VOLUNTEERS

I welcome visitors and volunteers but request advance notice when possible for planning purposes. Any special visitors to the program for an event are required to sign in and sign out. The details around such an event will be communicated to families in advance. If I plan to have a visitor at school, I will give you notice as well. In addition, your child will always be under my direct supervision when we have a visitor or volunteer. There will be opportunities for you to volunteer during the school year. Expect more information in October once our class has formed well.

FESTIVALS

Waldorf pedagogy revolves around festivals, which is such a beautiful way to celebrate the rhythms of the seasons and of life. Most of our festivals will be celebrated with the children only during the school day to minimize additional strains on the schedules of my families. Two that are shared with all families in our preschool is the Festival of Light Lantern Walk in November and May Faire in spring. This festival celebrates Martinmas, which is November 11th. I choose to hold mine earlier or later than this date so that it doesn't interfere with Mountain Song's celebrations since I have several families who attend there as well. More information will come about these beautiful festivals.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Keeping your child at home when they are sick is important to your child as well as to the other children in our program. Preschoolers are very tactile in nature and explore with fingers and mouths. When they start spending time with other children, they are exposed to many immune-building illnesses. We wash and sanitize toys regularly, wash the children's hands frequently, and use other methods to prevent the spread of illness. Current well-child health checks are required each year by the State. I try to

accommodate each family's chosen health care process, but I also have to meet state regulations. If your family does not regularly see a medical doctor for well-child checks, please let me know so we can figure out an alternate path.

Immunizations Policy

I fully support the parent's right to choose whether to immunize or not immunize their child. The following is simply a requirement from the state, not a reflection of my personal opinion. Parents or guardians must provide a completed Certificate of Immunizations or exemption status on or before the first day of care. All children are required to be fully immunized per State requirements unless an approved exemption is on file for the child. If no record is received, the child will not be allowed to attend. See the following policies for clarification:

- Our program accepts children who are not fully immunized, with a medical or non-medical exemption status.
- Immunization records will be reviewed on a quarterly basis.
- The parent/guardian will be notified in writing of any missing immunizations. If the record is not received within five days from written notification, the child will not be allowed to attend until records are received.
- There will be no reduction or refund of tuition for any days missed due to missing our outdated records/immunizations.
- Parent/guardian will be informed of this policy upon registration of their child and it will be available for review in the Family Handbook.

Injuries, Illnesses, & Returning to Program

If your child is injured and requires medical attention while at school, you will be notified immediately. Small bumps and bruises are a very normal event in the life of young children, as they are developing spatial awareness and how to navigate rapidly growing bodies. Unless significant, I will notify you of any typical type of minor injurious incident when you pick up your child at the end of his or her day. If you would like to be notified immediately of all scratches, falls, bumps, etc., please let me know and I will do my best to text immediately after such an incident occurs.

Minor scratches, scrapes, and bumps will be treated with soap, water, icepacks, band aids, and love as needed. More serious injuries will be logged and reported to you immediately as well as discussed at the end of the day. If emergency medical services are necessary, you will be notified as soon as the situation allows. If you cannot be reached, your emergency contacts will be called next.

For your peace of mind, I will err on the side of calling or texting you if any incident is greater than a minor scrape or unmarked bump (no sign of redness, swelling, etc.). We each have different needs surrounding these types of situations, and as a parent myself, I would always prefer to know if something has happened to my child, even if it is relatively minor.

Waldorf programs encourage active engagement with the children's environment. We explore climbing, building, wood working, sewing, chopping vegetables, etc. I pre-teach safety and utilize much care, but children will encounter bumps and scrapes while learning new skills and exploring nature. I aim for a balance between safety and allowing risks. When children are allowed to take reasonable risks in daily life, they become confident in their ability to press through challenging situations in life. They internalize concepts in physics, cause and effect, and vital critical thinking skills. It is always a balancing act of keeping them as safe as possible but not wrapping them in bubble wrap so tightly they cannot fully engage with their natural world. Please reach out to me if you have questions or concerns for your child's safety.

Illness Policy

In the event that your child becomes ill at school and needs to leave care, you will be asked to come pick up your child within the hour. If I can't reach you, I will call your emergency contacts.

Children with the following symptoms will need to be kept home or excluded from school activities until treated and symptom-free.

- Fever 100.5 or higher without a fever reducer in the previous 24 hours.
- Two or more episodes of vomiting and/or diarrhea in the previous 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in the stool, and/or decreased form to the stool that cannot be contained by clothing.
- A suspicious or undiagnosed rash. You will be required to check with a health department or your health professional before returning to guarantee that it is not contagious.
- Bacterial infection, including: Strep throat, scarlet fever, impetigo, bacterial conjunctivitis, chicken pox, and any skin infections that are draining or infected.
- Head lice are highly contagious and can be very difficult to get rid of. Children who have lice and or/nits may not attend school until they are completely gone. This typically takes at least three days to make sure the home and child are properly treated.
- Children with severe symptoms of illness will be required to be seen by your healthcare provider before returning to childcare.
- For the protection of all children, families and staff, children who require or have taken any medication that may mask cold, flu, or other illness symptoms within 4–6 hours must stay home.

If your child has a contagious illness, please notify us as soon as possible.

