



## *Parent/Guardian Handbook 2019-2020 School Year*

4017 E. 6th Street, Long Beach, CA 90814

(562) 434-8200

[info@maplevillageschool.org](mailto:info@maplevillageschool.org)

[www.maplevillageschool.org](http://www.maplevillageschool.org)

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## **WELCOME**

Welcome to Maple Village Waldorf School! We are celebrating our twelfth year serving the children of Long Beach and beyond, from infancy through 8th grade! We're glad to have you with us! It is our hope that this handbook will provide a basic understanding of the ins and outs of school life at Maple Village Waldorf School.

## **BACKGROUND & PHILOSOPHY**

### Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) and Anthroposophy

Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian philosopher, scientist and artist, was exceptionally active in the cultural and social life of his day. Schooled in modern science and philosophy, he developed anthroposophy as a science of the spirit.

Steiner firmly believed that the material view of the world that underlies modern life is blind to the reality of the spiritual world, which creates, nurtures, surrounds and penetrates the visible world. Humanity must awaken, he said, to its own spiritual origin, nature and destiny, and must recreate all of modern life and society with this spiritual nature in mind. Only then will the fulfillment of the individual and the peace and harmony of society be possible. Today, when many aspects of our culture are in crisis and people are easily drawn into cynicism and despair, the anthroposophical vision of human potential can be a source of hope and renewal.

### Waldorf Education

At the end of World War I, Emil Molt, the owner of the Waldorf-Astoria Cigarette Factory, commissioned Rudolf Steiner to develop a school for the children of his factory workers. Steiner saw an opportunity to design a system of education that would meet the spiritual needs of humanity. This was a time in Europe when tensions were mounting, as the industrial revolution was leading people into more mechanized roles. He believed there was a need for schools

that would educate individuals who were then able to create a peaceful and just society. His hope was to build a model for education in a new epoch of history. In autumn 1919, the first "Waldorf" school opened in Stuttgart with eight teachers and 175 pupils, mostly the children of Waldorf-Astoria factory employees. The curriculum included activities for the hands, the heart, and the mind. It contained strong moral and spiritual elements. The school's explicit purpose was to create free, creative, independent, moral, and happy human beings.

### Aspects of Waldorf Education

- Emphasize the harmony of nature
- Respect the individuality of the student
- Foster self-determination in the student
- Develop the student's creative and critical abilities
- Stress cooperation rather than competition
- Stress the active involvement (as contrasted with passive learning) of students in a wide range of educational situations

Waldorf education emphasizes the need for children to fulfill each developmental phase of their childhood without being hurried ahead into abstract, materialistic thinking. This is supported by many of today's foremost educators who are now seeing developmental problems as a result of early academics and influence of the media. Age-appropriate curriculum is an educational concept gaining wide acceptance.

Each subject is introduced to the child when they are most ready for it, and in a manner to which the child is naturally receptive at that stage. Year by year, the content of the curriculum expands with the ever-growing powers of the child, nourishing their inner life successively through stories from folk tales, legends, myths, and

history and nourishing their outer life with the development of individual and social skills.

All of Waldorf education is focused on challenging children in such a way that the emergent ability of independent thinking can lead to a true experience of meaning. In the early years, children are led to an experience of meaning through a plethora of hands-on activities. In the grade school years, children are led to an exploration of meaning through awakening interest, enthusiasm, and love for the subject at hand. In the high school years, students engage in the search for meaning through thinking as they approach an understanding of their unique individuality. As Steiner puts it, the experience that the world is good and worthy of imitation in the early years, followed by the cultivation of a deep sense of wonder for the beauty to be found in all things, becomes the foundation upon which the high school student learns to discover truth in the world.

In a world in which education is focused on normative, quantifiable outcomes, the uniqueness of the individual child's gifts and challenges often has to take a backseat to the pressure of general societal expectations. Waldorf education values difference and strives to support developing children and adolescents in such a way that they can bring their gifts to fruition, while at the same time learn to cope with their challenges. They leave school with a strong sense of purpose based on a clear understanding of both themselves and the world.

#### Maple Village Waldorf School Mission Statement

Maple Village Waldorf School aims to create a compassionate and welcoming environment rooted in the traditions and philosophies of Waldorf education. We endeavor to engage and nurture the whole child, resulting in a balance of heart, mind, body, and spirit. We strive to provide a full, living education, integrating academia, the arts,

and communal awareness in order to inspire, energize, and develop creativity and a love of learning in each student.

We also place a high importance on contributing to and providing a positive focal point for the local community. Our school provides an environment that helps usher into the world well-rounded individuals - learned, inwardly confident, responsible, and self-motivated - with reverence for others and their environment.

#### Diversity at MVWS

Maple Village Waldorf School is fortunate to have a wide array of cultures, races, economic backgrounds, religious affiliations, gender identities/expressions, and sexual orientations represented in the makeup of our faculty, staff, parents, and students. We value this multiplicity and consistently strive to ensure that the population of our school reflects that of our community. We collaborate with diverse communities in Long Beach, as well as other cities and countries, to enrich our educational and social environment and to actively engage in the city and in the world in which we live.

