



# Berkeley Rose Waldorf School

## Parent Handbook

WELCOME!

CONTACT INFORMATION

[2017 - 2018 Major Dates SCHOOL CALENDAR](#)

COMMUNICATION POLICY

WEEKLY COMMUNICATION

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

PARENT EVENINGS

EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITS & CONFERENCES

GRADES PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES & PROGRESS REPORTS

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL POLICIES

WELLNESS GUIDELINES

SAFETY PROCEDURES

PARK SAFETY PLANS

SITE PROCEDURES

DROP-OFF & PICK-UP POLICIES

MORNING FAREWELLS

GENERAL DRESS GUIDELINES

FAMILY CONTRIBUTIONS

SCHOOL CULTURE

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

MEDIA

CHILD SAFETY & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

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

The child goes forth each day  
And what he sees that day,  
That he becomes.

--Walt Whitman

## **WELCOME!**

We're 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***

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

### ***Sunflower (kindergarten) - Grades***

2515 Hillegass, 1st Fl  
Berkeley CA 94704

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



# Berkeley Rose Waldorf School

## Academic Calendar **Major Dates** 2017-18

Notes: All Thursdays are early dismissal at 1:45pm for Grades  
Early Childhood (EC) is both kindergarten and all nursery programs  
PC= Event organized by Parent Council

**This calendar contains MAJOR dates only. A full & complete calendar will be available by the start of school.**

<u>August 2017</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
31 Thursday	7-9pm	All School Gathering: Orientation Evening	Sanctuary@Cedar
<b>September 2017</b>			
2 Saturday Hillegass	9am-1pm	All School Workday	Cedar &
4 <b>Monday</b>		<b>Labor Day – School closed</b>	
5 <b>Tuesday</b>		<b>Teacher In-Service - School closed</b>	
6 Wednesday	8:30am 8:45am	First Day of School for Grades Rose Ceremony for Grades <i>(1st gr ends at 12:30, grades 2-5 normal dismissal with aftercare)</i>	Hillegass Willard Park
7 Thursday	8:30am	Warming Day for EC & Kindergarten EC & Kindergarten First Day	Classrooms Classrooms
9 Saturday	12-4pm	PC Welcome Back Picnic	Strawberry Creek Park
12 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
<b>October 2017</b>			
9 <b>Monday</b>		<b>Indigenous People's Day - School closed</b>	
10 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
11 Wednesday		Picture Day	
13 <b>Friday</b>		<b>Teacher In-Service - School closed</b>	
15 Sunday	9:30-11:30am	Harvest Faire	Codornices Park
16-20 M-F	TBA	Parent Evenings	Classrooms
16-20 M-F	TBA	Parent Teacher Conferences - KG	Sunflower
21 Saturday	10am-12	EC Open House	Cedar
23-27 M-F		Parent Teacher Conferences - Nursery	Cedar
27 Friday Hillegass	8:30-9am	PC Parent Tea	Cedar &
31 Tuesday		Parent Teacher Conferences - Nursery	Cedar
<b>November 2017</b>			
1-3 Wed-Fri		Parent Teacher Conferences - Nursery	Classrooms
4 Saturday Hillegass	10am-12	All School Open House	Cedar &
9 Thursday Codornices Park		Martinmas Lantern Walk	
10 <b>Friday</b>		<b>Veteran's Day – School closed</b>	
14 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
16 Thursday	7:30-9pm	PC Parent Conversation Night with Vasilica	Hillegass
17 <b>Friday</b>		<b>Teacher in-service - School closed</b>	
20-24 M-F		<b>Thanksgiving Holiday – School closed</b>	
<b>December 2017</b>			
1 Friday		Grades Advent Spiral (during school)	TBD
2 Saturday		EC Advent Spiral	TBD
9 Saturday		Enchanted Winter Faire	Hillegass
12 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
15 Friday		Last Day - Regular dismissal and afternoon program	
18-29 M-F		<b>Winter Break – School closed</b>	





# Berkeley Rose Waldorf School

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PC= Event organized by Parent Council

