



# Berkeley Rose Waldorf School

## Parent Handbook

2018-2019

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A vision of the whole child, whose development –  
physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual – unfolds in stages,  
A curriculum carefully designed to nurture  
and support the growth of the child through each developmental stage,  
With the goal of producing free human beings, capable, in themselves,  
of imparting purpose and direction to their lives.  
--Rudolf Steiner

**WELCOME!**

We are so glad that your family has chosen the Berkeley Rose Waldorf School. You have become a part of a community of families who share a common dream of providing their children a joyful, caring, rhythmic, imaginative, and wholesome environment to thrive in, and where all aspects of each child are supported and developed through academics, social/emotional health, and motor skills at the appropriate developmental time.

In all of its actions in the classroom, Berkeley Rose strives to:

- Respect and protect childhood
- Ensure our students become contributing and beneficial citizens of the world
- Follow the principles and standards of Waldorf education

As a community, Berkeley Rose strives to offer a compassionate, open, and diverse environment. Our school honors the world's cultural contributions within our curriculum and community festivals. It is a school that is accessible and judgment-free, and works with families in exploring and discovering the best choices for their children in a culture brimming with options.

Berkeley Rose is a representative community of diversity, welcoming students of any gender, race, religion, ethnic, and financial background. It does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational or admissions programs and policies. The school is a nonprofit 501(c)(3).

The nursery program is licensed through the state of California and serves children 2.5 - 6 years old. Kindergarten is part of the Early Childhood program and serves 5 and 6 year olds. The grades program currently serves grades 1 - 5, with expansion in the future.

Berkeley Rose does not provide transportation for students at the school and we encourage walking, biking, carpooling, and alternative methods of transport.

Please respect our staff and teachers' time and privacy by calling the main number if your matter is not urgent or of a personal nature.

**Sick or tardy attendances should be reported by sending an email to [office@berkeleyrose.org](mailto:office@berkeleyrose.org) by 8:30 am.**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### ***Nursery Program***

Mailing Address:  
1442A Walnut St. #395  
Berkeley CA 94709

School Address-*Please do not send mail to this address:*  
2138 Cedar St.  
Berkeley CA 94709

#### ***Kindergarten and Grades Programs***

2515 Hillegass, 1st Fl  
Berkeley CA 94704

Main Number, Fax & Voice Mail: (510) 859-ROSY (7679)

### **COMMUNICATION POLICY**

The relationship between child, parent, and teacher is an important one, dependent on mutual respect, and openness. Parents are invited to share their questions and concerns at parent evenings, in scheduled conferences, and in conversations with their teacher. It is our hope that we can all grow and learn together in the spirit of community. The following policy arises out of the expectation that everyone will practice compassion, communicate directly and clearly, and expect the best from one another. We at all times encourage you to speak directly to the person with whom you have an issue, concern, question, or pressing matter.

## **Community-Wide Communications Policy**

- Expect the best!
- Practice respectful communication at all times.
- Direct speech, which includes:
  - Speaking directly to the teacher, parent, employee, or colleague with whom you have an issue, concern, question, or pressing matter.
  - Avoiding third-party conversations.
  - Avoiding gossip, "parking lot conversations," and hurtful or critical speech when speaking about others.
  - Avoiding bringing concerns to the office.
  - Avoiding the use of electronics to discuss important matters.

Berkeley Rose is a "content-free email/text" community. This means that all matters are discussed in person or over the phone, never via email or text. Email/text should be used for planning and requesting meetings and phone conversations.

- Address issues in a timely manner. Be proactive; don't wait to bring something forward. We cannot move toward resolution if we are ignorant about a situation. Addressing issues early prevents further escalation of the situation or problem.
- Avoid speaking about your concerns (at home, the park, or at school) when your children or other parents are in earshot.

## **How to Address an Issue**

We have the following protocol in place for anyone who needs to discuss an issue with a person at Berkeley Rose.

- Speak directly to the person with whom you have a concern, question, or pressing matter.
- The person will summarize back to you what s/he hears, and provide you with a plan for a resolution and timeline, if necessary. If more consultation is needed with colleagues, she/he will schedule a second meeting with you to discuss the timeline/plan.
- Allow the person of concern time to respond appropriately, avoiding "checking in" before the proposed follow-up meeting.
- Attend a follow-up conversation regarding the issue. This provides an opportunity for both parties to update, clarify, and respond. It keeps the concerned party involved and in direct dialogue about the issue.
- If things remain unresolved after the first 4 steps, it is time to request assistance (see below).

## **Groups/Email Communication List Guidelines**

The school provides the parents google group as a forum for the parents to share news, make asks, and communicate. We ask that parents please do so with these guidelines in mind at all times:

1. If you have a grievance with an individual, please contact them directly and provide them with an opportunity for a conversation. One of the most important values of our school is our direct communication policy.
2. If you are concerned about how the forum is being used and have questions about what types of posts are allowed, please contact the administration by emailing [office@berkeleyrose.org](mailto:office@berkeleyrose.org) and we will try to answer your questions.

3. The parents group is not currently moderated by the school. In the past, when there have been disputes, we have managed to guide the conversations offline and keep the forum intact. We would like to continue to keep it this way in an effort to allow fluid and timely communications.
4. You can change your settings to receive a daily or weekly digest or opt out of emails entirely and still be able to access the parent forum online via your google groups. You don't need a gmail account to access your google groups. If you have questions about how to do this, please contact [office@berkeleyrose.org](mailto:office@berkeleyrose.org). If you are not happy with the amount of emails you are receiving - this parent group is quite active in their posts - please log into your google group settings and change your delivery settings. By default, all parents are added to the parents google group and are set to receive each email as it is generated.
5. Lastly, please be kind, whether you are giving or receiving feedback, and please attempt to resolve grievances among yourselves and not over the airwaves.

We've outlined some basic do's and don'ts. The list won't cover everything, but hopefully should give enough examples that you can use it to navigate on items which haven't been explicitly addressed. To access this list please click [here](#).

### **BigSIS PORTAL**

BigSis will be used to access all your family's information (emergency, contact, health, academic reports, attendance, etc.). A sign up link is sent to all parents after enrollment. You will be able to access your own personal information as well as your child's, including student reports.

### **WEEKLY COMMUNICATION**

The school will send a weekly newsletter that will be sent via email to enrolled families. Upcoming events, festival preparation, community requests, and timely information will be included in this correspondence.

### **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

It is important that teachers be informed about events in their students' lives that could affect their happiness and sense of wellbeing. Here are some examples of things you will want to share with your child's teacher:

- Your child has had a difficult morning or is anxious about coming to school.
- Your child's eating patterns have changed.
- There will be or has been a birth in the family.
- There is or has been an illness, hospitalization, or death in the family.
- There has been or will be a separation or divorce in the family.
- You or your spouse will be traveling.
- You are having visitors for an extended period.
- You are remodeling your house or moving.
- You are working longer hours.

**Here are examples of things to tell the administrative office, who in turn will share the information with the teacher**

- Your child will be absent due to illness or vacation. Please let us know the nature of any illness when you call, before 8:30 a.m.

- Someone not listed on your information/emergency form will pick up your child. We cannot release your child to anyone who is not on this form without your written permission.
- You (or someone else) will pick up your child at an unusual time.
- There is new medical information we need to know about, such as a newly discovered allergy.

### **PARENT EVENINGS**

Berkeley Rose schedules evenings with its parent body several times a year. Within these meetings, teachers and parents will explore the curriculum, work on projects, and discuss various topics that support and enhance the Waldorf education experience. There is an important social aspect to these occasions in that they help build a circle of loving adults around the children. Please save the dates listed on your calendar and plan on attending. Both parents are highly encouraged to attend.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITS & CONFERENCES**

Bi-annual parent-teacher conferences provide an opportunity for sharing impressions, concerns, and goals for the child by both parent and teacher, and can deepen our understanding of the child as well as strengthen our work together. They usually occur during the late fall and in the spring. The child will not be present at these meetings. Your teacher will provide more information.