Waldorf education began almost 100 years ago in Northern Europe. Maple Village Waldorf School is proud of its position in a diverse urban setting that allows it to further develop an American curriculum that meets the modern student with rigor, relevance, and cultural awareness. Waldorf education strives to bring students a richer view of the world and a deeper connection to others.

We strongly believe that inclusion of diversity throughout the learning experience strengthens all subject areas. Through the Waldorf method of teaching, students hear stories about heroes and courageous people from around the world. Whether it is building models of the shelters of indigenous peoples in the 3rd grade, learning phonics through tales from Jamaica, China, Africa, India, and

Russia, or studying the heroes of recent history—like Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.—the curriculum provides our students and families the opportunity to learn about and appreciate contributions from men and women from all cultures and walks of life. Children study Native American and Spanish language and culture, as well as learning Japanese verses, poetry and songs. Our attention to diversity and inclusion is not only experienced in terms of curriculum content, but also in terms of action. Cultural cooking is brought into every grade, and teachers integrate different learning styles into lesson plans, modify physical activities for various body types, and are sensitive to the range of abilities in each class. Activity groups always integrate genders, and assumptions are not made about sexual identity. Use of language is approached with sensitivity to respect the private beliefs of students and families present in the school. Classroom decoration and school festivals and events honor and celebrate a diversity of cultural experience and expressions.

Our students also actively engage with the world, with people of other cultures in local and distant geographies through the many collaborative relationships the school maintains with community groups, agencies, and programs. Our students work with people experiencing homelessness, have adopted a child in South Africa, partnered with a school in Uganda for a water conservation project, and have pen-pals across the world.

The faculty at MVWS recognizes the value of including a variety of cultures, experiences, opinions, and life stories in each classroom. Lessons balance personal experiences with global perspectives to better educate students and prepare them to be active citizens and leaders for the future. In every subject there is an effort to authentically reflect the lived experience of students and to introduce things that are less familiar in a respectful way. This variety is an essential part of educating the whole human being.

#### Accreditation

Maple Village Waldorf School intends to seek full accreditation by the Waldorf Early Childhood Association (WECAN) and the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America (AWSNA). We are currently a Developing Member of WECAN and an Associate Member of AWSNA. The process of accreditation in all schools is ongoing, requiring review and monitoring every few years by the accrediting teams.

#### **SCHOOL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

Maple Village Waldorf School will gradually establish a threefold governance structure that will include a College of Teachers, a Board of Trustees, and a Governance Council. Currently our Faculty Council, comprised of all lead teachers, Board of Trustees, and Administration all work together for the whole of our school. We are also greatly supported by the Parent Village.

#### Faculty Council

The Faculty Council is responsible for the Cultural Realm of the school. The Council is a body of faculty and staff who study the philosophical underpinnings of Waldorf pedagogy based on the work of Rudolf Steiner. The Council is charged with the oversight and development of the pedagogy of the whole school. The Council serves as a consultative body to the Board of Trustees.

#### Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the Economic Realm of the school, including legal and financial aspects. Specifically, the Board focuses on long-range planning, strategic development, risk management oversight, and fundraising.

### Administration

The Administration is responsible for the Rights Realm of the school. The Rights Realm is the area of agreements and equity. The Administration manages and develops resources in service of the Mission of the school. They implement policies, plans, and budgets approved by the Council and Board, manage human resources, supervise implementation of strategic plans, and facilitate and ensure the smooth daily operations of the school.

### Parent Village

Much of the work of the school is carried out by parent committees. Committees play an integral role in the daily functioning of the school and offer great opportunities for parent/guardian involvement in the school. Membership on committees is varied, depending on their function.

Current Parent Village committees include:

- Maple Connection (Hospitality)
- Wings (Fundraising)
- Scrip
- Spring Gala
- Hands (Site Beautification)
- Harvest Faire
- Classroom Parents
- Gratitude
- Technology
- Diversity
- Holiday Float
- Yearbook
- Safety

### Listening Council

The purpose of the Listening Council is to facilitate communication among community members when challenges arise and other avenues have not proven effective. Any member of the Maple Village Waldorf School community (staff, faculty, administration, Board member, or parent/guardian) may consult with the Listening Council. After attempting to resolve a concern or make a request through the proper channels as directed in the Parent/Guardian and Employee Handbooks, the individual shall be given the opportunity to choose two (2) members from the Listening Council to hear about their situation. The Listening Council procedure can be found on our website under the Parents tab, and paper copies are available in the front office.

