



The South Shore Waldorf School is delighted to welcome you to the 2024/25 school year!

What follows will acquaint you with the day-to-day life of the school and introduce you to some of the ideals of our school community. If you have any questions or concerns about what you read here, please do not hesitate to contact your class teacher or the administration.

1. Governance Overview

The South Shore Waldorf School and Kindergarten Association

Since 1997, The South Shore Waldorf School Association has been registered with Nova Scotia Joint Stocks as a not-for-profit charitable organization. The Association includes all those who have children currently enrolled in the school, the faculty of the school, and all friends who have expressed the desire to support the school.

The Association holds an Annual General Meeting each autumn. At this meeting, the Board of the school for the coming year is elected. It is composed of up to ten members from parents, interested friends, and includes two members of the faculty.

Board of Directors

The Board carries the long-term goals of the school at heart and is responsible for the legal and financial relationship within the broader community, the municipality, and the province. It acts as an overseer of school activities by including in each monthly meeting reports from Faculty, Administration, Parent Council, Financial Committee, and any other committee established as required.

Board meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month and are open to parents, faculty, and friends (dates are listed on the school calendar).

Faculty

Waldorf schools are ideally faculty-led. The faculty oversees and directs not only pedagogical aspects of the school, but is also involved in administrative, organizational, developmental, and governance decisions. Faculty oversees the school's curriculum development, pedagogical policy, program administration, faculty hiring and dismissal, professional development, and student admissions. Every decision carried out by the faculty is guided by their mission statement:

"In everything we do, we nurture the healthy, holistic development of each individual child. We create an education grounded in nurturing, uplifting, and healing. As teachers, we personally guide our students' interest in and knowledge of the world. Entrusted with this task, we freely commit in gratitude."

Administration

The Administration is responsible for the necessary day-to-day business activities of the organization. It carries out the decisions and standing policies of the Board and Faculty, and strives to serve the needs of the faculty, parents, and students. Its main functions include: reception, communication, enrolment, student records, marketing and public relations, finance, and facilities management.

Parent Council

The Parent Council is made up of parents who commit to serving as parent leaders for a specified period of time.

The purpose of the Parent Council is to:

- Promote the community of the school and facilitate a vibrant and positive parent/school relationship
- Support and educate parents
- Support the organization of fundraising events, festivals, and social events
- Promote and organize volunteer opportunities
- Offer input and advice to the school regarding matters that pertain to parents

2. School Programs

The Waldorf curriculum facilitates the well-rounded development of children by engaging them in a wide variety of subjects using an interdisciplinary approach that complements their natural abilities and their age.

Kindergarten

The SSWS Kindergarten provides a warm and loving home-like environment, organizing the school day within rhythmic active and restful cycles around free play, forest walks, storytelling, painting, drawing, crafts, and practical activities such as lunch preparation, baking, and setting up and cleaning up. It is open to full-time and part-time students, beginning at age three and a half.

The Elementary School Program

Consisting of Grades 1 through 6, the elementary school program is anchored by a two-hour Morning Lesson that begins each school day. This Morning Lesson focuses on a particular subject (such as language arts, math, history, geography, physics, or biology) for a prolonged period of time lasting two to several weeks. The remainder of the day consists of forty-minute subject lessons, including French, art, choir, music, movement, and handwork.

The class teacher teaches the Morning Lesson and several other periods in their students' day, while specialist teachers teach the various subject lessons.

Middle School Program

Consisting of Grades 7 through 9, the middle school program follows a similar structure to the elementary, with a two-hour Morning Lesson followed by forty-minute subject lessons, including French, art, choir, music, movement, and handwork.

Throughout the year the class teacher offers feedback and learning assessments to students directly, through personalized Narrative Reports, rather than sharing those reports with parents. Students are also involved in producing their own code of conduct; current middle school students are in the process of establishing a Student Council as well.

After Care Program

The After School Care Program provides care until 5:30 pm on school days. The After Care Program offers an “outbreath” for children at the end of the day, facilitating craft projects, homework time, and indoor and outdoor play. Please pack an after school snack for your child(ren). Aftercare is billed monthly and all school families need to register.

Through our After Care Program, we also offer programs on PD days as well as a one week program during the first week of winter break and during spring break. Pre-registration is required.

*There is no childcare for storm days. If school is canceled half-way through the day, a member of staff will be available to stay until children are picked up.

Educational Support

The South Shore Waldorf School strives to provide excellent Waldorf education to all children entrusted to our care. However, we recognize that sometimes children have academic, social, or physical challenges beyond the scope of the classroom setting. We are dedicated to working with families to help them find the extra educational support their child needs in order to thrive.

3. School Life

Late Arrival and Early Departure

Should your child need to leave early in the school day, please ensure that the class teacher knows so the child will be ready. If a child will be arriving late, please contact the administrative office. All children should be picked up promptly at 3:00 pm. After 3:15 pm, children who have not been picked up will go into the After School Program. Billing for after care will come from the administrative office following booking. Please notify your class teacher, the office, or the Care-Coordinator if someone other than your child's parents or legal guardian will be picking up your child.