Visits with families, in their homes, are scheduled before the fall term begins for all Early Childhood classes, as well as first grade. They give the children an opportunity to feel the connection between home and school. These visits also give the teacher a picture of the child's home or family life, which can be helpful in understanding the child more deeply.

### **GRADES PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES & PROGRESS REPORTS**

Two parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year for all grades. Conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Mid year reports are provided for the upper grades at the end of the first semester in January and a final progress report is provided at year's end. Final conferences and reports reflect on the goals/performance for the year and include recommendations for the summer. Reports are accessed through our BigSis Portal.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL POLICIES**

#### **Enrollment**

Enrollment at Berkeley Rose Waldorf School requires a non-refundable tuition deposit of 10% of the annual tuition and a signed Enrollment and Tuition Policies Contract ("Contract"). The tuition deposit should be made payable to Berkeley Rose Waldorf School and should be included with the completed Contract. This deposit will be credited to the last tuition payment for the Academic Year.

## **Enrollment Forms**

Parents are provided with information and enrollment forms through our BigSis Portal.

Early Childhood Forms include, but are not limited to:

- Child's Pre-Admission Health History, Parent's Report
- Child's Pre-Admission Health History, Physician's Report
- Childcare Center Notification of Parents' Rights
- Personal Rights
- Identification and Emergency Information
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment

ALL forms must be filled out, signed and returned to the office before admission to Berkeley Rose Waldorf School. The administrative staff must be given sufficient time to review and record all student forms prior to the student's admittance.

Prior to admission to Berkeley Rose Waldorf School, children shall be immunized against diseases as required by the California Code of Regulations, SB-277. The medical record form will need to be returned to the office prior to, or within 30 calendar days following, the enrollment of a child.

## **Medical Exemption**

It is permitted to exempt a child from immunization only if a medical exemption is provided by a licensed physician.

## **Payment Options**

Tuition and all other school-related payments are handled by FACTS Tuition Management Agency. This service allows the school to be more flexible in the payment options given to its families, and provides families the ability to create a payment plan over the course of the school year, in addition to providing receipts, payment assistance, and optional tuition insurance. A registration fee is charged each year by the FACTS system.

Families may securely and easily set up automatic bank-withdrawals, or use MasterCard, American Express, or Discover (a handling fee of 2.5 percent for credit card payments is applied to the total). Families who pay in full or two payments have the additional option of paying by check/money order, mailed to FACTS.

Bounced checks will incur a \$30 returned-check fee. A late fee of \$50 will be charged when a payment becomes 7 days past due.

Any unpaid balance as of June 1, 2019 will accrue interest at the rate of 12% per month, compounded monthly.

Berkeley Rose Waldorf School reserves the right to refuse a child entry into class for non-payment of tuition.

Should there be any change in tuition during the course of the academic year, you will receive 30 days written notice.



### **Tuition & Deposit Obligations & Refunds** □

Berkeley Rose Waldorf School cannot reimburse families for absence due to illness or temporary withdrawal. Refunds will be granted based on the terms described below.

The deposit is not refundable except under the following circumstances:

- Student moves outside the greater East Bay (20 miles or more from school) with 60 days prior written notice.
- The student experiences extended physical illness and is unable to attend school.

### **Tuition Obligations & Refunds**

- □ If the student withdraws on or before August 1st, no additional fees are due (the deposit will not be refunded.)
- If the student withdraws between August 2nd and September 1st, 25% of the annual contracted tuition is payable.
- If the student withdraws between September 2nd and November 1st, 50% of the annual contracted tuition is payable.
- If the student withdraws anytime after December 1st, the whole contracted tuition is due.
- If a student is dismissed for cause (e.g., a serious violation of the school rules as determined by the grievance committee), the undersigned must meet the full contractual obligation as stated above.
- If dismissal is mutually agreed upon, tuition is due for the period of time beginning September 1st until the end of the month of dismissal. Please note that all new students are on a six-week trial period.

### **Changes of Staff/Teachers**

All staff is hired on an at-will basis, and may leave or be terminated at any time. The family understands it is enrolling the child in the school to receive a Waldorf education, therefore the dismissal or departure of a teacher does not constitute grounds for a child to leave the program, or a family to be released from financial obligation. In addition, a change in enrollment in a program or class may affect number of assistants or specialists employed, but will not compromise curriculum/services offered.

### **School Closures** □

The school may be required to close operations due to unforeseen disaster, such as flood or earthquake, and families would be responsible for care in this instance. The number of uncompensated disaster days, or "acts of God," is not to exceed three. Anything beyond this will be compensated on a daily prorated basis.

### **Agreements Signed in Tuition Contract** □

Each family is provided with a copy of the Tuition Contract signed and submitted to the school. If you have not had all your questions answered in regard to this contract, please contact the Administrative Office.

As part of this contract each family agrees to the following:

- I have read and agree to the above terms and conditions and agree to pay tuition on time according to the schedule I select within the FACTS tuition management system.
- I understand FACTS enrollment information will be provided in a timely manner, and agree to complete the FACTS enrollment process prior to July 1st.

- I understand that the student deposit will be refunded only in the event a student is denied re-enrollment or is otherwise exempted from the full-year obligations as provided above.
- I understand that Berkeley Rose Waldorf School may, without exclusion of other actions, withhold school records or suspend the student if tuition obligations are not met by the parents or guardians.
- I understand that Berkeley Rose Waldorf School reserves the right to expel any student who demonstrates repeated behavior that is destructive/harmful to the school environment, experience, or other enrolled students, or the student is not willing to abide by school policies.
- I understand that my child may be expelled as a result of uncooperative behavior from the parent/guardian.

## **WELLNESS GUIDELINES**

Your child's right to, and need for, a safe, healthy environment is one of Berkeley Rose's top priorities. All Berkeley Rose Waldorf School employees are trained in CPR and First Aid. For the wellness of the teachers and the children who attend Berkeley Rose and their families, we request that each family do its part in ensuring a healthy school and home environment. Please make sure that you have a plan in place for when your child is ill or needs to be picked up from school. State law requires that our school have a health policy in place, and that it include certain guidelines.

It is in your child's best interest to have a yearly check-up, especially if he or she is less than seven years old. A physical examination is required by state law before entering the early childhood program.

### **Well-Being**

Berkeley Rose Waldorf School teachers take a special interest in your child's health and would be happy to discuss it with you at any time. A well-rested child who is dressed warmly and fed a wholesome diet is best prepared to withstand the onslaught of winter colds and ailments. It is normal, however, for children to experience illnesses as they grow.

Children often need to explore and play very close to each other. Social interactions, physical exercise, and creative play are all learning activities. At our school we strive to provide an environment that promotes healthy active children. We wash hands regularly, clean the bathrooms, and discourage sharing food or mouthing toys.

### **Sleep**

When a child is well rested, his or her day flows in a harmonious way. Just as children are carried along by the regular rhythms of the school day, so they are nourished by the regular rhythms at home. As difficult as it is in these modern times to establish set mealtimes and bedtimes, we strongly encourage you to do so. It is very important for young children to go to bed at the same time every night, and we recommend that this be no later than 8 p.m. Please feel free to contact the teacher if you would like some ideas for making this transition a successful one for parent and child.

### **Diet**

Making certain your child has three meals a day of whole foods free of sugar, pesticides, and synthetic ingredients will help them to feel well throughout their day. We encourage providing

balanced meals and healthy snacks for your child each day. Please see the Food section of this handbook for more information.

### **Peanut-free Policy**

The school recognizes that peanut allergies represent a health and safety hazard, which can have serious consequences for those who have such an allergy and the safety of all. In order to protect those students, staff, employees, visitor and guests of the school from an environment that may be harmful to them because of such an allergy, and because of possible harm to personal well-being, the school hereby prohibits the use, serving, or selling of peanuts, peanut butter or any product containing peanuts or peanut oil by students, staff members, employees, visitors, or guests in the building and grounds.

This peanut prohibition will be in effect 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and will apply to anyone present on the school grounds at Cedar or Hillegass or any school-related events.