## **SCHOOL LIFE**

### Early Childhood

Our early childhood programs provide children (infants through kindergartners) with a calm, joyful environment filled with magic and reverence. Each child's developmental journey is met with love and interest, and the overall environment nourishes the children physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Play is the true work of the child. Imaginative play is encouraged throughout the day by using dolls and playthings in the classroom that are unfinished. For example, dolls have eyes and a simple mouth so that the child must create the expression. Playthings are made only from natural products such as wood, wool, cotton, and silk and can become whatever is needed in the course of play. The simplicity of form invites the child to imaginative and creative play. A sense of beauty and love of nature is cultivated. Opportunities to do "real work" to strengthen community, foster individual responsibility, and to provide a sense of accomplishment include cooking, baking, cleaning, woodworking, and gardening.



Providing rhythm is central to Waldorf education, as it gives children a strong and secure foundation that fosters growth and development. A yearly rhythm is established by celebrating the seasons and festivals. Daily rhythms include story time, circle/movement time, snack and lunch time, outdoor play, indoor play, projects, and weekly rhythms of baking, artistic activities, and crafts.

Stories and fairy tales are told by heart and then later acted out by the children. For example, verses, songs, and rhymes incorporated with movement are used to assist speech development and promote a rich vocabulary. This serves to expand the imagination. Likewise, puppet shows are incorporated into daily play. As Dr. T. Berry Brazelton, the well-known pediatrician, notes, "The ability to create mental pictures leads to more advanced thinking." Fostering the magic of childhood in the learning environment builds a foundation not only for creative and flexible thinking later in life, but also helps preserve the joy and awe inherent in a young child's soul.

### Elementary Grades

When the child is ready for first grade, it is appropriate to use the powers of understanding for more abstract matters, including writing, reading, and arithmetic. But, to the child, it is not simply the acquisition of knowledge that is important. The process by which this knowledge is learned, through the creativity of the teachers who become the "authors" of each subject, must meet the inner need in the child for true authority and provide a secure basis for the child to reach out in the world.

The Waldorf school responds to this need with a most remarkable offering: providing a Class Teacher as the key authority for the time between the "change of teeth" and the onset of puberty. Ideally, this teacher, though by no means the only teacher of the class,

accompanies the children through all eight grades of elementary school. The Class Teacher's task is to guide the group of children during these important and impressionable years and to teach the class many of the curriculum subjects.

During these years—grades one through eight—the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are acquired. The children engage in a variety of cultural activities that cultivate the imaginative faculties—drawing, painting, poetry recitation, drama, singing, playing a musical instrument, and so on. During both the practical and cultural activities, however, the essence of the teacher's task is to work with their pupils with the imagination of an artist.

The children should not simply be taught to do artistic activities and manual skills, but they should be taught so-called "non-artistic" subjects imaginatively and artistically as well. This is true, though in widely different ways, in mathematics and grammar, woodworking and knitting, physical education and foreign languages, all of which are part of the Waldorf curriculum. These cultural activities help the children build academic skills slowly, fortified with deep comprehension and understanding.

To support such an approach, all aspects in a Waldorf school—from the classroom furnishings to the way a poem is recited, from the pen a pupil uses to the exercises done in movement classes—are considered with two criteria in mind: they should be functional and they should be beautiful. For the child, this guarantees a caring authority that produces a stimulating effect on all of their inner and outer senses.

### Child Study

Waldorf teachers are specifically trained to observe children in order to gain a better understanding of each child's progress through the

developmental stages of childhood. A Child Study is a more intensive look at one certain child's development presented by the Class Teacher with contributions from the rest of the faculty and the child's parents/guardians.

### **FAMILY AND SCHOOL IN PARTNERSHIP**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any topic in this section of the handbook, please start with your child's class teacher. If further communication is necessary, you may contact the Dean of Education. Please limit email content to logistical matters and otherwise arrange for a telephone or in-person conversation.

#### Parent-Teacher Partnership

As Waldorf parents/guardians and teachers, we are joining together in a partnership for the care and development of children. As partners, we need to be in close contact. You are the "eyes and ears" at home, just as the teachers are the "eyes and ears" at school. We encourage you to share your insights, questions, and goals regarding your child's development with us. Regular parent/guardian meetings, parent/teacher conferences, and visits with the teacher help maintain the communication so vital to our work together. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled about midway through the year. These conferences are held to discuss the development and well-being of your child. The teacher will present a progress report and provide an opportunity to exchange ideas and questions.

One of our shared goals as parents/guardians and teachers is to ensure that children are well-prepared to receive the full benefits of a Waldorf education. Home life is as essential to the growth of the children as the quality of education they receive at school. We request your cooperation and support in the following areas:

#### Life Rhythms

Rhythm is a fundamental principle of life. We experience the rhythm of the year in the cycle of the seasons, the rhythm of the month in the cycle of the moon, and the rhythm of the day in the passage of the sun across the sky. Our bodies are also attuned to the rhythms of our breath and our heartbeat. Young children are very sensitive to the inner and outer rhythm of life. Establishing a sense of continuity and order in their daily lives gives them a deep sense of security and well-being. In order for children to come to school rested and refreshed, we encourage you to maintain a calm, orderly rhythm for going to bed in the evening and rising in the morning. Many parents/guardians find a regular nightly routine of story, song, or quiet conversation eases the child's transition into sleep.

