

River Song Waldorf early childhood



Parent Handbook 2013-2014

*Know what it is to be a child?
It is something very different from the man of today.
It is to have a spirit yet streaming from holiness;
It is to believe in love,
To believe in loveliness,
To believe in belief;
It is to be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ears;
It is to turn pumpkins into coaches,
And mice into horses,
Lowness into loftiness, and nothing into everything,
For each child has its fairy godmother in its soul.
-Shelley, 1908*

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Table of Contents

Welcome.....	4
Orientation	5
Service & Program Policies	5
Student Enrollment.....	5
Change of Enrollment	6
Child Pick Up/ Drop off Procedure.....	7
Authorized Adult Pick Up	7
Late Pick Up Fees	7
Late Parents	7
Parking Lot Safety	7
Transitions.....	8
Drop Off	8
Drop-in	8
Signing in and Out.....	8
Tuition and Fees Policies.....	9
Tuition Payment.....	9
Fee Deductions	9
Custody	9
Supervision.....	9
Students with Special Needs.....	9
<i>Illness Policy for Children</i>	10
For children who become ill at school:	11
Administration of Medications	11
Staff responsibilities.....	11
Walk Permission.....	12
Photo Permission	12
Child Protective Services (CPS)	13
Preventative Policy.....	13
Child Abuse:	13
Child Abuse Reporting Law	13

Philosophy of River Song Waldorf School.....	15
What is Waldorf Education?	15
Curriculum.....	16
Curriculum Activities	16
Expected behavior for all students	16
Discipline.....	16
What Your Child Needs For School	19
Toys from Home.....	19
Three Basics for a Happy School Experience	19
Request regarding Media Exposure.....	20
Chalk Boards,Parent Pockets, Newsletter, Web Site	20
Parent Participation	20

Welcome

Welcome to River Song Waldorf School. Thank you for having your children with us. It is an honor to be with these amazing young people. In order to fully support them, we would like to orient you to some of the guidelines in our school. Please read the following information regarding; requests to parents, signing-in/signing-out procedures, clothing, lunch, nap items, media exposure, and parent participation.

If you should have any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact your child's teacher or the EC Director. We will be glad to assist in any way we can.

-The Early Childhood Teaching Staff & Board of Trustees, River Song Waldorf School

Aurora Romine, Faculty, Moonflower Room
Tracy Buchanan, Faculty, Sunflower Room
Susan Castellon, Administrative Director
Brendan Beers, Board Member
Matt Gibbs, Board Member
Vanessa Haywood, Board Member
Julie Wenzel, Board Member
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Orientation

Service & Program Policies

Student Enrollment

- 1) Each student attending River Song Waldorf Early Childhood must be properly registered before attending their first day. Parents/guardians must fully complete and sign all necessary forms included in the Enrollment Packet.
- 2) All contracts are for 12 months (September 1st through August 31st). Enrollments after September 1st will be for the remainder of the school year.
- 3) There is also a non-refundable \$50 Application Fee that must be turned in with the corresponding paperwork. All information contained in the Enrollment Packet and in the student's records is strictly confidential. Designated staff members do have access to these records for reasons connected with their job. However, no records are to be removed without specific authorization from the Administrative Director.

Once the Enrollment Interest Packet and Application Fee are collected from the family the following steps will take place:

- 1) The enrollment coordinator and/or lead teacher will contact the parent(s) to schedule a teacher-family meeting. This is a mandatory meeting.
- 2) Enrollment will be confirmed once the teacher-family meeting has occurred and space availability is confirmed.
- 3) Upon acceptance, an enrollment fee of \$125 must be submitted. This is per student, non-refundable, and will be applied to the child's first month of tuition.
- 4) All New students begin with a 30-day mutual trial period.
- 5) Enrollment packet forms must be signed and returned
 - a) Required health and immunization forms
 - b) Emergency Contact
 - c) Medical Records
 - d) Authorization for Medical Treatment
 - e) Statement of Health Status
 - f) Parent Commitment Forms
 - g) Parent Permission Forms

Paperwork must be turned in within a timely manner if not, students will be asked to stay home until all forms are turned in.