### **Developing Illness**

As parents, you know better than the teacher how your child appears and acts when he or she is ill. The lively environment of school is not a soothing environment for a child who is not well. Please make arrangements so that the child can be in a quiet and restful place when he or she is ill. All working parents know the feeling of needing to go to work when a little one is not feeling well. The teachers are very sympathetic to this situation, but urge parents to arrange back-up child care.

After an illness, children often appear healthy in the morning, but are still not up to the vigorous activity of school. See the Berkeley Rose Waldorf School Health Policy below and please refer to it for our guidelines on illnesses and how to help keep Berkeley Rose a healthy environment.

### **Medications at School**

Please give your child medicine at home. If a child must take medication at school, it must come in its original container on which the physician's instructions are clearly legible. Parents must also complete paperwork before any medication can be administered. Children are not to have medicine in their lunches; it is to be handled adult-to-adult. Vitamins and supplements, such as cod liver oil pills, are treated as medicine.

### **Injuries at School**

Cuts and scrapes are washed with water and soap and bandaged, if applicable. Bumps will receive a cold compress. More serious injuries, such as a bite from another child, are documented with a state licensing form, and a phone call to the parent and to licensing. In an emergency, we will use the information you have provided regarding contact numbers, physician's name and phone numbers, and specific instructions. In case no parent or guardian can be reached, your signed consent will allow us to give the medical attention your child might need.

### **Special Needs**

Please let the school office and your child's teacher know if your child requires special needs of any kind. It is helpful to your child if new information is shared with the school as it becomes available. For example, if your child suddenly needs glasses or has a hearing loss or any other physical condition that requires special attention. Inform us of any allergies so that we do not mistake those symptoms (sneezing, wheezing, watery eyes) for symptoms of contagion.

If your child has had a speech and language evaluation or any other outside assessment or evaluation, please be sure that the office has a copy of the report for our files and please share that information with your child's teacher.

### **Special Needs Services**

As a developing school, Berkeley Rose Waldorf School is not able to enroll students with certain special needs. We do not offer programs for significant medical, cognitive, psychological, or developmental disabilities.

If Berkeley Rose is not able to meet the needs of any student, the school will assist you, to the best of its ability, in finding proper placement for your child.

### **Adaptive Programs**

If your child needs an adaptive program for any reason, please communicate these needs to your child's teacher. Berkeley Rose will make every attempt to comply with your requests. However, we cannot guarantee compliance in every case.

### **Referrals and Educational Recommendations**

Your child's teacher might recommend an outside assessment or evaluation based upon observations, participation, and performance in the classroom. These evaluations include, but are not limited to:

- Hearing/eye/medical exam
- Psychotherapy/counseling
- Nutritional support
- Sensory-motor evaluations
- Speech therapy/occupational therapy
- Anthroposophical approaches and therapies

### **California Department of Health Services Illness Guidelines**

We are required by the Department of Social and Health Services to report any suspicion of child abuse to Child Protective Services immediately.

If there is a reported case of a disease at Berkeley Rose and your child is not vaccinated against the disease, or does not have documentation of a medical diagnosis of having had it, state law requires that you keep your child home for a medically determined period of time. In cases of life-threatening disease, state law also might request that you seek medical attention under the supervision of an appointed social worker.

If a child shows signs of illness, Berkeley Rose and its employees are required by law to reserve the right to refuse to care for the child's illness and/ or request early pick-up.

*Please research your options for sick-child care and alternate care, and have plans in place, should an illness arise.*

### **Health Policy**

Families must report to Berkeley Rose any highly infectious conditions (measles, "chicken pox," ringworm, head lice, etc.) that any member of the family contracts.

Each family must notify Berkeley Rose and keep a child home when s/he:

- has been exposed to a disease they have not been vaccinated against or had (medical proof required)
- has diarrhea

- has just developed a clear, persistent, watery nasal discharge (children are most contagious at this stage)
- has nasal discharge that s/he cannot responsibly address on her/his own with proper hygienic care
- has developed a fever of 101 F+ (child may attend after 36 drug-and fever-free hours)
- has developed a rash that has not been diagnosed by a doctor (doctor diagnosis required by law)
- has vomited (child may attend after 24 hours free of vomiting)
- has shown signs of illness (overly tired; irritable; excessive/painful coughing; not eating; complaining of aches/pains/sore throat; flushed; signs of rash; red and itchy/crusty eyes; etc.)

**Please explain the following school rules to your child**

- Please cough into the crook of the arm
- Please wash hands after using the restroom, after blowing the nose, and before eating
- Please do not share food or drink during school hours; do not place toys in mouth
- Please use the restroom for urinating/defecating (not outdoors)

Berkeley Rose does not share or disclose personal health information, unless required by law.

**Food**

Naturally, most of you already possess excellent eating habits and enjoy nutrient-rich diets. We would be remiss as educators, however, if we did not make clear our nutritional expectations. While we respect varying dietary needs and personal choice, we also acknowledge the effect diet has on the learning environment. Children learn best when they are nourished with healthy food.

**Early Childhood Program Only**

The food activities we provide the children are of the highest quality. Where possible, organic foods are used; free-range eggs; honey instead of refined sugar; and so on. Each child’s special needs are considered. Therefore, if your child has allergies or dietary considerations, please note them in the “Child’s Preadmission Health History; Parent’s Report” form you were asked to complete upon your enrollment (all enrollment forms can be found on our website).

**Lunch & Snack Guidelines**

Snack is served to all children each day in the early childhood morning programs, including kindergarten. Each day, your child will need to bring a healthy lunch from home. Please check with your teacher for more information, if necessary. It is with the intention of best supporting our students that the following guidelines are offered:

- No junk food. If it could be sold in a vending machine, this is a good indication that it might be considered junk food (soda, chips, candy, candy bars, gum, chocolate, sugary treats, etc.)
- No sport drinks - obviously, these drinks are high in sugars, additives, and dyes.
- No food sharing - due to various food allergies in the class, this is the one moment where the sharing of food is actively discouraged. Your child must eat what you pack for her/his lunch.

At the orientation, your child’s teacher will provide more details about what foods your child should bring.

## Food Safety

Items such as lunch meats and dairy products require refrigeration and must be sent to school in a sealed, insulated pack with a cold pack inside, or insulated thermos. Please note that we are unable to heat up individual lunches for children. Items that require cold packs/refrigeration/insulated thermos include:

- All meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs.
- All cooked foods (casseroles, rice, etc.)
- All dairy (yogurt, milk, cheese, sour cream, etc.)

## Packaging

We also ask that you be mindful to not create extra garbage with prepackaged foods and use reusable containers as much as possible. This is an important part of our children's education.

## Lunch Backpacks and Baskets

Grade school children should bring their lunch in an insulated lunch backpack that fits the child proportionately and comfortably. Families are asked to please include two cloth napkins or napkin and placemat in the lunch. Early childhood children should bring their lunch to school in a handheld basket. Please ask your teacher for further descriptions if necessary.

## SAFETY PROCEDURES

One of the main priorities for the Berkeley Rose Waldorf School is the health and safety of our students. We want to assure you that BRWS' Emergency Plan is in place to respond to different emergency situations such as an earthquake, a fire, or a shelter-in-place/lock-down. There are also procedures for family reunification after such an event.

The school regularly conducts drill exercises to familiarize students, teachers, and staff with the school protocols.

## What You Can do to Prepare for a School Emergency

Please review and take the following actions so that if an emergency takes place your child is safe:

1. Ensure that your child's emergency contact information is accurate, current, and updated in our BigSIS database.
2. Anytime you pick up your child early from school it is important that they are signed out; in Early Childhood on the roster and for grades at the front desk.
3. Send a 1 gallon ziplock bag with your child's name clearly marked. In this bag place a few non-perishable snacks. Food should be peanut-free and low in sugar. **Please drop bags off at the Cedar or Hillegass campus' front office, where your child attends.** These bags will be returned at the end of the year.

Note: The school has an emergency supply of water at each campus for emergency purposes.