#### Media Policy

Why choose to protect your child from exposure to TV, movies, video games, the Internet, and other media? In a world that continues to accost childhood through advertising aimed at an ever-younger consumer group it seems content would be the primary impetus behind such a decision. However, there is much more to consider, especially for children under the age of nine. Waldorf schools are designed to nourish the feeling life of children and to strengthen the imagination so vital to the development of critical thinking. The mood of sympathetic concentration cultivated in a Waldorf classroom demands not only the full art of a teacher but the united effort of a class. When achieved, education deepens, and lessons touch the hearts as well as the heads of students. Teachers have found that students whose diet includes media exposure have trouble entering into the level of focus being asked for in the classroom experience. Additionally, the cultivation of the imaginative power of each individual child is paramount as a foundation for the healthy development of creative and critical thinking in adolescence. A reliance on ready-made pictures reduces a child's ability to visualize

both the written word (when reading) and the spoken word (when imaginative pictures are given, stories are told, etc.). Students accustomed to passively receiving impressions have difficulty making the inner effort necessary to sustain imaginative thought.

There is a growing body of research regarding the negative impacts of media on neurological development, vision tracking, and the ability to focus in school in children exposed to television, movies, and video games, particularly under the age of nine.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to have their children refrain from any media exposure (television, video games, computer, etc.) on school nights throughout their years at Maple Village Waldorf School, but particularly in the years up to age ten. We know this is a challenge, but you have a community of parents/guardians and teachers here to support your efforts. We encourage you to seek them out for ideas on how to create a media-free lifestyle for your family. At a recent public health summit, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry made an announcement that based on thirty years of research, viewing content of entertainment violence in TV, music, video games, and movies leads to increases in aggressive attitudes, values, and behavior, particularly in children. Recent research indicates that media exposure has negative effects on the neurological, cognitive, and sensory development of the child, including speech and language development, motor skills, attention span, perseverance levels, creativity, imagination, and initiative. We encourage you to be informed about ongoing research on the effects of media on the child.

### Sunday Evenings

Every Monday morning the lesson given by the teacher lays the foundation for the week's work. The old adage, "early to bed and early to rise makes one healthy, wealthy, and wise" holds true here! Please plan your weekends to allow for some "settling-in" time on Sunday evenings.

### Toys

Please keep your child's toys at home. The teacher is responsible for engaging the children actively and creatively during school time. Please check with your child's teacher before sending items that are not necessary. When items from home are lost at school, children often feel anxious and sad.

### Festivals

Seasonal festivals renew our awareness of the rhythms of the year and foster the children's relationship to the seasons, the world, our community, and other cultures, as well as giving them a sense of gratitude. Children love preparing for festivals by decorating the room, baking, and singing. Nature stories, songs, poetry, and special tales help bring deeper significance to the children.

Maple Village Waldorf School plans to celebrate the following festivals: Michaelmas, Harvest Faire, Lantern Walk, Winter Spiral, and May Day.

### Religion at Maple Village Waldorf School

Like other Waldorf schools, Maple Village does not seek to teach a particular religious view. Students from all religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are welcomed and differences are respected. We acknowledge and share the religious customs and celebrations enjoyed by our families. If you are interested in celebrating special holidays in your child's classroom, we encourage you to give

suggestions to your child's teacher. Parent/guardians participation helps to make these festivals meaningful and special. Parents/guardians are also welcome to keep their children home in observance of their own religious holidays.

We strive to bring a universal nature to our festival celebrations through their connection with the rhythms of the earth and the cosmos. We feel that the ceremonies and rituals associated with them help reveal the deeper significance in many everyday occurrences. The living rhythms of the year, though taken up in each class in different ways, help provide a common foundation for the children.

#### Parent-Teacher-Administration Avenues of Communication

If you have a question or concern about your child's classroom experience, speak directly to your child's class teacher. Your child's teacher will communicate their preferences for parent-teacher conversations, which can occur via telephone, email, or in person. We ask that you limit all email correspondence to simple, logistical matters and that they are sent directly to teachers or administration. Any emails that are sent to all the parents/guardians in a class need to be first reviewed by the teacher. Any personal concerns that require a lengthy discussion should be addressed in a prearranged conference. Our most effective and valued form of problem-solving includes teamwork between parent/guardian, teacher, and school, so we request that all concerns or questions be brought directly to the appropriate staff member rather than happen in side conversations.

Maple Village Waldorf School is committed to positive adult communication that models a civil society for our students. All MVWS community communications should be based on mutual respect and foster dialogue in a climate in which different perspectives are heard and valued. While it is natural for concerns

to arise within any community, we ask that such concerns be communicated in a productive and constructive manner. In addressing concerns, an important starting point is the recognition that the best interest of the students is the first priority.

#### Student Electronic Devices

Children are not permitted to bring cell phones or electronic devices to school. If you require your child to have a cell phone for after-school use, we ask that it stay in their backpack, turned off, during school hours. All communication between parent/guardian/caregiver and your child needs to go through the front office in lieu of texting or calling your child during school hours. Likewise, children must communicate with you via the front office phone during the school day.