A word about attendance and tardiness: bringing your child to school on time every day is very important and it is the best way to ensure your child's success. Students who arrive late or miss school days often feel that they have missed out on something and it is very difficult for them to find their way back into the group.

Media Policy

The South Shore Waldorf School is dedicated to nurturing each child's capacity for creative imagination, independent thinking, and positive action. The school's efforts to foster students' healthy emotional development and meaningful relationships with their environment are undermined by their encounters with electronic media, which separate children from authentic experience and promote a distorted, developmentally inappropriate and consumerist view of the world.

We are fostering an environment that develops imagination and physical awareness. Please do not allow your child to bring electronic devices to school. This includes iPods, cellphones, and cameras.

It is requested that children not bring toys in general from home. We ask for your understanding and cooperation as we work toward creating an environment that fosters non-commercial, co-operative, imaginative play.

Students learn best to use electronic media as a resource and tool when these media are introduced after children have developed a rich experiential foundation. Media thus become a supplement to, not a substitute for, the richness of direct experience.

For the rationale behind our Media Policy, please see Appendix A.

Use of School Phone

It is important that the school phone is available for incoming calls. Parents may use the phone for short, local calls. Children should only use the school phone for an emergency and with a teacher's permission.

The school's phone number is: 902-624-0874.

Dress Code

Footwear and shirts must be worn at all times on school premises. The children spend time outdoors every day, so please dress them appropriately. Children should come with waterproof rain-gear and boots in autumn and spring, and snow boots, coats, hats, scarves, and mittens in winter.

Umbrellas are not permitted for safety reasons.

Children should have their core organs covered at all times. We recommend children wear wool or wool/silk base layers in colder weather.

All students should keep a bag with an extra set of clothes (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) hanging on their assigned hook. Please ensure that children have sturdy shoes for running and outdoor games. All children will need a pair of non-slip, non-marking shoes for exclusive indoor use. All items are to be marked with your child's name.

As we work to create a positive environment for both teaching and learning, we request your help in choosing appropriate and comfortable clothing. The following guidelines are provided to assist parents in ensuring that their children are appropriately dressed:

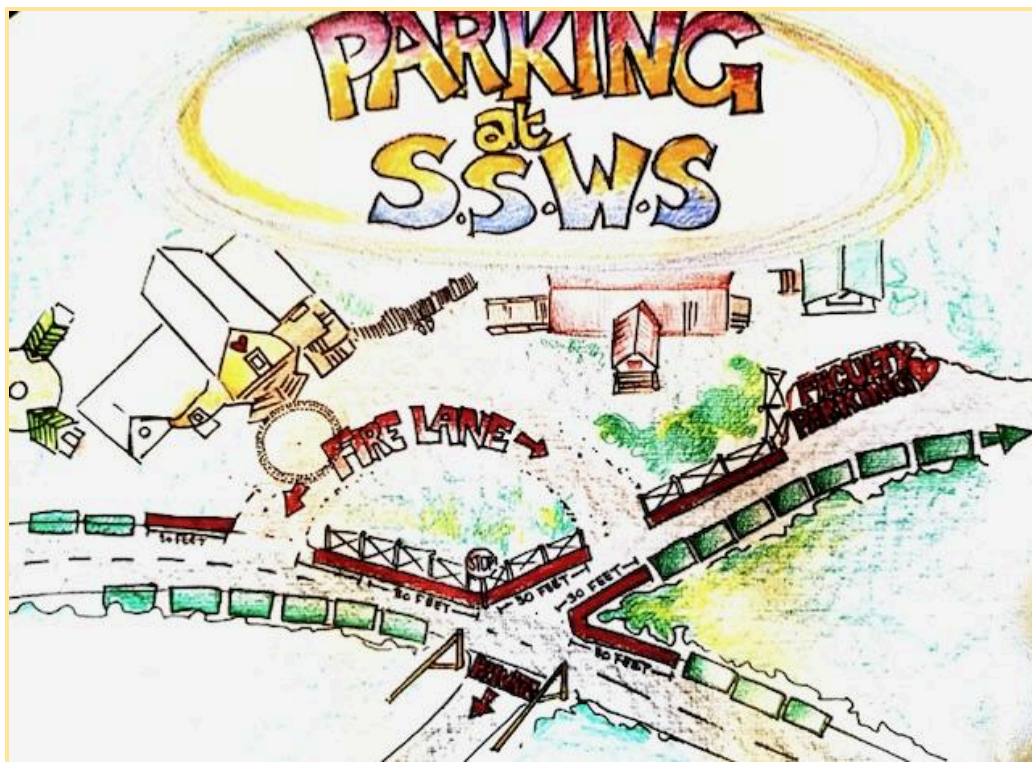
- Please ensure all clothing is free of logos, recognizable characters, and words. If you are uncertain if an image is of a "recognizable character," please discuss this with your class teacher.
- Children require a pair of flat soled indoor shoes(not slippers)
- Please ensure all clothing is mended and in good repair.