**This calendar contains MAJOR dates only. A full & complete calendar will be available by the start of school.**

<u>January 2018</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Location</u>
1 Monday		New Years Day – <b>School closed</b>	
2 Tuesday		Faculty In-Service - <b>School closed</b>	
3 Wednesday		School resumes	
5-12 Fri-Fri		Parent-Teacher Conferences for Kindergarten	
9 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
15 Monday		<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – School closed</b>	
20 Saturday	10am-12	Open House	Classrooms
22-26 M-F	TBD	Parent Evenings	Classrooms
26 Friday		Re-enrollment & Financial Aid applications due	
<b>February 2018</b>			
1 Thursday	7-9pm	Speaker Event	TBD
13 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
16 Friday	8:30-9am	PC Parent Tea	Cedar &
Hillegass			
19-23 Monday		<b>President's Week Break - School closed</b>	
<b>March 2018</b>			
5-9 M-F		Parent Teacher Conferences for Nursery	
13 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
15 Thursday	7:30-9pm	PC Parent Conversation Night with TBD	Hillegass
16 Friday		Deposits due for 2018/19	
26-30 M-F	TBD	Parent Evenings	Classrooms
<b>April 2018</b>			
2-13 M-F		<b>Spring Break – School closed - Camp offered one week</b>	
17 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
<b>May 2018</b>			
4 Friday	AM school hours	Grandparents & Friends Day	Cedar &
Hillegass			
6 Sunday	9:30-11:30am	May Faire	Strawberry Creek Park
7-18 M-F		Parent Teacher Conferences for Grades	Classrooms
8 Tuesday	7:30-9pm	Parent Council Meeting (PCM)	Hillegass
10 Thursday	During Fac. Mtg.	Afternoon of Gratitude	Hillegass
19 Saturday	Evening TBD	Spring Auction	TBD
28 Monday		<b>Memorial Day – School closed</b>	
<b>June 2018</b>			
14 Thursday		Early Childhood and Afternoon Program Last Day	
15 Friday		Grades Last Day. <i>Early Dismissal, All School Picnic, No Afternoon Program</i>	

Revised 6/30/17

## **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.
- Do not speak about your concerns (at home, the park, or at school) when your children or other parents are in earshot (regardless of whether or not you think they are paying attention).

### **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).

### **How to Request Additional Support**

On rare occasions, an issue may go unresolved, or require additional support. As well, some people may find direct communication intimidating or uncomfortable. In these circumstances, a person is encouraged to request additional support from Berkeley Rose Waldorf School through the Bridge Committee. During a Bridge meeting, at least one faculty member and one administrative member from the committee will provide a listening presence and support in order for you to communicate directly to the person of concern. If a concern is with one of the members of the Bridge Committee, then a replacement for them will be found on the Bridge Committee team. Bridge meetings are documented and confidential. After speaking with the Bridge Committee, those in attendance will discuss next steps for seeking a resolution. All requests for meeting with the Bridge Committee are to be made in writing via email to [bridge@berkeleyrose.org](mailto:bridge@berkeleyrose.org) and will be responded to within 48 hours, excepting holidays and weekends. If urgent, please specify it in subject line.

### **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. These are scheduled according to the teacher's and parent's availability. 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 usually scheduled before the fall term. 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 and one written progress report at the end of the year are scheduled during the school year. The conferences are scheduled during the following times: the initial goal setting conference is scheduled during the month of November and the final conference is scheduled during the months of April and May. These conferences reflect on the goals/performance for the year and includes recommendations for the summer.

An end of the year formal report is mailed to the families in summer and summarizes the content discussed at the spring meeting.

## **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 on our website and can click [here](#) for quick access . 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, 2018 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. As well, low enrollment in a program or class may affect employment of assistants or specialists, but will not compromise curriculum/services offered. A change in ancillary staffing does not constitute grounds for a child to leave the program, or a family to be released from financial obligation.

### **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 glasses or has a hearing loss or any other physical condition that requires special attention. It is helpful to your child if new information is shared with the school as it becomes available. Let us know of any allergies so that we don't 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
- Anthroposocial 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 she has 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 is 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).

In the early childhood program, our whole grain offerings are arranged in a weekly rhythm and augmented with fruit and nuts. Your child's teacher will provide you with a list of the class' food rhythm.

### **Lunch & Snack Guidelines**

Snack is provided 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.

It is required that your child eat during snack and lunch unless he or she is ill. Every child must eat a portion of her/his snack/lunch before going outside for recess. 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**

An emergency supply of food and water is stored in an outdoor earthquake shed at Berkeley Rose Waldorf School. Food for those with food intolerances is also included in this supply. In the event of a catastrophic event, Berkeley Rose students will remain at the facility, unless unable to do so.