#### Parent Evenings

Every teacher schedules one or two Parent Evenings each year. Together, parents/guardians and teachers discuss various aspects of programs and curriculum while engaging in handwork or artistic activities. Attendance at Parent Evenings is required by at least one parent/guardian of each student, as they cover matters that are essential to your child's experience at school.

#### Classroom Volunteers

Occasionally, teachers will request assistance in the classroom. The relationship between teacher and child develops through shared experiences that embody trust, wisdom, beauty, and love. From the handshake at the door in the morning to the verse at the close of day, a mood of mutual trust is built through which education takes place. Any volunteer in the classroom also becomes a member of the class!

While volunteering in the classroom, our guidelines are:

- Volunteers may need to have an orientation conversation with the teacher concerning their presence in the room (where to sit and whether one should be ready to assist and in what capacity).
- If you would like to discuss the lessons that you have observed, please arrange to do this with the teacher outside of class time and away from the children.
- Parents/guardians are requested to observe confidentiality. We appreciate your observations and hope they will serve to deepen our mutual understanding of the children.
- All volunteers are required to complete a TB test at their own expense and deliver the results to the front office.
- All volunteers who will be alone with students (e.g. driving on a field trip) are required to complete a LiveScan background check at their expense. LiveScan forms are available in the office.

### Home Visits

Teachers realize the value of seeing the child in their home environment and so may arrange home visits as often as busy lives and circumstances permit. Please feel free to invite your class teacher into your home for a visit or a meal together.

### Dress Standards

The Maple Village dress standards are intended to minimize distractions so that students are better able to focus on their education. When these standards are not followed, teachers will assess the needs for the class. Maintaining these standards will allow teachers the ability to focus on instruction.

The clothing selections recommended by Maple Village Waldorf School are comfortable and accommodate all kinds of

movement activities, able to withstand dirt, grass, mud, water, and paint, and layered for warmth and changeable weather.

### All-School Dress Standards

- All students should come to school with jackets for cooler weather.
- Include a hat for outside wear, to provide protection from sun or cold (please note hats are not to be worn inside the classroom).
- Rain gear of some kind is essential for rainy days or a hint of one. Students will go outside as much as possible at recess, even in the rain.
- Identify outwear (sweaters, jackets, boots, etc.) and water bottles with names written on tags.
- Each child has a cubby or hook where extra clothes, coats, and shoes accumulate. Please check your child's cubby or hook regularly for things that can be taken home.
- Pajamas are not to be worn to school (unless it's "Pajama Day" in your child's class).

### Preschool Through Fifth Grade Daily Dress Standards

- Clothing should be clean, in good repair, and allow for free and safe movement.
- Clothing should be modest, covering the torso and upper thighs, with no undergarments visible.
- Shirts must have shoulder straps at least one-inch in width.
- T-shirts with overly large writing, advertising, media-related images, violent, aggressive, or distracting images are not permitted.
- Hair must be not become a distraction in class. If hair becomes a distraction (in students' eyes or otherwise), the teacher will work to develop a resolution to make the learning environment more optimal.

- Shoes should be comfortable and allow for safe movement. They must be closed-toed and have a back strap or closed-heel. (No Crocs, blinking lights or sounds.) Gym shoes are the best choice for footwear. Cleats are not permitted.
- Shoes must be worn on campus at all times during school hours. Indoor shoes must be worn in the Early Childhood classes.
- No make-up may be worn. Stage make-up is the only exception.
- If a skirt is worn, there should be shorts underneath.
- Jewelry should be simple, and should not be excessive or overly ornate.
- Hats and hoods may be worn outdoors only.

#### Middle School (Grades 6-8) Daily Dress Standards

- Clothing should be clean, tidy, and in good repair.
- Clothing should be modest, covering the torso and upper thighs, with no undergarments visible.
- Shirts must have shoulder straps at least one-inch in width. Spaghetti straps are not permitted.
- Shorts and skirts must be mid-thigh or longer in length, even if leggings, shorts, or tights are worn underneath.
- Leggings are permitted when worn with a top which completely covers the torso and upper thighs when arms are raised or lowered.
- Hair must be not become a distraction in class. If hair becomes a distraction (in students' eyes or otherwise), the teacher will work to develop a resolution to make the learning environment more optimal.
- Shoes should be comfortable and allow for safe movement. They must be closed-toed and have a back strap or

closed-heel. Gym shoes are the best choice for footwear. Cleats are not permitted.

- Shoes must be worn on campus at all times during school.
- No make-up may be worn. Stage make-up is the only exception.
- Jewelry should be simple, and should not be excessive or overly ornate.
- Hats and hoods may be worn outdoors only.
- Visible tattoos and large jewelry in piercings are not permitted.
- Inappropriate clothing for the classroom includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - Strapless and backless garments, or ones which bare the torso when the arms are raised or lowered.
  - Ripped and/or torn clothing.
  - T-shirts with overly large writing, advertising, media-related images, violent, aggressive, or distracting images.
  - Excessively baggy, short, or tight clothing in any way restricting the movement of students in eurythmy, physical education, or other classes.
  - Flip-flops, high heels, wedges, or foam-type clogs.