Reporting Communicable Illness

Parents/guardians must notify the program if their child has been diagnosed with a reportable communicable illness. These include, but is not limited to: Strep throat, conjunctivitis, pertussis, chicken pox, hepatitis, measles, mumps, meningitis, diphtheria, and rubella. In the event that a child has been diagnosed with a communicable illness, all parents will be notified, as will the local health department per State requirements.

Any child diagnosed with a communicable illness will not be allowed to return to the program until a healthcare professional or local health department representative determines that the child is no longer contagious and is well enough to return to school. In such instances, a note from a healthcare professional is required before child may to school.

Medication Administration Procedures

The intent of this policy is to ensure the proper steps are followed when it is necessary to administer medication while in care at preschool. My preference is to not have to provide medications, but I understand under some circumstances this is unavoidable.

All medications should be given at home whenever possible. When a child requires medication to be administered, a parent must give the very first dose at home so that the child may be observed for any reactions to the medication prior to coming to school.

If it becomes necessary for medication to be administered to a child during the day, I or another designated staff member trained in Medication Administration will administer medication to your child. The following procedures must be followed for the administration of medication:

1. Medication may only be administered with written parental permission. See me for permission slip.
2. Any medication may only be administered if a complete order and authorization form signed by the child's healthcare provider is provided.
3. All prescription medications provided by parent/guardian must be in the original container with the prescription label from the pharmacy containing the child's name, dosage, and route.
4. Over-the-counter medication will not be administered without a healthcare plan signed by the child's healthcare provider. A child-resistant container must be provided and appropriately labeled with the child's first and last name.
5. Topical non-steroid medication (sunscreen, diaper ointment, lip balm, and lotion) will only be applied if a signed waiver from the parent/guardian is on file. A record of administration does not need to be kept for topical non-steroid medication.
6. Prescribed and over-the-counter medications will be kept in a locked storage box at the recommended temperature as prescribed on the label.
7. Medication will not be used beyond the expiration date on the container and/or the written order from the healthcare professional/pharmacist. Expired medications will be returned to the parent.
8. A medication log will be maintained to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent/guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of the medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on the log.

Allergies

Despite best efforts to monitor the facility and raise awareness among families, it is impossible to eliminate all risk for children with food and/or environmental allergies. It is possible that the presence of an allergen on a child's clothing or belongings from home may trigger another child's allergies. Known allergies along with child's emergency contact information must be posted in the classroom in case of an emergency.

Secondhand Smoke

Children will never be exposed to secondhand smoke in my home or on my premises. Smoking will never be tolerated on my property.

SAFETY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The safety and emergency preparedness procedures are implemented to provide for the safety and well-being of the children in my care. This plan serves to provide for the protection of children and personnel in the event of a natural or human-caused emergency or natural disaster.

Safety Preparations

- Evacuation plans and procedures are posted for families to see or are available for review upon request and are reviewed annually for necessary updates
- Exits open freely and are not blocked
- Emergency backpack is fully stocked at all times and located near the locked medicine box in case of quick exit from the building
- See written evacuation plan for locations for reunification in the event the program is evacuated

Drills

Monthly fire and emergency drills are conducted and documented to include children and adults in attendance, start and completion time of drill, and notes or changes to be made. I will always let you know when we have had an emergency drill so you can talk about it with your child.

ADDITIONAL

Special Needs in Accordance with ADA

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, I accept children with disabilities. Every effort will be made to care for every child, with accommodations to allow access to the preschool curriculum and environment, based on the layout of the preschool space, available insurance, and if necessary care can be provided.

Reporting Child Abuse

As an in-home preschool provider, I am a mandated reporter and am required by law to report any suspected form of child abuse, but not limited to, neglect, physical abuse, and mental abuse. If a parent or guardian arrives intoxicated, the child's emergency contact will be called. If the parent/guardian proceeds to leave with the child while intoxicated, the appropriate authorities will be immediately notified by program personnel.

Complaints & State Regulations

If you have concerns for your child's well-being at school, I hope you will let me know before it becomes a significant complaint. However, if you feel it necessary to file a complaint, here is the contact information for the Colorado Child Care Licensing & Administration:

1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO, 80203-1714

(303) 866-5948

<https://dcfs.my.salesforce-sites.com/oec/home?lang=en>

Identifying Recalled Items

I regularly check for recalled items and material updates and will update parents as needed. All of the materials and equipment in the program are regularly checked for safety. If you come across recalled items that you think might concern our preschool, please let me know so I can take care of any potentially recalled items.

Pet Policy

We care for pets or other animals at our home, therefore, your child may encounter and interact with those animals while in our care. Child safety is paramount in our program. All animals are kept and cared for in compliance with all state and local animal and childcare licensing requirements. All pet vaccination records are updated annually and are on file. We are happy to provide you with more information and answer any related questions you may have regarding the pets on premises.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

The Waldorf Sunflower House is a place where young learners and families can thrive together. We are reinventing home-based care to provide outstanding Waldorf education in nurturing homes to the children in our communities. I'm so thrilled that your family will be a part of our community.

We (I) acknowledge that we (I) have received and read the handbook and agree to the terms and conditions contained within it.

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

With much gratitude,

Stacie Warren,
Director at Waldorf Sunflower House, LLC
719.352.4209
waldorfsunflowerhouse@gmail.com