The alternate location for the Cedar Street campus is: Live Oak Park at 1301 Shattuck Ave., 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.

In catastrophic events, it is usually difficult for local numbers to reach other local numbers in the area of the event. Berkeley Rose has set up an out-of-state emergency hotline number: **(662) 471-8351**. The outgoing message will report the condition of the children and their whereabouts. The parents, in turn, are requested to first try Berkeley Rose numbers, and then leave a message at the emergency hotline if they do not reach a live person. Parents are requested to report their condition, whereabouts, and whether or not and when they can pick up their child, or if another authorized person will be able to do so.

Please program Berkeley Rose Waldorf School's catastrophic event disaster response telephone number into your cell phone: **(662) 471-8351**.

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.

While walking to the park using the sidewalk and crosswalks when available children are accompanied by an adult. Specifics about walk partners and ratios should be discussed with your class teacher, as these details change from program to program.

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 always 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.*

Berkeley Rose Waldorf School's catastrophic event disaster response for out of state phone: (662) 471-8351 (please program this phone number 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 Street 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:

**Morning Drop Off & Pick Up Policies**

Rosebud Nursery	8:30-8:40 / 12:30
Marigold & Buttercup Preschool	8:30-8:40 / 12:30
Sunflower Kindergarten	8:30-8:40 / 1:00
First/Second Grade	8:15-8:30 / 2:30
Third/Fourth/Fifth Grade	8:15-8:30 / 3:00

**AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM START AND PICK-UP TIMES:**

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

\*Grades start time is 1:45 on Thursdays

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

### **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 with you.

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, will be dismissed to the afternoon program teacher. Drop-in fees will be charged for children who are admitted for late pickups.

### **Go Green to Cedar**

The Cedar campus is in a facility that adheres to green-building practices, and we, therefore, encourage families to walk, bike, take public transportation, and/or carpool.

### **Preschool & 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.

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. This can be noted 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.

## **MORNING FAREWELLS**

### **Nursery**

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**

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 10 hugs and 10 kisses 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 8:15 - 8:30. 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 8:30. It also supports our healthy rhythm of timeliness and beginning classes as whole group without further disruption.

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. The front office staff will provide your child with a late slip and guardians must sign the Late Arrival 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.

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

Please pick your child up promptly at the end of your child's program each day (as noted above). It creates anxiety for children to be picked up late. There is a 10-minute grace period

allowed at pickup time. After 10 minutes, remaining children will be escorted to the Afternoon Program and parents will be billed the per-hour drop in rate, billed by FACTS on a monthly basis.

### **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**

### Dress Policy

What we and the children wear contributes to the sense of peace and tranquility necessary for creative play, expression, and learning. The teachers are very conscious to wear plain-colored clothing without advertising, imagery, or writing. They dress appropriately and according to the weather.

Over the many years our teachers have spent in the classroom, they have experienced how pictures and writing on clothing can distract the children while interfering and affecting their imaginative play. We therefore ask that parents refrain from sending their children to school wearing clothing with imagery and messages/wording.

Clothing should be clean and in good repair (tear free and hemmed). The clothing should be comfortable and allow free movement. Please avoid tight-fitting or stiff clothing that restricts movement, such as stiff jeans. Clothing that is too loose, falling off the body is also to be avoided as a distraction and discomfort throughout the day.

The front and back of the torso must be covered at all times, even during movement classes.

Shirt or dress straps must be at least 1" wide.

All underwear must be under clothing as to not be visible.

Shorts should be as long as a student's fingertips when arms are relaxed at child's sides. Skirts and dresses must be the same length as shorts if leggings are worn underneath. Without leggings, skirts and dresses should be no higher than approximately three inches above the knee.

Clothing should be in solid colors (except black and neon). Stripes, polka dots, floral patterns, and plaids may also be worn.

Clothing, shoes, and accessories should be free of media images, pictures, logos, and wording.

We all know how changeable the weather is here in the Bay Area. Therefore, we ask that all children be provided with enough layers to adjust to the changing temperatures.

Arms and legs must be covered unless the outside temperature at time of drop-off is above 70°F. (Layers may be removed if and when the day heats up.) Midriffs are covered at all times. (Tip: Box up summer clothes at the approach of the cool months, so that children will not be tempted to "hold on to summer" by wearing them.)