Students not adhering to the above rules will be asked to change into dress code compliant garments. Additional consequences for dress code infractions are at the discretion of Maple Village Waldorf School.

#### Student Conduct

Clear boundaries and expectations regarding conduct are necessary in any community of learning. At Maple Village Waldorf School, the primary expectation is that students show respect for the

self and others, as well as for the classroom learning environment. In addition, the following guidelines apply:

- Behavior that violates the person or possessions of another is unacceptable.
- Students are expected to use respectful and kind language. Foul or rude language (including hand gestures) will not be tolerated.
- Gum chewing is not allowed.
- All school buildings, equipment, and grounds, including lawns, trees, and flowerbeds, are to be treated with respect.
- Teachers will give their students clear outdoor boundaries agreed upon among the faculty. Students are expected to stay within these boundaries at all times.
- The use of any type of electronic equipment by students is not permitted on campus at any time.
- If behavioral expectations are not met during the school day, the school can ask that the student not participate in Extended Care for that day or a period of time for the safety of the student and others.

#### Closed Campus Policy

In the Waldorf curriculum the teaching is not limited to the classroom. The teachers need to feel free to take the students into the play area or walkways at any time. In light of this fact, and for the safety of our students, we would like the campus free of non-staff, non-students, and non-volunteer parents/guardians during the school day. If you are visiting to work in your child's classroom or on campus as a volunteer, we ask that you come to the front office to sign in and receive a visitor badge. This will be a sign to all that you are cleared to be on campus. Upon leaving, please sign out and return your badge.

#### Creative Discipline at Maple Village Waldorf School

As teachers we guide behavior in a gentle, non-threatening, yet effective manner. We carefully structure the environment and daily rhythm. When disruptions or conflicts occur in Early Childhood, we use creative images, characters, stories, and humor to redirect play, regroup children in their play, and give them a special role involving their cooperation. In the Grades, each teacher involves all the students in conflict resolution, helping them to learn to resolve conflicts and to express their feelings and needs in safe, respectful ways.

Children will be sent home for verbally/physically aggressive or disrespectful behaviors. If your child is having difficulty with aggressive behaviors, please confer with your teacher before an incident occurs to establish consistent methods of discipline both at home and at school.

#### Disciplinary Procedures

Maple Village Waldorf School is committed to striving to secure an educational environment for all students free from bullying, harassment, taunting, prejudicial or threatening behavior, physical or verbal, among students or staff. The school will enact this commitment in its supervision of students and in its education of students in values of anti-bias, acceptance of diversity, and personal self-worth, and in its education of students in problem-solving social/emotional skills.

Each teacher is responsible for implementing classroom management and discipline according to predetermined MVWS procedures that are consistent across all classrooms and teachers. For minor infractions, the teacher will follow our predetermined MVWS

discipline guidelines. Serious misbehavior or repeated minor infractions will be discussed with colleagues during faculty meetings.

The teacher will notify parents/guardians of concerns regarding behavior and consequences both verbally and in writing. They will make a written record of the incident and of subsequent conversations and meetings. Either teacher or parent/guardians may request a parent/guardian conference after the incident. At this conference, more than one faculty or Board member may be present.

If, following consultation and work among the teachers, faculty, and parents/guardians, a child's behavior continues to show no improvement, suspension or expulsion may be considered.

Teachers and parents/guardians will meet before any final decision is made. Notwithstanding the foregoing, MVWS reserves the right to immediately suspend or expel any student as it deems appropriate.

#### Photography and Video Recording at School Events & Social Media

Class plays and all school assemblies are part of the curriculum. They are presented to the community as a gift from the children. Class plays and assemblies should be treated with the reverence in which they are given. All videotaping or photography needs to be approved by the teacher prior to the day of the performance.

Parents/guardians are welcome to post photos of their own child at school social events and field trips on their personal social media sites. However, in respect of the privacy and confidentiality of other enrolled children, parents/guardians are not at liberty to post photos of other children, even those children who are photographed during play with their own child. In addition, no one is allowed to post identities or personal information regarding staff, children, or parents/guardians featuring school activities on any social networking site.

#### Student/Family Privacy

As a school we respect the privacy of all enrolled families and thus we are not able to share confidential information. Confidentiality plays a vital role in promoting respect for every individual and fostering a strong community. MVWS takes this very seriously and makes every effort to protect each family's privacy.

Communications among staff and parents/guardians about children are kept confidential at all times. MVWS recommends that conversations about a student, behavior, or incident should be conducted in private, away from the student and other members of the school community.

#### Birthday Invitations

If your child wishes to invite all of the children in their class to a party, you are welcome to distribute invitations at school. Invitations for a specific group should be distributed outside of the school setting.