- Clothing should not interfere with daily activities. This may include overly flowing or long garments as well as bare legs.
- Any jewelry worn must not interfere with movement activities or be a distraction in class.

Transportation and Parking

There is no formal transportation system in place for the school. Parents are responsible for getting their child(ren) to and from school. Some families carpool. Please ensure you are adequately covered by your insurance if you participate in such an arrangement.

NOTE: There is NO PARKING in front of the fence at the front of the school. This is a fire lane. Please park safely along the far side of the road and kindly refrain from using or blocking the faculty and staff parking lot.



Field Trips, Special Activities, and Events

For all field trips, special activities, and events, permission slips are sent home with each child and must be signed by a parent/guardian and returned to the school by the date specified. Volunteer drivers are arranged as necessary.

In order to volunteer at the school or on field trips, a Child Abuse Registry Search and Police Criminal Check must be submitted to the administrative office prior to the event. This can take several weeks to process, so if you are interested in volunteering please consider getting these done early in the school year.

Dogs

As much as we all love dogs please do not bring them inside the kindergarten yard. When dogs are on school property they must remain on leash, and under the control of an adult at all times. Owners must promptly remove any dog poop from the grounds.

Due to the large numbers of people who attend our events and festivals, no dogs are allowed on school property at those times.

Lost Items

A Lost and Found Box is kept inside the school front entrance. Please check promptly for misplaced articles. To minimize lost items, please label your child(ren)'s clothing and lunch containers. Unclaimed contents will be donated to charity at the end of each term. Labels can be ordered through

www.emilypress.com/sswaldorf.

Cleaning Products and Scents

In keeping with our commitment to respecting our environment, instilling kindness to animals, and safeguarding our students' and teachers' health, we use only natural, chemical-free, and ethically-produced cleaning products. We support the use of naturally-scented products such as beeswax candles and essential oils and ask that no synthetic scents be worn or used at school.

Separated Parents

In absence of a court order stating otherwise, South Shore Waldorf School will remain neutral in the event of any dispute between separated parents of any child(ren). The emotional well being of the child(ren) is best served by a parental agreement shared with the school outlining responsibilities and permissions for arrival and pickup, and planned absences.

4. Student Health

Illness

If you will be keeping your student at home for any reason, please notify the school by calling 902-624-8074 or emailing admin@waldorfns.org.

Our goal is to maintain a safe and healthy environment for everyone. In order to achieve this, it takes all of us working in partnership to keep illness from entering our school. As parents and teachers, we need to watch for symptoms of illness in ourselves and the children. Students and teachers should stay home when sick.

Screening:

- Please screen for illness prior to arrival at school
- Faculty will observe for illness as part of normal routine in order to keep everyone safe
- Children who present with symptoms of illness will be sent home, following guidelines put forth by the Nova Scotia Health Authority.

It is the policy of the South Shore Waldorf School that children will not be permitted to attend if they are ill with a contagious condition, fever, or diarrhea, or other symptoms listed below.

All children attending must be able to participate in all parts of the program.

All parents of children who attend the school, employees, and essential visitors are also required to self-screen for symptoms of illness not limited to the symptoms mentioned below and asked to stay home when they are unwell.

- **In addition to the guidelines for illnesses above**, children must be kept home, and treatment must be sought when any of the following occur:
 - **Head lice**
 - **Pinworms**
 - **Pinkeye (Runny red eyes, thick mucus or pus draining from the eyes or nose)**
 - **Impetigo, Fifth Disease, Hand Foot & Mouth, or other undiagnosed rash.**

- **If a student becomes ill while at school** they will be cared for until arrangements for pick-up have been made. The parent or guardian will be called, either by the office or the child's educator, updated to the situation, and asked to pick up their child.

Accidents

An Accident/Injury Form will be filled out by a faculty member whenever a child is hurt. This report will outline the circumstances of the injury and any first aid that was administered.

A first aid kit is located in each classroom. Any time the class goes on an excursion, any emergency medications or devices that may be part of a child's medical plan will be placed in the emergency bag, along with the classroom's emergency forms, and will accompany the teacher who is holding the class. The teacher will also carry with them a phone for emergencies and will inform the office of their whereabouts.

Accident/Injury forms will be signed and dated by the faculty member completing the form.

In the event of a severely injured child, that child will be provided with immediate medical attention and parents/guardians will be notified immediately. Any child needing to go to the hospital will be transported there by their parent(s)/guardians or ambulance. In the absence of the timely availability of parent(s)/guardians, a staff member will go to the hospital with the child and wait until the parent(s)/guardian(s) arrive. Staff will not drive, or have a taxi drive children to the hospital. If deemed an emergency that requires immediate medical attention, an ambulance will be called.

In the event that the child is taken to the hospital outside of parental/guardian supervision, the staff member who accompanies the child will bring the child's emergency form and any medications or medical devices that may be part of a child's medical plan.

At the time of the accident a member of the school administration will immediately call the appropriate agency (i.e. physician, hospital, poison control, ambulance, fire department).