- 6) Enrollment will be denied if there is an outstanding debt to River Song Waldorf Early Childhood.

Change of Enrollment

Reduction in or Increasing Enrollment

Parents wishing to reduce or increase their child's enrollment are responsible for the current tuition rate until a spot in the new desired program becomes available. When the enrollment change occurs, parents should fill out the request form. If they are wishing to add days, they must wait until space becomes available. If they are reducing days, they must meet the same requirements as in dis-enrollment. To change a child's enrollment a Change of Enrollment Form must be completed and returned to the Director.

30 Day Dis-enrollment Policy

Parents who choose to dis-enroll their child prior to the contract end date of August 31st are responsible for giving 30 days notice. Tuition will be billed for 30 days from written notice.

Re-enrollment

The re-enrollment period is a time for current families to enroll their children for the upcoming school year before enrollment is opened up to the outside community. There is often a waiting list and re-enrollment allows parents the opportunity to have priority over families in the outside community.

Re-enrollment occurs during specified times. If completed forms and payment are not received by the specified deadline parents will become part of open enrollment and will give up the opportunity for early enrollment.

Child Pick Up/ Drop off Procedure

Authorized Adult Pick Up

Children will be released only to those adults specified on the child's **Child Pick-Up Form**. Other adults may pick up a child only with written permission of the parent and photo identification. If a person who has specifically been refused authorization or an unknown person attempts to pick up a child, faculty will:

- 1) Check the child's pick-up form to confirm authorization (or lack there of)
- 2) Detain the child until phone permission is granted by the parent(s) & grant pick-up or refuse pick-up accordingly.

Late Pick Up Fees

School ends at 1:00 p.m. for half day students and 5:30 p.m. for full day students. Parents will be called when a child is not picked up by the end of their school day. A faculty member will stay with the child until s/he is picked up. **A late fee of \$25 will be charged if a parent is 5 to 10 minutes late three times in one month. A late fee of \$50 will be charged if a parent is 30 minutes late or more.**

Late Parents

Each day, a faculty member shall be designated to supervise any children whose parents may be late in picking them up after the school closing time. This staff shall remain with the child(ren) and call each child's parents or guardians at all emergency numbers listed on the child's enrollment form until arrangements are made with some responsible adult to retrieve the child.

If the child is not picked up and arrangements have not been made by 45 minutes after closing time, faculty should call the police or sheriff and report the child abandoned. If all efforts to have the child retrieved have failed, release the child to the police or sheriff. (per Colorado Division of Child Care Rules and Regulations)

River Song Waldorf Early Childhood reserves the right to disenroll any student whose parents are continually late to pick them up.

Parking Lot Safety

When arriving to drop off or pick up children, a parent is responsible for the child and must accompany them until departure. In the parking drive through parking area and near on street parking, an adult must be within arm's length of the child until they are in the car.

Transitions

Drop Off

Dropping your child off at school is a special time for the parent, the child and their teacher. **We ask that when you bring your child into the school you sign in, find their teacher, make contact with them** and then prepare for leaving as quickly as possible. It is tempting to want to visit with the teacher or other parents but this can be quite a distraction to the flow of the morning. Parents wishing to visit should step outside. Parents wishing to talk to the teacher should schedule an after hours appointment.

Before the parent (adult/carpool driver) leaves the school after dropping off the child, and as soon as the parent arrives at the school to pick up the child, that adult must take responsibility for the safety of the child.

Drop-in

Drop-in childcare is not available at RSWS. Children may attend during the hours and days in which they are enrolled. Children who are not enrolled on a particular day and time may not stay at River Song.

Signing in and Out

By law, all children must be signed in and signed out of River Song Waldorf Early Childhood **on a daily basis**. A sign-in/sign-out sheet is located in a notebook on the cubby shelf in the entry way. Parents or the person authorized to pick up a child will fill in the time of pick-up/drop-off and their initials.

In cases where someone other than the parent/guardian or someone on the child's pick-up form will be picking up the student, a letter must be provided by the parent/legal guardian that includes the new person's name and time of pick-up. This letter must be given, in advance, to the child's teacher at a previous drop-off time. In an emergency verbal authorization will suffice.