#### Food Policy

The school will work with each class to avoid or limit any potential food allergens within that class. You may be asked to send alternate snacks for your child on a particular day(s) if food allergies are a concern. We serve healthy, whole foods and avoid sugar at school.

#### Courtesy

- With the exception of those assisting disabled persons, no animals are allowed on campus at any time without prior permission from faculty or administration.
- We are a non-smoking campus (including electronic cigarettes).
- Cell phones should be turned off when entering any classroom.



## **PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding any topic in this section of the Handbook, please contact the Parent Village leaders.

### A Guide to Parent Involvement

It is through parents'/guardians' involvement in their children's classrooms and in the daily life of the school that we are able to provide a rich and varied curriculum. Teachers appreciate parents/guardians volunteering for specific tasks such as plays, field trips, special projects, etc. A commitment to work alongside the teachers in the teaching of tasks is essential.

MVWS depends upon the support of our entire community for ongoing committee work, fundraisers, and events. Therefore, each Grades or Kindergarten family is expected to earn a minimum of 20 volunteer credits during the year. A portion of these credits should be dedicated to the Harvest Faire and the Spring Gala. Each credit is worth \$20.00. Credits can be bought out by those families who are unable to volunteer. Please check with your Room Parent and Committee Chair monthly to ensure your volunteer credits have been allocated properly. These volunteer activities directly support the life of the school as well as the operating budget. We thank you in advance for your contributions and support.

### Financial Contributions

All independent schools, and now even many public schools, rely on extra support above and beyond tuition and fees. This is because the real cost of educating our children - of giving them a solid cultural and academic foundation - is more than the cost of tuition. In order to provide the vibrant and diverse education offered at Maple Village Waldorf School, generous tax-deductible gifts are necessary. We

plan to raise money each year for the education of our children in the following ways:

### Scrip

There are many ways to earn additional dollars for MVWS while purchasing things you would buy anyway. Each family with a child enrolled in Kindergarten through 8th Grade must contribute at least \$75 in Scrip donation earnings per school year. This may be satisfied by a cash or check donation in lieu of using the Scrip program, however we encourage each family to take advantage of the free money offered to our school by using this program. Me & My Baby, Parent/Toddler, and Preschool families do not have Scrip earning requirements but are still encouraged to sign up. More details are available on our website and by emailing [scrip@maplevillageschool.org](mailto:scrip@maplevillageschool.org).

### Annual Giving Campaign (AGC)

The AGC consists of tax-deductible gifts of cash or equity investments. One hundred percent participation in the AGC is expected and necessary to attract outside funding sources to further enhance our financial picture. Therefore, all gifts large and small are welcome.

### Donor-Advised Gifts

Tax-deductible donations and grants can be directed toward specific school programs that match the donor's areas of interest, such as physical resources, tuition assistance, or teacher development.

### Special Events and Development Committees

Special Events and Development Committees will be Board-mandated to enhance fundraising through the planning and producing of events, support for volunteer, donor, public and alumni relations, as well as grant research and our fundraising endeavors.

Development Committee members are those who have specific interest in the communal and economic well being of the school, and who enjoy working closely with other members of the community. If you feel you might have skills, enthusiasm, and vision to share as we grow towards the future, please contact a Board member.

## **PRACTICAL & DAILY MATTERS**

### School Office Hours

The school's front office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day that school is in session. Please contact the administration if you need to schedule a meeting outside of posted office hours.

### Early Childhood School Days/Times/Age Requirements:

#### Me & My Baby Classes:

Children must be at least 6 months old at the start of their session (some flexibility given at teacher's discretion). Class meets on Thursday from 12:00 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. A parent or guardian must attend with the child.

#### Parent/Toddler Classes:

Children must be at least 18 months old at the start of their session (some flexibility given at teacher's discretion). Classes meet on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. A parent or guardian must attend with the child.

#### Three-Day Parent Participation Preschool:

Children must be at least 3 years old and potty-trained as of September 1st (some age flexibility given at teacher's discretion). Classes are held Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday (Sweet Pea class) and Wednesday/Thursday/Friday (Poppy class) from 9:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

### Five-Day Kindergarten:

Children must be at least 4 years 3 months old as of September 1st. Classes are held Monday through Friday from 8:45 a.m. until 1:15 p.m.

Maple Village Waldorf School provides snack for Early Childhood students each day. Please send a healthy lunch for your child, along with a reusable bottle of water. We recommend avoiding packaged and high-sugar foods.

### Elementary Grades School Days/Times/Age Requirements:

Children must be ready to enter each grade as determined by Waldorf readiness guidelines. For more information, please contact the Dean of Education or your child's teacher. Grades classes meet Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (1st & 2nd Grade), 3:00 p.m. (3rd through 5th Grade), or 3:30pm (6th through 8th Grade); and Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. - 1:45 p.m. (all grades).

For all grades students, please send a snack as well as a healthy lunch for your child, along with a reusable bottle of water. We recommend avoiding packaged and high-sugar foods.