In the event that the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child cannot be reached, the child's emergency contact will be notified as soon as possible.

Immunizations

Immunizations and periodical tests are not given at the school. Please provide written notice to the administration of new immunizations to be added to health information records.

Medication can only be given to the child at school if the parent has provided signed written instructions: Please ask administration for the necessary forms. Medication must come from a bottle labeled by a pharmacy or naturopathic doctor, with date, dosage, child's name, and physician's name.

Peanut and Allergy Policy

We are a peanut-free school. No items containing peanuts are allowed, including but not limited to peanut butter, whole peanuts, and baked goods that may have come into contact with peanuts. Please be aware that peanut allergies can be life-threatening, so adherence to this policy is of the utmost importance.

If your child has an allergy, please ensure your class teacher and the office staff are aware of the allergy and its severity.

If your child's allergy is anaphylactic, please provide your class teacher with an epipen to use in an emergency. We keep an epipen on site for emergency use in the case of previously unknown allergies.

5. Parent Involvement

SSWS embraces the vision of a vital, engaged, and valued parent body. Parent participation in school life and parent educational opportunities help to deepen parent understanding of Waldorf education, which significantly enhances the school experience for students.

Parent involvement in the practical life of the school is therefore essential for both the school and for our students.

There are many ways in which parents can participate in school life. They can join the parent council, one of the working groups, the craft circle, or the board directors, become a class link, and/or volunteer to help organize a particular event or fundraiser.

Less formally they can share ideas, undertake practical jobs, and organize social events.

Other opportunities for parents to participate include classroom help, yard and building maintenance, assisting with events, volunteering at the Airstream Café, and putting up event posters.

Many hands make light work, and there is always something to do! Ask your class teacher or one of our administrators if you are not sure how you can help.

Community Building Hours - Volunteer Commitment

Parent participation and volunteering are a cornerstone of the SSWS community. Our school community's strength is a direct result of the involvement of parents and friends.

It is because of the innumerable volunteer hours contributed every year that we are able to maintain a lower tuition than most other independent schools in the province!

In the 2013/14 school year SSWS instituted a new program to help encourage participation in building our wonderful community. We ask each family to make a commitment upon registration to a minimum of 2.5 community-building hours per month (30 hours per year per family).

For full details please contact your Class Link.

Opportunities for Parent Study and Education

Various study and educational opportunities are provided by the school each year through lectures, workshops, and courses for parents and friends of the school.

These take place at the school and are intended to facilitate acquaintance with the theory and practice of Waldorf education. Notices are posted as these opportunities arise.

Suggestions for topics can be sent to discover@waldorfns.org, or talk to your class teacher or a member of the parent council.

The Borrowing Library

The school lobby houses a small library of books and periodicals relating to Waldorf pedagogy and similar educational and child-raising philosophies.

Parent/primary caregiver engagement with the substance of the school's philosophy and pedagogy is strongly encouraged. We welcome you to take an active interest.

Questions and conversations related to Waldorf education and the anthroposophical understanding of child development are welcomed by all who teach, administer, and volunteer at the school. We encourage parents to inquire about study and reading groups, or to start their own.

6. Parent-Teacher Relationship

Class teachers maintain continuous contact with parents. A detailed written report of each child's progress and development is prepared for grade-school students at the end of each school year. This report does not include marks or grades. Final exams are not given at the school (although the children may take quizzes or unit-tests in the upper grades). Parents are urged to consult the teacher when a question or concern arises.

All of our teachers are available to meet from 3-3:15 daily. Meetings outside this time can be arranged in advance by contacting the teacher directly.

Teachers will communicate with parents in person and via email throughout the year. They will monitor emails outside of class hours Monday through Friday. Please do not use social media as a communication tool with your teachers. For any urgent communication needs please email admin@waldorfns.org.

Parent-Teacher Interviews and Parent Evenings

Parent-Teacher interviews are scheduled for October/November and April/May. Additional meetings can be requested.

Parent Evenings will be held throughout the year to bring awareness to parents of the work the students are doing in class.

Parents will be notified in advance and are strongly encouraged to take part.

Home Visits

It is a tradition among many Waldorf schools for class teachers to visit their students at home; we continue this tradition. The home visit usually takes place during the summer holidays and is especially important for new teachers or students before beginning a new school year.

Your teacher will contact you to set a date and time.

School Work

The grade school students' work is collected and taken home at the end of the school year.

Parents may see the work at any time by making arrangements with their child's teacher or during Parent-Teacher interviews.

End of Term Concerts and Class Plays

Concerts are held at the end of the fall term in December and at the end of the school year in June. Parents and friends are invited for an opportunity to observe work-in-progress from the various classes as well as some finished pieces.

Child Protection & Duty To Report

At SSWS keeping the children entrusted to our care is taken very seriously. All faculty, staff, board members, parents, and any other adults working with students in a volunteer capacity are required to undergo a Criminal Records Check and a Child Abuse Registry Search. These checks must be updated every three years.