Tuition and Fees Policies

Tuition Payment

An invoice will be sent to families each month for the next month's tuition. Tuition is due on the first of every month. Payments not received by the 10th of the month are subject to a \$25 late fee. Payment may be made with cash, check, or electronic funds transfer (EFT) from your bank account. If Payment is to be made via EFT, please fill out an automatic withdrawal form (available in the school office). Consult the latest Tuition Rates form for most recent fees.

Fee Deductions

Tuition Assistance is available upon approval by the Board of Directors and when funds are available. Tuition Assistance must be applied for on a yearly basis.

No deduction from the agreed tuition or materials fees shall be made because of absences, suspension, or expulsion of the student, regardless of the reason for absence, suspension, or expulsion.

No deduction from agreed tuition or fees shall be made because of school closings for weather, utilities, scheduled school breaks, and/or staff outages due to illness.

Custody

River Song Waldorf School will remain a neutral party and premise in regard to child custody/living arrangements. Parental access can only be denied in accordance with court documents. Proper court documents must be on file at RSWS. Staff is trained to put the safety of themselves and the children first. Staff will attempt to delay/stop unauthorized pick-ups while the authorities are notified

Supervision

The student/teacher ratio will be no less than one teacher to seven students.

Parents are required to supervise their children in the parking areas and gated garden area during drop off and pick up.

Students with Special Needs

In order to stand true to our mission, the River Song Waldorf Early Childhood will serve members with and without disabilities.

In order to accommodate members with special needs, faculty must:

- ▶ Meet with the parent to assess the needs of the child.
- ▶ Increase staff member awareness of the needs of the child.

Any questions regarding the accommodation of a child with special needs is to be directed to the Administrative Director.

Illness Policy for Children

Most children with mild illnesses can safely attend River Song. But a child may be too sick to attend if:

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the program's activities.
2. The staff cannot adequately care for the sick child without compromising the care of the other children.
3. The child has any of the following symptoms unless a health provider determines that the child is well enough to attend and that the illness is not contagious:
 - **Fever** (above 100 axillary or above 101 orally) accompanied by behavior change and other signs of symptoms of illness (i.e. the child looks and acts sick)
 - Signs or symptoms of possible severe illness (eg. Persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, lethargy)
 - **Diarrhea**: Changes from the child's usual stool pattern – increased frequency of stools, looser/watery stools, stool runs out of the diaper, or child can't get to the bathroom in time.
 - **Vomiting** more than once in the previous 24 hours
 - **Mouth sores** with drooling
 - **Rash** with a fever or behavior change
4. The child has any of the following diagnoses from a health provider (until treated and/or no longer contagious):
 - Infectious conjunctivitis/pink eye (with eye discharge) until 24 hours after treatment started
 - Scabies, head lice, or other infestation – until 24 hours after treatment and free of nits
 - Impetigo – until 24 hours after treatment started
 - Strep throat scarlet fever or other strep infection – until 24 hours after treatment started and the child is free of fever
 - Pertussis– until five days after treatment started.
 - Tuberculosis until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious
 - **Chicken Pox*** until six days after the start of rash or all sores have crusted over
 - Mumps until nine days after start of symptoms (swelling of "cheeks")
 - Hepatitis A until seven days after start of symptoms (e.g. jaundice)
 - Measles until six days after start of rash
 - Rubella (German measles until six days after start of rash
 - Oral herpes (if a child is drooling or lesions cannot be covered) until lesions heal
 - Shingles (if lesions cannot be covered until lesions are dry

Adapted from: Caring for Our Children, American Academy of Pediatrics and American Public Health Association, 1992

*If your child is **unimmunized** against chicken pox, and you know that your child has been exposed to chicken pox, please refrain from bringing your child to school until 20 days have passed or until sores have crusted over.

For children who become ill at school:

Staff will immediately attempt to contact the parents or someone who has been listed on the child's Emergency Contact Form.

Note: A child may be exposed to contagious diseases in any school environment, including River Song.