## In Case of a School Emergency

Although your first reaction would be to call or rush to your child's school, please follow the steps listed below:

1. DO NOT call or rush to your child's school.  
Phone lines and staff are needed for emergency response efforts.

2. **DO NOT** phone/text your child's teacher.  
Phone lines and faculty are needed for emergency response efforts and therefore are discouraged from using cell phone communication.
3. **DO CALL** our Emergency Off-Campus Out-of-State Message Line for information regarding safety, location and estimated time of pick up.  
In the case of an Emergency, and as soon as we are able, this message will be updated.

Please program into your phone as:  
**"EMERGENCY - Berkeley Rose Waldorf School"**  
Cedar Campus - (661) 527-4121  
Hillegass Campus - (662) 471-8351

### **How Will I be Reunited With my Child?**

This is what you need to know to be reunited with your child/children:

1. Parents/guardians will be directed by school or public safety officials to their child's specific location. This information will be distributed via BRWS Emergency Off-Campus Out-of-State Contact Message Line.
2. Students will be released **ONLY** to parents/guardians or other designated individuals who are documented as emergency contacts. All individuals will be required to present a valid ID such as a driver's license. Please remember to bring your ID with you, and inform your child's emergency contacts that they will be required to show proper identification if they are picking up your child. The reunification process can be time consuming, so everyone is urged to be patient.

The alternate location for the Cedar Street campus is: All Souls Parish - 2220 Cedar St., 2.5 blocks north of the school.

The alternate location for the Hillegass campus is: Willard Park, 2730 Hillegass Ave, 2 blocks south of the school.

The school has a detailed emergency response protocol, required by licensing, which is posted at the school and in the school's emergency response binder.

### **PARK SAFETY PLANS**

Berkeley Rose is an urban school and as such utilizes nearby parks for many of its outdoor periods in kindergarten and the grades. Berkeley Rose has been utilizing the public park system on a daily basis since its founding in 2009, and has developed safety rules and plans to ensure the children have an enjoyable time at the park.

Children are accompanied by an adult while walking to the park using the sidewalk and crosswalks when available. Field trip and park supervision is provided by adults who are teachers at Berkeley Rose or interns, volunteers, and/or parents. *Except for parents, adults are required to have passed fingerprinting/ background checks, and at least one teacher is required to have received CPR/First Aid and safety protocol training.* (Amended 8/18/2015)

## In Case of Injury/Emergency

- Perform basic first aid
- Ask another adult to:
  - 1) call 911 or **(510) 981-5911**;
  - 2) Call parents/persons on emergency form
  - 3) Call the school

Ratios for the kindergarten and grades programs' park/walk time are as follows:

- Kindergarten: One teacher to 10 children. Over 10 children: teacher and other adult.
- Grades 1-5: One adult to 12 or fewer children. Two adults with groups of 11-30. Additional parent volunteers required for field trips to museums, etc.
- Grades 6-8: One adult per class (up to 30 children) for park/walks. Additional parent volunteers required for field trips to museums, etc.

The adults/teachers will have with them:

- First aid kit
- Consent for medical treatment forms
- Information and Emergency contact forms
- Cell phone

According to the outing and the group's needs, teacher's protocol will include:

- Headcounts
- Creating a "safe container" for the children by choosing the best vantage point for reviewing their play.
- Adults will regularly review with children both respectful play and park rules. If these expectations are not met the child will sit out for a period of time with the adult.
- Boundary/usage rules and meeting spots (in the event of two adult-led groups separating) vary by park/field trip location. Please see your teacher for details.

Regarding Dogs at Parks: Dogs frequent all parks. The school has developed the following protocol to mitigate potential problems relating to their presence:

- Children will be regularly reminded not to play near or to approach dogs, nor attempt to pet them.
- Teacher/adult will assess the safety of a situation if a dog is present (leashed or not).
- If the adult assesses that the dog poses a threat, the adult will either ask the dog owner to leash the dog or move to a different part of the park. Alternatively, the adult will move the children to a different area of the park or return to school.
- Adults will avoid confrontations with dog owners, and direct dog owners to speak with the school administration, should a request for conversation arise.
- Parents will be notified should an unusual incident arise as teachers see fit

Regarding people at the parks: Public parks are open to anyone; the school has developed the following protocol to mitigate potential problems relating to people exhibiting undesirable behavior:

- Adults will observe those using the park space upon arrival, and plan usage accordingly.
- Adults will assess the behavior of all park attendees around the children at all times.
- If a person in the park is behaving or speaking inappropriately, the adult will move the children to another area of the park or return to school, depending on the situation.



- In the event of an incident, the supervising adult will call the school office to inform them of the class's departure and request that they call the police and/or the parks department.
- Parents will be notified should an unusual incident arise.

### **Emergency Numbers**

Berkeley Rose Waldorf School: (510) 859-7679

Live Oak Park Recreation Office: (510) 981-6690

Willard Park Recreation Office: (510) 981-6660

Non-Emergency Berkeley Police: (510) 981-5900

**Berkeley Police: (510) 981-5911 or 911**

*Note: Dialing 911 from a cell phone puts you in touch with the highway patrol--always use the city's local emergency phone number for more immediate and accurate response.*

Emergency Off-Campus Out-of-State Message Line for information:

Cedar Campus - (661) 527-4121

Hillegass Campus - (662) 471-8351

(Please program this phone number as "**EMERGENCY - Berkeley Rose Waldorf School**" into your call phones).

### **Park Addresses**

Codornices Park: 1201 Euclid Ave

Live Oak Park: 1301 Shattuck Ave

Top o' Dwight Park: Dwight at Hillside Avenue

Willard Park: 2730 Hillegass Ave

## **SITE PROCEDURES**

### **Parking**

Our school is like many urban schools in the area with limited parking. If you will be at school for more than 10 minutes please park your car in the surrounding two-hour parking zones, and not in the green zone at Cedar. The white zone at Hillegass is reserved for loading and unloading (drivers may not leave the car unattended--please see your child's program in "Morning Farewells," below, for more information on the drop-off process). If you will be at the Cedar school campus longer than two hours, we recommend parking at the Bank of America lot nearby (an all-day pass is much cheaper than a hefty parking ticket!). If you will be at the Hillegass school campus longer than two hours, we recommend parking at the Telegraph-Channing Garage or the 8-hour parking value zones nearby (\$1.50 per hour).

Please be aware of the below time windows in which you must drop-off and pick up your children.

## **DROP-OFF & PICK-UP POLICIES**

### **Program Hours**

Rosebud Nursery	8:30 - 12:30
Marigold Preschool	8:30 - 12:30
Sunflower & Dandelion Kindergarten	8:30 - 1:00
First - Second Grade	8:15 - 2:30
Third - Sixth Grade	8:15 - 3:00

\*All Grades pick up time is 1:45 on Thursday

### **Curb-Side Drop Off for Hillegass Campus**

Parents have the option to drop children off at the front of the school in the drop off zone between 8:00 - 8:30. The zone is available for convenient drop-off during the 30 minute arrival window and will be monitored for that time only.

If you should arrive after 8:30, the drop-off zone is no longer an option. Please park in the surrounding 2-hour zone and accompany your child into the front office.

### **Fifth and Sixth Grade**

Fifth and Sixth Grade children need to sign in at the front office before continuing on to their respective classrooms.

### **Late Arrivals for Hillegass Campus**

For safety reasons, the office must know which students are on campus each day. If for some reason your Grade or Kindergarten child is late and arrives after 8:15 or 8:30 respectively, the front office staff will provide your child with a late slip and guardians must sign the Late Arrival log book. Once receiving this, the child may walk to class and wait quietly outside the classroom until the teacher receives the child. Note: The adult may exit the school campus as soon as the book is signed.