A set of clear regulations outlining the school's legal and moral responsibility for its students, together with the steps to be taken should an individual within the school community be suspected of child abuse, of any kind, are outlined in our Policy Guidebook. A copy of the Policy Guidebook can be consulted in the office.

The Police Records Check and the Child Abuse Registry Search can take several weeks to process, so if you are interested in volunteering please consider getting these done early in the school year.

Information about Nova Scotia Duty to Report can be found here:

<https://novascotia.ca/coms/families/changestocfsa/Duty-to-Report.pdf>

7. Unexpected School Closure Days

At the South Shore Waldorf School we recognize that unexpected school closures due to weather or other circumstances can be an inconvenience or burden for parents who send their children to our school, especially those who work outside the home and may experience challenges finding suitable care for their children in the event of an unexpected closure. That said, school closures are a part of life in the maritimes.

Full Day Closures

The school's policy is to follow the announced closures of the South Shore Regional Centre for Education (SSRCE), except in extreme weather situations.

In some cases, SSRCE may not close its schools, or only close some schools, or it may only cancel buses. If the SSWS faculty feels that it is not safe for faculty, staff, parents and students, to travel to school, even though the SSRCE has not made the decision to close all its schools, SSWS classes may be canceled.

This is a decision that we do not take lightly at any time, and we appreciate the support of our parents who are faced with an often difficult and last-minute situation once they hear of that early-morning decision.

In these circumstances, our decision is based on the predicted road conditions at either the beginning and/or the end of the school day. It has nothing to do with the amount of precipitation, but rather safety for driving conditions. We refer to the provincial department of highways road conditions website, Environment Canada weather reports, as well as early morning phone calls to all staff.

In either of the above cases, as soon as the decision is made, we begin a comprehensive communication plan including sending an email to all parents and faculty, updating our website and social media, and changing the recording on our main school phone number. Additional announcements will be made on CKBW, CBC Radio, and CBC storm centre website. All of this will be done before 7 am.

We also expect each parent to check our website or phone system or listen to the radio to make sure that they are fully informed of school closures on days with inclement weather. If you do not have access to any of the above at home, please make sure your class teacher knows how to get in touch with you in the event of a storm closure.

We suggest that in each class some time is taken in the fall to identify families for whom last-minute childcare arrangements are especially difficult, and see if there are other families in the class who may be able to help.

When school is closed due to weather, all other events in the school scheduled for that day are canceled as well.

Mid-day Closures

If school is closed due to unforeseen circumstances during the school day, a phone tree will be activated and faculty members will remain on site until all parents have been reached and all children have been picked up.

8. Community, Festivals, and Fundraising

In ancient cultures festivals were an integral part of community life marking the changes of the seasons and the calendar year. There is as much joy in the preparation and the anticipation of a festival, as there is in the participation in it.

Parents are invited to attend the school festivals listed below. Dates and times will be available on the school website, in the monthly newsletter, and in the full-year calendar available at the beginning of each year. Please check for any changes before the event in question.

Below is a list of the festivals usually celebrated by South Shore Waldorf School. We are a faith and culture inclusive school, and we welcome and encourage families to share their festivals with the school community. If your family has an annual festival that is part of your cultural traditions not listed below, please speak to your class teacher about incorporating it into our festival life. We all benefit from the richness of our diverse community.

The annual Holly and Ivy Fair and Mayfair, as well as other fundraising events, offer a warm, festive atmosphere, children's activities, good food, and high quality craft items for sale. In the course of the school year, they serve both as important seasonal celebrations and fundraisers.

Rose Ceremony

As students transition from Kindergarten, they often experience trepidation and grief at leaving the warm embrace of Kindergarten. The Rose Ceremony, which celebrates the transition, addresses both excitement and grief. Grade one students have an extra day of summer vacation so that they are not lost in the all school "first day" excitement.

On the second day of school the children in the first grade arrive after everyone else has gone into their classrooms. The children gather with their kindergarten teacher one last time in the kindergarten and they lead them into a beautifully decorated space where their families and new teacher are waiting for them. A harpist plays for them. They hear an archetypal story full of images and wonder about their journey through the grades. Then they meet their new friends in the oldest class and each child is given a flower. They cross through a bower and follow their teacher to their grades classroom for the very first time.

Michaelmas

As part of our self development we have been reimagining what our festivals mean for us here in Nova Scotia. The timing of Michaelmas and Truth and Reconciliation, as the days grow shorter and darkness encroaches, carry significance for us, and we have reimagined our festival in this light. We set up a series of gentle "trials" for our students. These activities will provide them with opportunities to explore their bravery, leadership, grace, inner strength, trust and deeds of goodness.

Halloween Whispers

A magical evening celebration called Hallowe'en Whispers is organized by parents and teachers. Originally inspired by All Souls Day in Mexico and acknowledging those who came before us, the students create short musical vignettes that are performed in different spots in the forest.

Parents, teachers and friends came together and shared delicious food, festive games and crafts and music. This wonderful celebration has evolved into a significant fundraiser for our school.