Administration of Medications

All Early Childhood Faculty and staff must, according to licensing regulations, attend Medication Administration Training. To facilitate safe administration of medications we must have the following from parents:

- 1) A current permission slip with the current date on it.
- 2) The permission slip must also include what time, route, dosage, and side effects are for that medication.
- 3) The medicine must be in its original bottle (pharmacies will split the medication into two bottles upon request.)
- 4) The medicine must be removed after dosage period has expired.

Staff responsibilities

- 1) The staff member administering the meds must give the child the medication and log the time, date, mode, child, medication name, and employee signature in the Medications Log binder located in the kitchen.
- 2) Faculty and staff must then return the medication to the locked medication cabinet. Faculty and staff are never allowed to cut pills for children.
- 3) If a child has an expired medication in the locked medications cabinet, faculty and staff must give this medication to the parents of the child whose medication it belongs to.

Walk Permission

By signing the Parent Agreement form for the policies in our parent handbook I give permission for my child to go on walk through the Springmeadows and Brookhaven Condominium Association property in the company of River Song Waldorf School staff. I will not hold Springmeadows and Brookhaven Condominium Association liable for anything that may happen to my child while on the property. I understand that the children also walk to Spring Creek and spend time near the water.

Photo Permission

By signing the parent agreement form for the policies in our parent handbook I give River Song Waldorf School permission to use photos of my child and/or family at River Song Waldorf School and/or at River Song events for promotional material. By signing this permission form I understand that River Song may use photographs of my child and/or family on the school's promotional flyers, forms, handouts, newsletters and website. If you do not wish to have your child's photo taken please ask the director to make a note in your file.

Field Trip Permission

Any field trip permission forms will be provided for signature on an as needed basis.

Child Protective Services (CPS)

Preventative Policy

In all childcare centers and schools, the safety and well-being of children is of foremost concern. Because this is the case, all employees are required to report any suspected child abuse, regardless of who is suspected or where the abuse may have occurred. Judgment of actual abuse is not made at the school. It is the responsibility of the appropriate state agency to investigate the allegation and make a judgment. The school's role is to report any conditions which indicate the possibility of suspected abuse. It is the responsibility of the school to insure that each staff member is informed of the child abuse reporting law and reminded of the responsibility to report suspicions of abuse to the appropriate agency. Records of reports and accompanying details must also be maintained.

Child Abuse:

As a licensed child care center we are required to report any suspected child abuse to The Department of Human Services.

Child Abuse Reporting Law

Under the "Child Protection Act of 1987" (C.R.S. 19-3-301) in the Colorado Children's Code, child care center workers are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect. The law at 19-3-304 states that if a child care worker has "reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child is being subjected to abuse or neglect or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect shall immediately report or cause a report to be made of such fact to the county department or local law enforcement agency."

"Abuse" or "child abuse or neglect" means an act or omission in one of the following categories which threatens the health or welfare of a child: skin bruising, tissue swelling, or death; any case in which a child is subjected to sexual assault or molestation, sexual exploitation, or prostitution; any case in which a child is in need of services because the child's parents, legal guardian, or custodian fails to take the same actions to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision that a prudent parent would take.

If at any time a staff member reasonably suspects child abuse, it is the responsibility of that staff member to report or to cause a report to be made of this suspicion to the local county department of social or human services at 970-498-6990 or to the police department. It is not staff's role to investigate suspected abuse – only to report it. Persons who make a good faith report are immune from civil and criminal liability. Additionally, the law provides for the protection of the identity of the reporting party.

A child care worker who fails to report suspected child abuse or neglect commits a class 3 misdemeanor and will be punished as provided in section 18-1-106, C.R.S. The staff person could also be liable for damages "proximately caused thereby."

Dismissal Policy

River Song Waldorf Early Childhood reserves the right to dismiss, whether temporarily or permanently, any student when, in the opinion of the Faculty and the Board of Trustees, such action is deemed necessary and appropriate and/or is deemed in the best interest of the student or class involved. In the event of temporary dismissal, re-enrollment will be contingent upon all scheduled financial obligations being current and Faculty and Board of Trustees approval. In such a case, an exit interview will also be conducted with the parent.

Philosophy of River Song Waldorf School

We understand that our families come from a wide range of experiences and cultures. In the past, some of our families spent all of their formative and school years in a Waldorf setting. Others were not necessarily even aware what a Waldorf school was until they came through our doors. We know from experience that both of these types, and all the points in-between, can become a wonderful addition to our story!