### **Early Childhood Schedule Details**

8:30 – 8:40 Arrival  
Parents sign child in  
8:45 – 9:00 Morning Circle  
9:00 – 9:45 Free Play/Daily Activity  
9:45 - 10:00 Clean Up/Bathroom  
10:00 – 10:20 Snack  
10:20 – 10:30 Shoes on  
10:30 - 11:20 Outside Play  
11:20 - 11:35 Shoes/bathroom  
11:40 – 12:00 Story  
12:00 – 12:20 Lunch  
12:20 – 12:30 Good-bye Circle/Nature Table  
12:30 Pick-Up  
Sign child out  
Children in Afternoon Program picked up by teacher

### **Early Childhood Aftercare Schedule Details**

12:30	Bathroom/ wash hands
12:45- 2:00	Nap Time
2:00- 2:15	Bathroom/ wash hands
2:15- 3:00	Snack
3:00- 4:00	Indoor Play
4:00- 5:00	Outdoor Play
5:00- 5:30	Clean up and say goodbye

### **Early Childhood Program**

Children may begin arriving ten minutes before the official start time. It is important that all the children arrive on time ready to begin their day with their classes. It is always best to connect with the teacher and allow your child to also make that connection.

Your child's teacher will share drop-off and pick-up details at your class Orientation Evening. Please note that the Early Childhood nursery and kindergarten classes are not "drop-in" programs. Activities are planned that follow daily, weekly, and monthly rhythms and the children, therefore, are expected to attend each day. The day is best taken as a whole. It is designed to be a balance of experiences.

Please be aware that the teachers are preparing their classrooms or saying farewell, so please keep your children as peaceful as possible while in the halls before and after school.

Please always supervise your child after signing out. Before and after school, please do not allow your children to play unsupervised on the adjoining sidewalks or driveways.

At the end of the day children who are staying for the Afternoon Program, or those who have not been picked up 10 minutes after the handshake/goodbye, will be dismissed to the afternoon program teacher. Drop-in fees will be charged for children who are admitted for late pickups.

### **Nursery: Signing In & Out**

In the nursery programs, it is required by state law that parents sign their children in and out of school on a daily basis. This form is used to track the children; to know at a glance how many children are present. An emergency-response person (firefighter, etc.) would look at this to see how many children are currently attending. It is essential that this form is accurate every minute of the day. Your full signature is required in the designated area. Sign for your carpool children as well. If you forget to sign in your child(ren) we may call you to come back to the school to do so.

### **Pick-Up**

Every parent or other authorized adult has access to his/her child at any time during hours of operation. Parents must list any adult authorized to pick up their child on their child's consent form; that person will be required to show a photo ID to the office staff and have it copied and put on record as an alternate adult who can pick up your child. These adults must check in with the office prior to pick-up the first time. Parents must inform the teacher each time their child will go home with another adult.

Nursery parents can note this on the sign in/out sheet in the "comments" field, and should be verbally confirmed with the teacher during drop-off.

Please see the administrative office if there is anyone who should not sign out your child (for legal reasons), or if you need to add another person to your approved pick-up list.

### **Kindergarten and Grades Early Pick-Up**

If your child needs to leave early please stop by the front desk and sign your child out before leaving the campus.

### **Afterschool Program Start and Pick-Up Times**

Rosebud Nursery (must be 3 yrs)	12:30-5:30
Marigold Preschool	12:30-5:30
Sunflower & Dandelion Kindergarten	1:00-5:30
First/Second Grade	2:30-5:30
Third - Sixth Grade	3:00-5:30

\*All Grades start time is 1:45 on Thursdays

### **Late Pick-Up and Late Fees**

Please pick your child up promptly at the end of your child's program each day. It creates anxiety for children to be picked up late. There is a 10-minute grace period allowed at pickup time **from the school day to be reserved for unexpected delays**. After 10 minutes, remaining children will be escorted to the Afternoon Program and parents will be billed the drop in rate, billed by FACTS on a monthly basis." **Picking up children later than 5:30 pm will result in a \$5.00 per minute fee, per child.**

**Please understand that after two late pick ups after 5:30 pm, you may no longer be able to use the aftercare program for the remainder of the year.**

### **MORNING FAREWELLS**

#### **Nursery Program**

When your child is first enrolled, he or she may need you to stay for a little while. If you would like to remain with your child for a time, please discuss this with your child's teacher and follow their lead. If you stay, we will give you a task and ask that you attend to it regularly (for example: sweeping the floor, sewing, tidying the cubby area, etc.) This allows you to be present, without following your child around or trying to entertain her/him. This is beneficial for you, as you don't feel obligated to engage your child in an activity. Your child benefits because you are present, while they can explore and play freely. Eventually you will both be comfortable enough to separate with confidence.

#### **Kindergarten Program**

By the time your child enters kindergarten the morning transition goes more smoothly. If your child has challenges with morning separation, you and your child's teacher can create a plan together.

#### **Some effective goodbye rituals we have observed**

Parent gives a hug and a kiss immediately before leaving.

Parent goes into bathroom with child while the child uses the toilet.

Parent weeds the street-facing garden with the child.

Parent and child do an activity together, the same every day. (Say a nursery rhyme, greet the flowers etc.)

It is very important to leave after you say “Goodbye.” It signals to the teachers that you are **really** leaving and it signals to the child that you have confidence in the school and the teacher.

### **Grades Program**

Hillegass campus aims towards good stewardship of our natural resources. We encourage families to walk, bike, take public transportation, and/or carpool. Parents have the option to park and walk children to classrooms or drop children off at the front of the school in the drop off zone between 8:00 - 8:15. The zone is available for convenient drop-off during the 15 minute arrival window and will be monitored for that time only.

To help children transition from home life to school, we encourage the children to arrive early. This allows for the children to socialize and warm up to the classroom and school environment before Main Lesson begins promptly at 8:15. It also supports our healthy rhythm of timeliness and beginning classes as a whole group without further disruption.

### **ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY, and ABSENTEEISM**

#### **Attendance**

Regular school attendance is necessary for good learning. When children are absent, even for one day, they feel a loss. This education is experiential, and the missed experiences cannot be duplicated or made up. Please do not pull children out of school for extracurricular activities, appointments, or vacations; we want the children to feel school is important.

Four weeks of vacation are scheduled each year, as well as several holidays. Excessive absence impacts academic performance and affects the whole class, not just one child. The teacher is not required to provide work for children when academic time is missed due to illness, extracurricular activities or vacations. The school is not responsible for a child’s academic progress when absences are excessive. Frequent absence may require outside tutoring to help the child keep up.

#### **Punctuality**

Punctuality is a gift we give ourselves and our children. If adults model good attendance and punctuality, the children will learn respect for others, reliability, and develop a strong will from being consistently punctual. Morning Circle, the first activity of the day, helps the class come together and focus its energy. Late arrivals disturb the flow of the morning activities.

#### **Absences**

Please inform the office by phone or email ([office@berkeleyrose.org](mailto:office@berkeleyrose.org)) by 8:00 a.m. if your child will not be in attendance for any reason. Please give the child’s name, teacher’s name, and the reason for the absence.

Absences in excess of 20 days in one year is reason for academic probation. This may affect your child’s place in class for the upcoming year. Exception will be given for extended, consecutive medical absences such as those requiring hospitalization. There is no exception for absences due to vacation.

#### **Toys from Home**

Please keep your children’s toys and treasures safely at home where they will not be lost or broken. Children enrolled in the Nursery Afternoon Program may bring a special cuddly toy for nap time and keep it in their cubbies.

## **GENERAL DRESS GUIDELINES**

The faculty asks that clothing be simple in design and of colors in the natural world. Patterns such as stripes, plaid, floral, or solid colors are preferred. Additionally, clothing worn by Early Childhood children should not have letters, words, numerals, advertising, logos or media images. Simple, appropriate pictures or embellishments are acceptable within reason for Grades children, as well as small logos that are easily covered with a finger. It is recommended to avoid ornamentation of any sort that detracts from seeing the child before the clothing. Clothing should be easy to run and squat in; sized to fit; appropriate for the weather and the classroom; and in good repair. Shorts, skirts, and dresses should be approximately knee-length, or worn with leggings underneath. Shirts must assure coverage of the shoulders, and full coverage of the torso when the arms are fully raised above the head. No undergarments should be showing at any time.