Lantern Walk

A festival celebrating compassion and inner light in the outer darkness of approaching winter. This festival invites us to follow the lantern light into the gathering darkness. As the dark nights become long and the air cold, our lanterns represent the light and warmth we wish to send into the world and carry in our hearts. This is one of our most beautiful, and reverent events. The mood is one cultivating an inner quiet. We end the evening by sharing hot apple cider and bread, then quietly making our way home. Many families find this festival becomes their favourite of the year.

Advent

The four Sundays before winter solstice, Christmas, and Hanukkah are those leading into the darkest time of year, just before the turning point of midwinter. It is a time of anticipation, hope and promise, a time when the light is carried within us. Thankfulness for the Mineral Kingdom (first advent Sunday), the Plant Kingdom (second advent Sunday), the Animal Kingdom (the third advent Sunday), and the Human Kingdom (fourth advent Sunday) can kindle in us the strength of will needed to renew tranquility again and again against discouragement. At this time of year advent wreaths are lit in each classroom. On the first advent Sunday the school community gathers to journey down a spiral evergreen path. The apple candle each child carries is kindled in the centre of the spiral and then the light is carried back out to be placed somewhere along the path.

Holly and Ivy Fair

One of our major fundraising events, Holly and Ivy Fair is an annual seasonal festival and celebration with games, craft activities, live music, amazing food, puppet show performances, a silent auction and a handmade market.

Winterfest

Inspired by the Winter Festival in Quebec, Carnaval we spend a week in January celebrating Winter.

Puppet Show and Tea

A fundraising event including a beautiful luncheon served by the older grades and a puppet show that will capture the imagination of all ages.

Mayfair

In ancient traditions, Mayfair was the celebration of the beginning of summer; it was a festival of flowers. Mayfair is good, festive fun and a reminder that warmer days are ahead. Our school is festooned with decorations and we gather as a community to play games, make music and merriment. The day is graced by the children dancing the Maypole and by onlookers clapping and singing along.

This festival offers a warm, festive atmosphere, many children's activities, good food, and an annual plant sale along with a silent auction, puppet performance, live music and field games.

Coordination of Fundraising Events 2024/25

Our Kindergarten and Grade 1/2 classes are responsible for coordinating the clean-up crews needed for each of these events throughout the year. The Class Parents will be contacted by the respective grades class parents to plan what is needed. Kindergarten and Grade 1-2 families also take the lead in supporting the Puppet Show and Tea event.

Our Grade 3/4 class is responsible for coordinating the Mayfair, which is the last major fundraiser of the school year. The Class Parents will coordinate an initial planning meeting in early April. All families of the school will be asked to participate in order to make this event a success. A planning manual is available in the office and welcomes updates.

Our Grade 5/6 class is responsible for coordinating the Holly and Ivy Fair, which is a major fundraiser for the school. The Class Parents will coordinate an initial planning meeting in early October. All families of the school will be asked to participate in order to make this event a success. A planning manual is available in the office and welcomes updates.

Our Grade 7/8 class is responsible for coordinating Halloween Whispers, which is the first fundraising event of the school year. The Class Parents will coordinate an initial planning meeting in late September. All families of the school will be asked to participate in order to make this event a success. A planning manual is available in the office and welcomes updates.

Use of Electronics at Special Events

We kindly request that no cameras or other electronic devices be used during school concerts, ceremonies, and presentations. Cameras and electronic recording devices create a distraction for children participating as well as for those in attendance. We like to encourage all who gather together to be present in the now of the event.

A designated photographer will take photos for posterity. Please contact the Administration if you are interested in volunteering as an event photographer, and/or if you are interested in obtaining the photos taken during an event.

Cameras are permitted at public events, such as the Holly and Ivy Fair and the Mayfair.

Parent Supervision During School Events and Concerts

Parents are responsible for their children during school events. Please do not leave your children unattended.

9. Communications

The school organizes whole-school gatherings once per term, inviting parents, faculty, staff, friends, and board members to get together to discuss matters important to the whole community. These meetings are an opportunity to learn more about the workings of the school, including financial aspects, to participate in the planning process for the future, and to become involved in committee work.

(Please ensure that your contact information is up to date by contacting the office administrator when you move or if your information changes.)

Monthly Newsletter

A monthly newsletter is issued electronically by the office. It includes information about school events and its daily operation. It will be made available on our website or by signing up to receive it by email.

Class Link

Each year the class teacher and class parents will decide which parent will be the class link for that school year. The role of the class link is to assist the class teacher and to represent their class on the Parent Council.

Each year the specific tasks and responsibilities of this position will be determined according to the needs of the teacher and the availability of the class parent. Tasks may include telephoning parents on behalf of the teacher, helping to arrange field trips, and simple administrative tasks.

The role of the class link is also to foster a sense of community among the parents of each class and to ensure that all parents are kept well informed. The class parent is in a position to help identify and resolve issues and concerns raised by the teacher or by parents.