We provide the following information to get everyone on the same page, so to speak. Because, even if you were raised in a Waldorf home or school, we may do things a little differently.

What is Waldorf Education?

Simply put, a Waldorf education allows children to PLAY! It allows children to be children, uninterrupted by outside perceptions of what others THINK they should be experiencing. Young children, unencumbered by the media and unnecessary and artificial restraints, benefit greatly from experiencing their world on their own terms. This can be seen in the wonderful games they make up during their outside play, their exploration of the natural world around them, wet-on-wet water painting and countless hours of playing pretend.

This is not to say that they are allowed to do whatever they want, whenever they want. Adults are there to guide them from activity to activity, without unduly tearing them away from the imaginary world they were just in. Children are also supervised to make sure games are safe, while still allowing for some reasonable assessment of risk. For example: children are allowed to climb trees, but must show that they can get up and down from them without assistance, and may only climb to certain heights). Every opportunity is also given to help children learn to work things out for themselves in a safe, social environment.

Adults act primarily as buffers to the outside world for the children without stepping too directly into their games. When a child is hurt or is hurting someone, the teacher is there. However, they are not stepping in and telling the children, “This is the way you must play the game.” It is a lovely balance that is of great benefit to both the children and the adults in their lives!

Welcome to the world of Waldorf!

Curriculum

The focus of the River Song Waldorf Early Childhood curriculum is to:

- ▶ Nurture the imagination and wonder
- ▶ Spark a love of learning and a sense of pride in accomplishment
- ▶ Provide an environment free of the unhealthy and unnecessary pressures from teachers to sit for long periods and memorize abstract information too early, and pressure from peers to reenact behaviors from television
- ▶ Lay the groundwork for formal academic learning later on

Curriculum Activities

The major curriculum activities include:

- ▶ Free play indoors and outdoors
- ▶ Exposure to nature
- ▶ Circle time
- ▶ Exploration of fairy tales
- ▶ Painting
- ▶ Baking
- ▶ Handwork (modeling with beeswax and clay, sanding wood)
- ▶ Celebration of seasonal activities
- ▶ Guidance

Expected behavior for all students

- ▶ Respectful conduct towards teachers and others.
- ▶ Willing participation and following of instructions.
- ▶ Respect and protect school and personal property.

Discipline

In our early childhood setting, we strive to hold the balance between freedom of movement and loving kindness for the children, and holding firm and loving boundaries that allow all to feel safe and secure. There are some behaviors that require little more than a singing request for "Walking feet" inside. If the child does not slow down, we may physically touch the child gently and remind them that we walk indoors, and they may go outside to run.

We always try to remind them of the right behavior before we talk about alternatives or give consequences. Another example is "we use our best manners at the table", if a child is playing with their food. If that does not work, we will go to their chair and gently remind them with a whisper in their ear that they need to use their water for drinking, for example. If the child does not respond to cues, we may take the glass away briefly, if they continue to play with it. "I will give this back when you are ready to drink out of it instead of..."

We are here to help the children to remember or learn for the first time, ways to be respectful, helpful, and kind to others around them. Good communication is key, and it is a skill that we as adults are still working on, too. It is more important that we help a child communicate his or her feelings of frustration when a child had taken a toy away or done some harm emotionally. They need to communicate, "It hurt my feelings when you said you would never give me a turn on the swing". The adult can also help communicate this for the child that is too upset to speak. It is important for both the child who is hurting and the child who hurt someone to hear good communication happening and ways to prevent it from happening again. "Johnny, Mary is so upset. She tells me that you said you will not ever get off the swing to give her a turn. Is that true? (Give the child the benefit of the doubt...often the hurting child has misunderstood or is being overly sensitive!)" We give both children our sympathy and listening, and maintain full attention to the situation in the hopes of truly understanding what communications skills broke down and how we can help.