We ask that children are dressed appropriately for the weather with consideration for their warmth, arriving to school in warm layers that may be removed as the temperature rises. Children in grades 6 through 8 will be permitted to decide for themselves whether or not to wear a jacket at outdoor recess, unless the weather is considered extreme. Some spare community items are available if students come to school in clothing that is not appropriate for the weather or does not follow the clothing guidelines. Community clothing must be returned to the school upon dismissal. Younger students will be instructed to put on a coat, hat, and/or boots by a teacher before going outside.

Children must wear closed-heel and closed-toe shoes at all times. Early Childhood children should bring soft-soled, indoor shoes. Grades children should have sturdy athletic shoes on, or available to them. All footwear should be free of lights and media images. Jewelry, temporary tattoos, hair color/bling, and nail polish must be removed prior to coming to school. Secure earring studs are acceptable. Hair should be clear of the the child's eyes and pulled back from the face for ease in range of sight. Hair, clothing and any accessories should not distract or detract from the learning process.

### **Clothing & Accessories Needed at School**

The following is a list of articles of clothing we would like each child to maintain in her/his cubby. Wet or dirty clothing will be sent home at the end of the day. Please remember to replace anything brought home.

**For the early childhood program, the following items should be clearly labeled with your child's name**

#### **Nursery Programs**

- Plain, comfy-inside, no-slip, non-marking slippers with closed toes and closed heels
- Two pairs of socks
- Two pairs of underwear
- Shirts (2 each short/long sleeve)
- Pants (2-3 pairs)
- Wool (or similar-quality, like Polartec) sweater
- Hats (winter and sun)
- Rain wear: rubber boots, rain pants, raincoat with a hood or a rain hat. Patterns and images are okay on rain gear, but please avoid gear with logos / symbols.

## **Kindergarten Program**

- Indoor shoes or slippers
- Two pairs of socks
- Two pairs of underwear
- Shirts (1 short/long sleeve)
- Pants (2-3 pairs)
- Wool (or similar-quality, like Polartec) sweater
- Hats (winter and sun)
- Mittens
- Rain wear: rubber boots, rain pants, raincoat with a hood or a rain hat. Patterns and images are okay on rain gear, but please avoid gear with logos / symbols.

## **Grades Program**

The following items should be clearly labeled with your child's name

- Wool (or similar-quality, like Polartec) sweater
- Hats (winter and sun)
- Mittens
- Rain wear: rubber boots, rain pants, raincoat with a hood or a rain hat. Patterns and images are okay on rain gear, but please avoid gear with logos / symbols.
- A water bottle with a firm closure – Sigg, Nalgene and Klean Kanteen bottles are good examples. These bottles should have tops that open easily and close tightly to avoid leakage and allow for easy access.
- An extra change of clothing in a plastic bag that will be stored in the school bag. Extra articles of clothing should include underpants, socks, tee shirts, pants, long-sleeved shirts, hats, and barrettes or hair ties.

## **LOST & FOUND**

Items that are NOT clearly labeled with the child's name are placed in the lost-and-found box, which is located in the Administrative Office. Please check it periodically for lost clothing.

Parents will be reminded in the newsletter about anything left in the Lost & Found at the end of each month. If the items are not claimed then they will be taken to The Goodwill.

## **FAMILY CONTRIBUTIONS**

### **In the Classroom**

It is never too early to cultivate a generous heart. We ask all enrolled families to participate in a weekly program of contributing fresh flowers to beautify the classrooms, to share laundry duties, and where appropriate, participate in the classroom. Through these activities we model the joys of giving and shared responsibility to the children.

Please be sure to sign up for the gifting schedule at your Orientation Evening.

### **Fundraising**

Events are vital for Berkeley Rose to grow and function. Families are expected to participate in our annual fundraising events and to help spread the word of our fundraisers.

## **Volunteer Hours**

Parent involvement is vital in all Waldorf schools. It's a way to show our children how communities are built and helps unite all families. It's also how we keep our tuitions as low as possible. Berkeley Rose requires parents to work at least 20 hours per family every year in some aspect of school improvement, support or events. Volunteer tasks are assigned at the start of school. A signed form indicating volunteer assignments will be completed with other forms during the enrollment process each year.

## **SCHOOL CULTURE**

### **Festivals**

In Waldorf schools we celebrate festivals to connect us with the cycles of nature and the seasons, to establish a yearly rhythm for the children, and to strengthen our community. Annual cultural and seasonal festivals help us nourish our souls through the sharing of stories, food, songs, and activities. Through celebration we seek to foster wonder, reverence and gratitude for the world in which we live.

Teachers, parents and children work together in anticipation to express the unique character of each festival in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and curriculum.

In addition to the community-wide festivals listed here, teachers celebrate other festivals in their classrooms; including those connected to the different cultures being studied in the curriculum or the traditions of students in the classroom. Your child's teacher will provide further information about individual classroom celebrations at the Orientation evening.

### **Harvest Faire**

In the autumn we celebrate the bounty of harvest time and share legends and myths associated with the season, including stories of St. Michael. In the Celtic tradition, the ancient festival of Michaelmas celebrates the harvest, human courage and the triumph of light over darkness. The children prepare for the festival through singing, drama and the creation of crafts. The community gathers and celebrates in a park with different activities and community merriment.

### **Lantern Walk**

Each year our Nursery, Kindergarten and First, Second and Third Grades participate in a Lantern Walk in honor of St. Martin to celebrate a festival of inner light. The children prepare for this festival by singing songs, crafting lanterns and listening to tales that focus upon finding light within the darkness.

The community gathers for an evening Lantern Walk. As darkness falls, the children venture out into the night with their lanterns and walk along an illuminated path. Families sing while they walk in a mood of inner quiet and reverence.

### **Advent Spiral**

As the days grow noticeably shorter and the nights longer, we all begin to yearn for the return of the light. This is the time of year when we seek our inner light and carry it through the dark days of winter. To symbolize this each December we participate in a Winter Garden. A spiral path is laid out of boughs of evergreens. In the center of the spiral stands a moss garden on which burns a single candle. Soft music sets the mood of quiet reverence.



The classes quietly enter the Winter Garden room and sit quietly around the Spiral. One at a time, the children are beckoned by their teacher, given a shining red apple that holds an unlit candle, and walk the spiral. They travel toward the light of the central candle. From it they light their own candle and then return outward, placing their apple candle on a golden star. Thus the children walk into the darkness, gather their light and light the way for others.

When all the children have walked the path, the whole spiral is aglow with light. The music softly continues as the children quietly leave the Winter Garden.

### **May Faire**

May Faire is an ancient festival welcoming Spring. The classes prepare for the festival with Maypole songs and dances and by creating May crowns. The day of the May Faire, everyone comes dressed in their finery. A Maypole is erected bedecked with fresh flowers and ribbons. The children decorate their May crowns with flowers and celebrate the arrival of Spring by dancing and singing around the Maypole. Each grades class presents traditional maypole dances and other offerings. Strawberry shortcake adds to the gaiety of the day.

### **School Events—Who's In Charge?**

At school events where children, parents and the teacher are present, it is of utmost importance to clearly establish who has jurisdiction over the children. Too often this can be a confusing situation to everyone involved and dangerous for the children.

In general, it is best to know that *at communal school events you are responsible for your child.*

The teacher has responsibility for your child during class performances and festival events.

Once these activities are complete your child will be returned into your care and supervision.

Your support in maintaining this order with your children at all events will be greatly appreciated.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

The teacher regards your child's presence at our school as a blessing. She or he has a special celebration and story to honor your child's birthday. This is followed by singing and the sharing of handmade gifts. This kind of celebration will happen throughout early childhood and the lower grades. In later grades, the teacher will contact parents about birthday celebrations.

Teachers will arrange all birthday celebrations; including scheduling celebrations for children whose birthdays fall outside the academic year.

### **MEDIA GUIDELINES**

We recognize that every family has a different relationship with media, and may have had a relationship with media that they would like to explore changing. BRWS supports families who are striving toward reducing or eliminating media. All faculty, as well as parents in support positions, are available to those families that are working toward this goal. We approach these goals through non-judgment, and instead through the possible and proven positive outcomes when media is removed.