Grades class parents initiate planning for the major fundraiser that is assigned to their class. Please see Coordination of Fundraising Events above for further details.

Parent Evenings

Parent evenings are a key way for parents and teachers to engage with each other, and with fellow parents.

They are also an opportunity for parents to deepen their understanding of the exceptional and innovative aspects of Waldorf education that are enriching their children's school lives. Parent evenings focus on how the Waldorf curriculum relates and responds to the child's specific needs, abilities, and capacities at each stage of development. A relationship founded on mutual understanding between teacher and parent greatly enhances the child's ability to learn and develop.

For this reason, the school considers attendance at parent meetings a requirement. Please plan ahead to ensure that at least one parent or caregiver is able to attend each parent meeting.

You, your child, and your child's teacher will all benefit greatly from this commitment.

Email

At SSWS e-mail communication is a regularly used convenience. However, we do not use email to engage in discussion. Email is a tool for arrangements, confirmations, and information.

Email communication is used for relaying routine information pertaining to school and class business and not for student-specific information, issues needing discussion, or concerns, complaints, disagreements, conflicts, or disputes.

We do not register concerns or complaints via e-mail or other electronic media platforms. Instead, use email to set up a face to face meeting to discuss concerns, as detailed in the concerns process below.

10. Concerns Process

Our Concerns Process is solution-oriented. We believe most conflicts arise from miscommunication about our universal human needs. The following pages can act as a guide to help you navigate expressing your needs, feelings, perceptions, and requests in a clear and solution-oriented way.

A healthy social life is found when, in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection and when, in the community, the virtue of each one is living (Rudolf Steiner, 1920).

- Concerns and conflicts do not necessarily signal a crisis. They are a natural outcome of a community working together and they offer an opportunity for change and improvement.

- It is SSWS's position that concerns and conflicts cannot be resolved unless all affected parties are involved. The Concerns Process is based in Non-Violent Communication and includes face to face communication between affected parties. Mediators are available to facilitate this.

Step-By-Step Protocol

There are several ways to address a concern:

1. Speak directly to the person about whom you have a concern and/or with whom you are in conflict.
2. Contact one of the school's Ombudspersons, who make up the Care Committee.
3. If you have taken steps 1 and/or 2 and your concern or your conflict has not been resolved, a school Ombudsperson will refer your concern to the Care Committee.

Care Committee and Ombudspersons

The Care Committee is an arms-length committee of the school mandated to conduct mediation by offering compassionate listening and determining further concrete actions within already available school policies or procedures. It may call in help from professionals familiar with SSWS who have agreed to be contacted as necessary.

- Strive to communicate well, with honesty and integrity
- Strive to resolve a concern or conflict as soon as possible
- Focus on finding a solution with those directly involved rather than talking about the concern with those farther afield.

If you feel uncomfortable directly approaching the person(s) about whom you have a concern or with whom you are in conflict, you may take your concern or conflict to a school ombudsperson. This is the case even for minor concerns and conflicts. An ombudsperson will listen, facilitate communication between parties, and guide you through the concerns process to satisfactory resolution.

Avoid expressing and trying to resolve your concern via email or other electronic platforms. We are not in process regarding concerns until we talk in person. You may email your concern to an ombudsperson, but only to register your concern and to begin the Concerns Process with the support of the ombudsperson.

Confidentiality

Concerns are received with care and respect, and will be held in confidence. "In confidence" means that no one other than those involved in the Concerns Process will be informed about the concern. Those raising the concern and those whom the concern is about are always part of the process. Anonymous communication is not feasible as there is no opportunity for dialogue or resolution.

11. Discipline Code

We recognize and welcome the unique gifts brought by each child we serve and we are committed to supporting all of our students in their development. In doing so, we look for a positive approach to discipline. We strive to gently help the child become conscious of hindrances to development and to find creative ways to overcome them.

Expectations

To ensure a positive learning environment, rules and expectations are communicated to the students in an age appropriate way at the start of the school year and reviewed as needed. These expectations are:

- Show respect for yourself in your language and actions. This means: be true to yourself, be safe, and be positive about your accomplishments.
- Show respect for others in your language and actions. This means: listen and follow the directions of teachers, peers, parents, and guests. It also includes being supportive of others' accomplishments, resolving conflicts satisfactorily, and helping others.
- Show respect for the school environment in your language and actions. This means: contribute to the care of the classroom, its contents, and the grounds of the school, and be an advocate for the physical environment in and around the school.

Although teachers work from a common understanding, each teacher will vary in how they carry out the above shared understanding. Parents may meet with teachers to clarify individual classroom management styles.

If the above expectations are not met, the student will be given a natural or logical consequence for inappropriate behavior. This may include, for example, losing use of items that have been damaged (natural consequence) or repairing damaged items (logical consequence). If appropriate, the parent will be advised of the behavior.

If the behavior does not change, escalates, or becomes a recurrent problem, the teacher will meet with the parents to inform them of the behavior. Together they will outline a consistent discipline strategy that includes in-school consequences and how the parents can support a behavioral change at home.