Hair should be clear of the the child's eyes, not causing a distraction to the child or classmates. Long hair should be pulled back from face so that child has full range of sight and hands remain free from the need to clear from face. Children must remain free of hair dyes or colors.

Shoes with closed toes and closed heels should fit well and be in good repair. Ankle support and soles should be sturdy to allow for safe movement. Please refrain from Crocs, open sandals, and shoes with lights, glitter, bells, and eye-catching decorations.

Supportive, athletic footwear is necessary for all grades children for days with movement classes, hikes, and is recommended on a daily basis for the walk and vigorous play at the park. Shoes are to be worn at all times.

Please refrain from costume items (unless requested by the teacher), jewelry, and highly decorative/uncomfortable headbands and barrettes.

Please remove temporary tattoos, nail polish, writing or drawing on the body before drop-off at school.

Kindly label all of your child's garments that come to school (socks and underwear included) with legible names or initials. This makes the teacher's' job simpler and also greatly increases your chances of getting your clothing returned to you!

Children are asked to wear a warm hat in cool/cold weather and a sun hat on bright days. Please find appropriate hats that your child likes and will be happy to wear. Please label these as well. Have both hats at school all the time, as the weather changes from moment to moment.

Children may wear:

- Collared shirts, T-shirts, long-sleeved jerseys, blouses, vests
- Pants, trousers, jumpers, shorts, loose-fitting/roomy jeans that stay upon the hips
- Skirts, dresses (no longer than mid-calf; avoid those with tutu fabric)
- Tights, leggings under skirts or shorts that are as long as the ends of the fingers when arms are relaxed at the child's side (remember, legs are covered when the temperature is under 70°F)

### **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.

**For the 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.

## **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 we have 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**

We believe that children enrolled in Berkeley Rose should be given the gift of a media-free childhood.

The use of television and other media in a child's life is often seen in their play. The child may speak in the tone of a certain character, or seem "stuck" in creative play, unable to play anything but a superhero, or favorite character. Other children seem to lose their imagination and can't think of anything to play. More subtle changes may be noted in a child who cannot sit still during a story, making it a distressing experience instead of a time of wonderment and delight.

There are many well-documented articles on the ill effects of TV on children; for example, an increase of hyperactivity and lack of attention span, or the inability to complete tasks. Perhaps



the greatest loss is the dimming effect it has on the child's imagination. For it is through the imagination that the foundation for learning and mental/emotional growth is developed.

Imaginative play, such as listening to stories, watching and creating puppet shows, and dress-up, foster in the young child an active participation in the world. Berkeley Rose wishes to help the children develop as fully engaged, creative individuals.

We urge you to resist the convenience of "plugging" your children into television, film, and video games, music and story tapes (if they are a substitute for the live human voice), and instead involve your children in meaningful play as much as possible. Examples of such play may be found in any domestic work. Big favorites are cooking, sweeping, dusting, washing dishes, yard work and gardening, carpentry, or shoe polishing. The teachers will be happy to share their ideas and suggest other alternatives.

As parents of grades children we hope that you can resist having your children use computers. We know that they are a part of the modern world and children may have some exposure to them. However, we believe that in the first five grades there is no need for digital education for the same reasons as stated above. It is obviously a helpful research tool for children as they get into the upper grades; but even then we strongly recommend that parents be present while the children use computers or digital devices. Computers and handheld devices should always be password-protected, to shield children from accidental exposure to unwanted and harmful imagery. We strongly advise against having your child participate in any social media sites. These sites are not conducive to direct social development and have known to cause more damage than good for children's health and wellbeing.

### **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 teacher 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. (If we need to take a breather, an assistant or co-teacher will step in.)

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 Grades Program**

Our expectations for student behavior in the Grades program 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.

### **Grades Program Disciplinary Policy:**

The Berkeley Rose Waldorf School will take the following steps to address aggressive behavior: 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.

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.

### **Respond Immediately!**

If you think a staff member, substitute, or volunteer is inappropriate in his/her physical contact or verbal interaction with children, inform the Administration right away, either in person or in writing at the time the incident is observed or made known. Your report is important in ensuring the safety of our children. Good communication helps to protect all concerned. Please see the office personnel to request the proper forms and file a report.

### **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.