Dangerous or Violent Situations

There are times when a child will do something very dangerous or violent. First, we must attend to the child who is acting out, and ask for help from another adult for the other child if he or she has hurt someone. The next thing we must do is to calm and reassure the child that all will be OK. If you have ever done something terrible or dangerous, you may remember feeling out of control, scared, anxious, etc. Let the child feel safe before asking the all important question, "What happened?" What happened? is a great open ended question. It gives the child the opportunity to tell you what they experienced. It may often tell you a great deal about what led up to the incident, and lead to further discussion about where things went off track.

Once you find out the whole story, most often the child who acted out was feeling threatened or out of control of his/her surroundings, unable to communicate their needs, etc. A therapeutic approach to reintegrating them in to play is to make sure they have talked it out, give them skills for next time, and stay close to them for a while, getting them involved in what you are doing or taking an interest in what they would like to play next. Often apologies need to be made (see thoughts on saying "I'm sorry" below), and all need to feel safe and calm before returning to play. Punishment is not usually necessary, unless the act was repeated, terribly unsafe (we never throw shovels. Please sit down and cool off. You may take a break from playing with shovels for a while.), or harmful to an innocent person. If that is the case, we will have them sit out of play, preferably with an adult, to observe how other children are playing cooperatively.

Saying "I'm Sorry".

Saying "sorry" often glosses over the real problems at hand. It is important for children to hear what "I'm sorry" really means and when it is used appropriately. While we do want children to express their regrets if they have hurt someone else, we want them to be sincere in their communication. Therefore, we do not send Jane off to say "I'm sorry" to Jack. We may say, as the adult, "Oh Jack, I am so sorry that happened to you. Jane, why did you hit Jack? Oh, I see. Jane, you were scared that Jack was trying to push you off the ladder? Jack, were you trying to push Jane off the ladder? You wanted to be first? Was Jane here before you? Then you needed to wait, not push. Wow, Jane that must have been so scary! I

am so sorry that happened to you. We want everyone to be safe on the slide don't we? OK, so show me how to wait for your turn safely." Then we watch them and reinforce good habits and manners around taking turns. Making a child say "I'm sorry", especially if they are not sorry, will lead to a bad habit of insincere communication and saying things in order to please others, instead of saying things that are true in one's own heart and loving. We want to teach loving communication, not empty words.

If there is a child who is repeatedly challenging and does not seem to respond to these solutions, please talk to the lead classroom teacher for ways to deal with the situation. The lead teacher strives to maintain excellent communication with the parents and can help communicate and problem solve with all involved.

✓ ***Note: The dignity of the individual child must be respected and protected. Therefore, personal matters should be discussed: only in private, only when necessary, and only with authorized staff. A child who needs help should not be an item of gossip.***

What Your Child Needs For School

Please label child's name on all items!

- 1) Lunch in a basket with two cloth napkins and any utensils required. Please save sugary items for home. Water is provided.
- 2) Inside shoes/slippers: flexible-soled, secure on foot (i.e. stays on, natural material (if possible)).
- 3) Weather appropriate clothing, free of television/media/movie characters.
- 4) Sunhat and winter hat.
- 5) Weather appropriate and complete change of clothes, including socks and undergarments.
- 6) Nap items (for full-day children) include crib-sized fitted sheet or ½ twin flat, small pillow, small blanket, and soft toy.

Toys from Home

We ask families to please allow children to play with the toys we provide at school and to leave personal toys at home. In our classrooms we try to provide play items that engage the child's imagination and provide them with the opportunity for healthy group play. Classroom items are also more neutral in the arena of possession, i.e. they belong to us all, whereas toys from home are not as neutral. If your child does bring toys from home for naptime, we will ask that they be put with the nap time items.

Three Basics for a Happy School Experience

Well Fed:

Please try to have your child eat a good, healthy breakfast before school. The children expend so much energy at school and need a satisfied tummy to make the morning a happy time. Please let us know if your child has not eaten, and perhaps send something simple that they could eat on the way to school or during free play time.

Well Rested:

With the lazy days of summer still lingering within us, it can be difficult to establish a rhythmical bedtime for our children. It is so important that your child get enough rest during the night. An earlier bedtime goes a long way to ensuring that your child will have the energy and enthusiasm to be at school and will help them be up early enough to be hungry for breakfast.