If the behavior still does not change or escalates, a report from the teacher outlining the behavior and the strategies attempted will be put in the student's file and a copy given to the parents. The parents and teacher may meet again.

If the behavior still does not change or continues to escalate, the student's parents will be called and the student must be picked up immediately. Once a student is sent home they may be asked to leave the school.

The above is a guideline for parents, students, and teachers.

However, if behavior warrants it, the teacher may take whatever appropriate steps they determine necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the student carrying out the behavior, other students, other adults in the vicinity, the school property, and the teachers themselves.

At the South Shore Waldorf School, we want the standards of the school to be clearly understood by the parents. We ask that parents address discipline and behavior problems directly with their child's teacher, and teachers will address parents directly if there are concerns. If this does not bring satisfaction either one or both can request assistance through the Concerns Process.

Bullying

Bullying is distinct from normal social conflict among peers. It is aggressive in nature and includes a perceived imbalance of power and repetitive threats.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to, a written, oral, or electronic expression, the malicious spreading of rumors or social exclusion, physical attacks, or threatening gestures. These are not tolerated in any form, nor is retaliation against any person who reports bullying or witnesses or provides information during an investigation. Bullying is prohibited on school grounds, at school-sponsored events, after-school activities and outside of school as it creates an unhealthy environment for an entire class and school.

When a complaint of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation is brought to the attention of faculty or staff, it is documented and an assessment as to what initial steps are to be taken to protect the well being of students and to prevent disruption of their learning environment while the investigation is being conducted. The school will notify the parents of all students reported to be involved immediately after a complaint has been made.

Once the school has determined to what extent the allegation of bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation can be substantiated the class teacher will determine what disciplinary action and/or remedial action is socially and developmentally appropriate for the age of the student(s) involved and how it will be implemented. The response students and parents can most likely expect is immediate dismissal from school of the aggressor(s) until a plan, satisfactory to all parties, is put in place. Suspension and/or expulsion are consequences of last resort.

Confirmed incidents are documented and placed in the child's file for reference purposes.

Bullying should not be confused with teasing, social disinterest, random acts of violence, or physicality and conflict among equals. While children will often tease or fight, this bickering, even when upsetting to one or both of the children involved, should not be confused with bullying. The dynamics of bullying are complex. We recognize that it takes a collaborative process between parents and teacher, indeed an effective partnership, to resolve and heal both the aggressor(s) and the target. It can include whole family and class solutions.

12. Fundraising, Donations, and Financial Accessibility

SSWS is entirely self-funded and receives no government assistance. In an effort to keep tuition affordable and to make Waldorf education available to all parents and students who want it, the school community raises approximately 30% of the school's operating budget through its fundraising activities and donations.

All SSWS families benefit from low tuition because of our collective fundraising activity. If we did not supplement our operations budget through fundraising, we would need to increase tuition substantially.

We appeal to those who are able to contribute financially beyond their child(ren)'s tuition fee to do so. This gift could ensure the attendance of a student who may otherwise be excluded. It is possible to make a targeted donation which allows you to direct how your support is put to use. We encourage you to consider a monthly donation. The Enrolment and Development Coordinator can set this up for you during your enrolment meeting.

In addition, we ask that you consider talking to extended family members—grandparents, godparents, aunts, uncles, and so on—about donating to the school, including making a bequest in their will. Visit the **DONATE** page of the school's website to explore the options.

Approaching businesses with which you are affiliated to make a donation of money and/or materials/services will also be much appreciated by the school, as will your discussions with anyone in your community who recognizes the need for a creative, healing, and holistic education and who will benefit from a tax receipt: SSWS is a registered charity.

Work Credits

In order to help make Waldorf education more accessible, SSWS offers a number of cleaning, maintenance, market, and Airstream Café work credit positions each year. If you have questions about what they entail, please contact Administration.

To apply for a work credit please complete the application form in the enrolment package.

Work credits are assigned through a calculation that combines need and availability. The office maintains a waitlist for mid-year changes to work credit availability.

Tuition Assistance

The school does not have an established endowment that funds bursaries. All funding for the Tuition Adjustment Program (TAP) comes from tuition revenues, fundraising, and donations. The ability to offer families an appropriately assessed tuition level is affected by the number of applications received in a given year. The total TAP budget is limited to approximately 10% of the operational budget of the school year in which it is awarded. In any given year, between 20-30% of our families utilize the Tuition Assistance and/or Work Credit programs.

If your family has any questions about applying for Tuition Assistance, please speak to the Enrolment and Development Coordinator.

Tuition adjustment is awarded for the current year only. Applications are re-evaluated each year.

Please see your enrolment package for the TA application deadline. Any applications submitted after the deadline will be reviewed when applications received within the deadline have been completed and will depend on remaining resources. Mid-year applications will be considered if resources remain.

It has always been a foundational principle of SSWS to make attendance available for all families who value Waldorf education, within the limits of the school's resources. These resources are not only financial but derived from in-kind contributions by members of the school community in support of the health and operation of the school.