Our electronic media guidelines are designed to support the objectives of Waldorf education, and to be workable in the homes and lives of our school families. What are the electronic media habits in your home? In what ways is your family fostering a home culture of media discipline? Parents have consistently found that reducing the influence of media on their family life has encouraged family members to develop a livelier interest in one another, enlivened and deepened their communication, and fostered a deeper connection to the world around them.

The school expects that each parent understand and support the media guidelines for the good of their own children and their children's peers. Each family's respect for the media guidelines has a far-reaching positive effect on the students' educational and social experience in school.

To these ends, the school reserves the right to require students to reduce or alter their use of media if that exposure is undermining their education or the education of others.

For the purpose of these guidelines, "Electronic Media" includes television, movies, computers, social media and all other video and audio devices, including cell-phones and any electronic devices or screens used for games and music. The scope of "electronic media" will change as technology and its applications evolve.

In the interest of supporting a classroom environment where imaginations may flourish, the school asks that children's clothing, backpacks, lunch boxes, etc., be free of media images. For detailed clothing policies, please see Section 10.7.

## **Guidelines for Healthy Media Habits ~ A Developmental Perspective**

### **Birth to Age Two**

In agreement with the recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, BRWS advocates for no screen time before the age of two. Children under age two should have no exposure to movies, computers, cell phones, etc. The baby's brain is shaped by interactions with parents. Humans provide the relationships essential for healthy neurological and psychological development. This is the foundation of cognitive development, and this time should be electronic media-free.

### **Age Three to Age Seven**

The children enrolled in our early childhood programs should be given the gift of a media-free childhood. At this age, children have a rich, imaginative inner life that does not need to be "cluttered" with media overexposure. For the young child, the social and emotional experiences and the neurological pathways they cultivate are a cornerstone for healthy development. Let us allow our children to make their own magic!

### **Age Seven to Age Twelve (Grades One Through Five)**

Consistent with Waldorf education's emphasis on learning through direct experience, children in the lower grades (1-5) should not be exposed to electronic media in their daily lives. For the benefit of our children, any exposure to electronic media should be very moderate and under clear parental supervision. This is a time for very guided and gradual introduction of electronic media. Children in grades one through five should not be exposed to electronic media during the school week and should have very limited and supervised use of electronic media on weekends and vacations. BRWS suggests that children not be given their own personal electronic devices (ipads, ipods, cell phones, computers) but that these are for family use.

### **Age Twelve and Older (Grades Six Through Eight)**

At this age, it is appropriate for students to have a gradual and guided introduction to the applications and use of electronic media. These students should not be exposed to electronic media during the school week and should have limited exposure on the weekends and vacations. Our upper grades students may be allowed to use computers for class projects with teacher permission. At this age, children might have their own devices, but parental guidance is

still strongly recommended. BRWS recommends that families refrain from children participating in social media sites (i.e., Facebook) at this age. This is also a time for children to learn “digital citizenship” or what might be referred to as “netiquette.” Any access to electronic media at this age exposes our children to images that they may not be developmentally equipped to understand. What is accessible exceeds their abilities to manage it; hence, this is a time for strong parental involvement and supervision of any media use. Parents need to set limits and not rely on the child to self-monitor in this arena.

### **Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices at School**

The use of cell-phones and electronic devices for any purpose by students is not permitted on school grounds between 8 a.m. until after dismissal time, during school activities, or on school-sponsored trips without a teacher’s permission. We expect devices to be left at home, but understand that there may be reasons an upper grades student needs the use of a phone after school. We urge parents to limit the technology for the purpose of communication to voice and text communication only. During school hours, teachers collect these devices for safe keeping. Violation of electronic media use at school or any inappropriate use of these devices (“sexting,” bullying, etc.) will result in faculty confiscating the device until a meeting can be arranged with parents. These infractions may result in detention, suspension, or expulsion from school.

### **LIMITING CHOICES**

We at Berkeley Rose believe that always asking a child to choose or to have an opinion, can adversely affect the child’s growth forces. If instead, we carefully form the child’s day and present them with their food, clothes, and schedule of events, the child is free to grow through play, imitation, and imagination.

Though some parents believe that the early practice of choice gives children “the experience of making decisions and learning consequences,” the reality is that it tends to create children who must precociously think through too much information when they are too young. Prematurely being faced with too many choices can actually weaken a child and can undermine the growth of their eventual independence of thought and action. There certainly is a right time for a child to start making choices. This begins at the point that a teacher determines that the child is ready to enter the first grade.

Please give your young child the gift of a wonder-filled childhood by being the decision maker for them during their early years.

### **CHILD SAFETY & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

#### **Early Childhood Touch Policy**

As Waldorf early childhood educators, we are in frequent physical contact with the children. Some children like to be greeted with a hug in the morning. Other children would prefer a light touch on the shoulder. Some children prefer not to be touched at all and physical contact is limited.

Young children learn through their physical body: this includes movement, touch, using the senses, experimenting with the laws of physics and pushing the boundaries of others. This is why Waldorf education places such a strong emphasis on play, exposure to nature, using natural materials, nutrition, warmth and comfort.

Touch is an important way to communicate with young children. They require frequent, gentle touch in order to develop their physical bodies and their brains. Through touch, they learn to trust. Physical contact is one way that the child learns to trust the teacher. They are comforted when a teacher responds to them with gentle touch whether in greeting, in passing or in guidance.

Through touch, children learn where they end and someone else begins. They develop spatial and body awareness through touch. By interacting with other children and teachers physically, they begin to understand the boundaries of their body and they can eventually grasp the concept that other people's bodies have similar sensations to the ones they themselves experience. This is an important first step in developing respect and empathy.

Through modeling appropriate touch, children learn how to touch others respectfully. They learn what type of touch to expect from someone who cares about them. They learn to set boundaries for themselves about how they want to be touched. When they are playing tag, for instance, some children like to be tagged hard and knocked down. Others would rather just be lightly tapped. The teachers help the children communicate this to each other to develop the skills they will use to speak their needs throughout their lives. The teachers also ensure that the other children are complying with such a request, so they learn to modify their behavior to respect the needs of a friend.

We really can't rely on or even emphasize rational, verbal communication in early childhood since these children are so movement-oriented and physically active. Imitation is a strong force in them, so we model the behaviors we want them to imitate. When we work, we work carefully and consciously. When we eat, we use respectful manners. Children learn quickly how to sit at a table, how to fold a napkin, how to put toys away, and how to communicate. They learn this by imitating those around them. When it is time to come to circle, most children come because everyone else is there. If their hands are being too rough, we can put our hands gently over theirs to remind the hands how to be. When we remove our hands, we find theirs have indeed remembered gentleness.

In our teaching of the very young child, we don't lecture, present, give complex verbal instruction, give long explanations or ask lots of questions; simply because that is not effective. No corporal punishment will be used with the children. It follows that when the child needs guidance in proper behavior that physical movement and touch communicate much more effectively than words.

Here are some examples of how physical contact might be used in guidance and discipline:

- At cleanup time, a teacher hands Jordan a toy to put away. Jordan throws the toy in a mood of refusal. The teacher retrieves the toy, puts it in Jordan's hand and leads him to the basket where the toy goes. The teacher may hold the item in Jordan's hand if he tries to throw it again. During this whole process, the teacher might not use any verbal communication at all. It is a simple, direct message to Jordan that the teacher is in charge and that all the children are expected to participate in caring for the room.
- The other children are all sitting at the lunch table, ready to begin eating. Emily is playing with a toy, saying, "I'm not coming." The teacher says or sings, "Emily, please come. Your lunch is here and I see you have strawberries today!" Emily ignores the teacher. The teacher walks slowly to Emily and takes her hand. Emily yanks her hand back from

the teacher. The teacher stands behind Emily and puts her hands on Emily's back. She applies gentle finger pressure and says, "You will come to lunch now." Emily refuses again. The teacher says, "You may go yourself or I can carry you. Which would you prefer?" Emily says nothing and remains where she is. The teacher gently and slowly lifts Emily and carefully carries her to the lunch table and puts her in her chair. Throughout the whole interaction the teacher is accepting and clear. There is no judgment placed on Emily's choice to be carried to the table. There is also a clear expectation that Emily will join the class at the table.