Well Clothed:

Send your child to school in sturdy, comfortable play clothing. We are outside every morning for a minimum of 45-50 minutes, except during extremely inclement weather, so please dress your child (or provide additional clothing) with this in mind. During the winter if they aren't wearing snow pants we require them to have two layers on their legs. Long underwear under their pants or skirt can really help insulate.

For example, appropriate footwear is a must. Comfortable, sturdy shoes appropriate for the weather (warm boots in wet snowy, weather). Tights and undershirts are highly recommended during the cooler months. Jackets and sweaters as well as warm hats will be needed on cooler days and full snow gear will be the norm during the snowy, colder months.

Request regarding Media Exposure

Here at River Song Waldorf School, we wish to foster and allow that which is within the child and which will become the basis for later creative thinking and academic learning to emerge, namely their imagination and imitative abilities. These are very powerful and beautiful abilities of the young child. Yet these abilities become distorted and colored by exposure to the powerful influences of our technological, media-saturated world. When they are exposed to these things at such a young age, their imagination becomes what someone else imagined and their imitative play is a reflection of something often extreme and removed from what the adults and others that love them offer them to imitate.

Therefore, we request that your child's exposure to television, movies, computers, and the like be minimal, if at all. We understand the impact of and magnitude of this request for some families, but feel very strongly as to the benefits of it. As we go through the year together, we will explore ideas to help us all with this.

Chalk Boards, Parent Pockets, Newsletter, Web Site

We communicate written information to families in a number of ways:

- 1) Please remember to check your parent pocket (located in the kitchen hallway) a few times a week.
- 2) Classroom chalk boards have tidbits of current issues. They are located in the cubby room on your way to your child's classroom
- 3) Most written communications are also e-mailed to families via e-mail
- 4) We post notices of upcoming events in the entryway at school – on the door, on the lunch refrigerator, or in the windows.
- 5) A school newsletter is created and sent out every other month. This is distributed via the website and through e-mail.
- 6) A school directory (student and family names and phone numbers) is published a few times per year and distributes via parent pockets and email.
- 7) Our website is www.riversongwaldorf.com

Parent Participation

There are many opportunities for you to become involved in the school community: attending parent meetings, assisting at celebrations/festivals, volunteering for workdays (or helping with a specific project such as the Newsletter or website maintenance), joining committees (fundraising, marketing), becoming a class parent, reading up on Waldorf education, etc. See your teacher or the EC Director for ways to let your presence be known. We need you!

Parent Evenings

Dates and times of Parent Evenings are listed on the school calendar. These evenings are an important time to learn about the school, your child's class, why we do what we do, and for helping us come together as partner's in your child's life. Attendance is strongly encouraged!

Celebrations

Celebrations are an important part of the young child's life. They bring a sense of the rhythms of the year, a connectedness with others, and a sense of wonder and excitement. We have many celebrations throughout the school year that go along with the seasons and holidays. Here are some of the celebrations/festival we take part in:

- 1) **Welcome Back Family Potluck and Harvest Festival:** We come together as a community to welcome new families, celebrate the bountiful season of harvest and enjoy each other's company.
- 2) **Lantern Walk/Martinmas:** A celebration with handmade lanterns and a candlelit walk bringing our inner light into the darkness.
- 3) **Winterfest:** A community event of crafts, good food, and fun!
- 4) **Hanukkah:** Singing songs, and making Latkes for snack time
- 5) **Valentine's Day:** Sharing friendship with handmade valentines.
- 6) **Carnival:** Coming to school in our pajamas and having a special day of eating pancakes and playing carnival games.
- 7) **Easter:** The excitement of an egg hunt and the wonder of new beginnings.
- 8) **Springfest:** A community day of crafts, maypole dancing, picnicking, and celebrating spring!

Fundraising

Fundraising efforts are a vital part of RSWS existence! Adult volunteers are encouraged to contribute their time on a committee for one or more of the school fundraisers. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact the Director.

In the Classroom

Volunteers are utilized in specific classes as needed. Parents and college students are the main source for these volunteers, serving in various capacities. Volunteers must be briefed on River Song Waldorf Early Childhood philosophy, policies, and procedures. Substitutes are always welcome, see the Director to get information about being on the "sub list".