- The class is taking a walk. They are all holding onto a walking rope. George lets go of the rope and begins to walk toward the street. The teacher calls, "George, stop!" George continues to walk and enters the street. The teacher either takes his hand or picks him up (if he won't permit her to take his hand) and brings him back to the sidewalk. This is strictly a safety issue. No matter what the child's preference is about being touched, the need to keep the child out of harm's way takes precedence.

Children often welcome the interventions described above and, sometimes, will respond with a hug or smile. Physical contact is always used in service to our mission of helping the children become independent, confident, respectful and self-regulating. Because trust has been established between the teacher and child through time spent together as described above, the touch used in guidance is not scary or hurtful to the child. They perceive it as coming from a loving, strong person who is careful and intentional. This is why the children respond so positively to it and why it is so effective. It cuts through the excuses, rationalizations and judgments that can take discipline off track.

### **Grades Touch Policy**

Teachers warmly greet children with a handshake and eye contact each morning. The relationship between student and child in a Waldorf school is formed over many years. This allows for a deep connection based upon respect and understanding of one another. Children often feel great warmth towards their teacher, showing their emotions outwardly in hugs.

Waldorf curriculum lends to much physical contact with classmates and teachers throughout the day. Our movement and circle activities include dancing and games that nourish healthy interaction. If a verbal redirection is not effective, a gentle hand or arm on a child's shoulder or back is generally used to help a child once again engage with a task or activity.

If a teacher is frustrated or angry, he or she will make every attempt to regain equilibrium before addressing a situation. Waldorf teachers strive to remain as an objective, centered helper to the children. We build mutual support into our relationships with our co-teachers and assistants.

A teacher's touch is never out of frustration or anger. Touch is not used to punish, scare, startle, or tease. We do not tickle children because it can easily be perceived as veiled aggression. We will not touch a child's genital area without dire medical need and an adult witness. Any such need would be communicated to the parents.

The children imitate our use of touch in their relationships with others. All of the tools we use – touch, song, story, nutrition, activity, work and play – are used consciously, lovingly and carefully.

## **Behavior Management in the All Programs**

Our expectations for student behavior in our programs at Berkeley Rose include:

- Learning self-discipline and self-control
- Developing love, tolerance, and respect for others.

In this environment physical aggression is not acceptable. Physically aggressive behavior is extremely disruptive to the peaceful and harmonious environment we want to achieve. It is upsetting to other children and, in extreme cases, might put other children at risk of harm. When staff members have to deal with physically aggressive behavior, they are less free to concentrate on the development of academic and social skills with their students.

Students who repeatedly hit, push, punch, kick, shove, pinch, poke, slap or commit any other act of physical aggression upon another person will be helped in every way possible to learn non-aggressive ways to express their feelings. A behavior plan created by the teacher and communicated to parents will remain implemented until the aggressive behavior stops. If we find that we are not able to provide the help a child needs, we will work with parents to place the student in an environment in which the student can receive the help he or she needs to progress. If a child bites another person, then the child is immediately sent home.

## **Grades Program Disciplinary Policy**

The Berkeley Rose Waldorf School will take the following steps to address aggressive behavior of any kind, including \*bullying as defined below:

If a student in first grade or higher commits an act of physical aggression upon another person or aggressively treats inanimate objects in a way that can harm others (e.g., throwing or kicking things, breaking things), he or she will be:

- Immediately removed from the rest of the children to ensure everyone's safety.
- Counseled by his/her teacher on the standards of behavior at Berkeley Rose.
- Required to contribute to the overall harmony of the class through acts of service (such as repairing damage done to objects or classroom, cleaning or helping the teacher with various tasks).
- Required to give an oral or written apology to the person or persons who were recipients of the aggression.

If a repeated pattern of aggressive behavior is observed in a student, a conference will be held with the student's parents and teachers to discuss the student's behavior and agree on how to proceed to help the child focus his or her energy in more positive ways. Possible interventions might include:

- Requiring the student to complete behavioral assignments during recess.
- Sending the student home when he/she commits a violent act (in this case, a suspension may be required to allow for time for assessments and a plan to be made).
- Requiring the student to receive outside professional help, such as counseling.
- Developing a home and school behavior plan.
- Identifying outside resources that might be helpful to the student and his/her parents in learning non-aggressive behavior.
- Any other intervention mutually agreed upon that might help the student to develop the ability to express what he or she is feeling in appropriate words and to solve problems in non-aggressive ways.

\*Bullying is defined through the California Department of Education as follows:

Bullying is exposing a person to abusive actions repeatedly over time. Being aware of children's teasing and acknowledging injured feelings are always important. Bullying becomes a concern when hurtful or aggressive behavior toward an individual or group appears to be unprovoked, intentional, and (usually) repeated. Bullying is a form of violence. It involves a real or perceived imbalance of power, with the more powerful child or group attacking those who are less powerful. Bullying may be physical (hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing), verbal (taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, threatening), or emotional (spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, extorting, or intimidating). Bullying can occur face-to-face or in the online world. Bullying is also one or more acts by a pupil or group of pupils directed against another pupil that constitutes sexual harassment, hate violence, or severe or pervasive intentional harassment, threats, or intimidation that is disruptive, causes disorder, and invades the rights of others by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment, and includes acts that are committed personally or by means of an electronic act, as defined. An "electronic act" is defined as transmission of a communication, including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device, including but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager.

The school Administrative offices will maintain a record of serious or repeated incidents of physical aggression.

### **Berkeley Rose Statement of Intent**

Berkeley Rose is not a therapeutic school and we are limited to what we can provide to help children with behavioral difficulties. If it becomes clear that a child cannot, in our professional judgment, respond positively to the help we can provide or to the environment of the school, then the administration will work with the parents to place the student in an academic environment in which the student can receive the help that he or she needs.

### **Social Inclusion in the Grades Program**

We expect the students enrolled in our Grades Program to practice and demonstrate respect, kindness, tolerance and cooperation. These expectations require our students to learn kind ways of interacting without the use of verbal aggression or social exclusion. We work with students to help them learn developmentally appropriate ways of speaking respectfully with one another. We help students learn to cooperate with their peers and to take initiative in helping younger children.

We define verbal aggression and social exclusion as patterns of intentionally interacting with other students in ways that harm the student's relationships and feelings of acceptance. Verbal aggression and social exclusion can include but are not limited to: name-calling, spreading rumors, threatening, excluding a child from games or play, refusing to play with a classmate, and playing harmful practical jokes.

We discourage harmful remarks in various ways, which change as the children grow and learn. These include: modeling appropriate language; discussing social issues in class; establishing classroom expectations for speech and behavior; and providing opportunities for students to work and play successfully together.

### **Duty to Report Behavior**

All Berkeley Rose employees are “mandated reporters” as described in California Penal Code section 11165.7, and as such are obligated by law to report known or suspected incidents of sexual abuse or corporal punishment between any adult (including fellow employees) and a child.

### **Social Learning & Guidance**

As children grow and learn, they may experiment with language or interactions that another child experiences as hurtful. When staff becomes aware of repeated or clearly intentional incidents, we will address them in the following ways:

- Counseling by the class teacher on the standards of the classroom and Berkeley Rose Waldorf School.
- Redirecting the child’s energy toward a helpful or constructive task.
- Requiring the child to give an oral or written apology to the recipient(s) of verbal aggression or exclusive behavior.
- Completing an incident report which is kept on record to track patterns of verbal aggression or acts of social exclusion.
- Holding conferences with the parents, classroom teachers, and school officials.

### **Friendships**

We expect students to treat each other with kindness. We also understand that differentiating different peer relationships is important and part of normal development. Whether a student is maintaining an acquaintance or developing a close friendship with his or her peers, we expect that our students will learn to interact respectfully with each other at all times.

### ***Thank You!***

It is with warmth and appreciation that we thank you for taking the time and effort to read our Parent Handbook, which will, literally, put us all on the same page.