### Preschool & Kindergarten Sign In/Sign Out Procedures

Children in Preschool and Kindergarten must always be signed in and out by a parent/guardian or another person included on your emergency contact form. Always sign (do not print) your name.

Supervision of children begins at 8:30 a.m. (Kindergarten) or 9:00 a.m. (Preschool) and is available only until ten minutes after the end of class. If you need extended supervision for your child, please contact the office regarding Extended Day options.

### Extended Day Program

Morning Care is offered Monday through Friday beginning at 7:30 a.m. (Grades) or 8:00 a.m. (Kindergarten), and Aftercare is available Monday through Friday until 5:30 p.m. (Kindergarten & Grades) or 3:15 p.m. (Preschool). For a full list of Extended Day pricing, sign-up procedures, and policies, please contact the front office.

### Faculty In-Service/Professional Development Days

While the faculty and staff have numerous in-service days in the summer, there are also a few days during the school year when in-service days are scheduled. There are no classes on these days. Please note that although the staff is on campus, they will be unavailable. Check your school calendar for the dates of the in-service days.

### Punctuality

One of the greatest gifts we can give one another is the practice of punctuality. It is a gesture of deep respect for others and a virtue that will hold children in good stead throughout their lives. Consistent punctuality strengthens the will of both the adult and the child. When we are habitually late, we create a sense of lack of appreciation for the others who are ready to begin on time. Beginnings in life are significant. An agreement to begin on time, when kept, strengthens discipline inside the individual and creates a community of mutual support and commitment. Parents/guardians, we appreciate your efforts to get your children here on time to begin the day together. Those first ten minutes at the beginning of each day set a mood and tone of inclusion and mutual commitment to the day ahead that can't be made up later.

Please drop off your child as close to their class start time as possible. Any late drop-off is disruptive for the entire class and

interferes with the daily rhythm. If you cannot avoid to be late due to traffic, for example, please make sure that you inform the front office of your late arrival.

### Absences, Tardiness, Early Dismissals

If your child is absent, please call the office to leave word for the teacher. Please always try to arrive on time. If Grades students are tardy (arrive at 8:35 a.m. or later), they must check in at the front office to receive a tardy slip before entering class.

### Requests for Early Dismissal

When leaving during the day for appointments, please send a note to the teacher with your child in the morning and notify the front office. Upon arriving to pick up your child, please come to the front office to sign out your student. A staff member will go to the classroom and bring your student to you.

### School Activities, Vacations, Medical Appointments

If specific circumstances make a lengthy absence necessary, early consultation with the class teacher is essential. Parents/guardians are asked to schedule family holidays and vacations during school holiday times only, especially for children in the Grades; for any exceptions, please notify the class teacher at least 14 days in advance. Please try to schedule medical and dental appointments outside of school hours. Excessive absences, even if excused, may be grounds for dismissal. For children in the Grades, total unexcused absences of more than five days in a month and more than a total of 25 in a year will require a conference with parents/guardians.

### Class Field Trips

Signed parental/guardian permission for off-campus field trips is required. The cost, if any, of field trips varies by activity. All parent/guardian driver volunteers are required to complete a TB test

and LiveScan background check at their expense, as well as sign the school transport policy and provide a copy of valid auto insurance and valid driver license. LiveScan forms and Transport Policy can be picked up and returned to the front office.

#### Illness, Health and Safety

Since we do not have much space or staff to supervise sick or recovering children, it is best to keep them home if they are not well enough for outdoor play. A parent/guardian will be called if a child develops a fever or is too sick to participate in class. A place to rest quietly away from the group will be provided until a parent/guardian or alternate caregiver arrives. Please be sure your child is well enough to participate in all activities before returning to school. A child who has had a fever may return when their temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours. Remember to advise the office of any contagious or transmittable illnesses so that the teachers and parents/guardians of exposed children can be notified.

#### Medication at School

You will need to make a copy of your physician's instructions regarding the dispensation of medication as well as give your own written consent that we participate in the administration of any medication to your child. All medication must be brought to school in its original container and kept in the front office.

#### Head Lice Information and School Policy

Our school has a no-nit policy, which requires that children remain at home until all nits (lice eggs) are removed. If lice or nits are discovered at school, the parents/guardians will be called to pick up and treat the student immediately. This policy must be enforced, as it is virtually impossible for us to distinguish treated, dead nits from live nits. The number of cases and degree of infestation in the past

has made this strict policy necessary. Children may return to school once they have been treated and have no lice or nits.

#### Emergency Procedures

In the case of an emergency, the school has an Emergency Response Plan, which is updated and reviewed yearly with the faculty and staff. The plan includes policies and procedures in the event of a large earthquake that involves loss of power and an inability to leave the grounds. In the most severe scenario, all employees are equipped and ready for a 72-hour stay on campus with your children. Parents/guardians are asked to understand that, in case of an emergency of this magnitude, no students will be allowed to leave campus until released and checked out by parents/guardians or designated alternate caregivers. Phones, if working, will be used only to report conditions or request assistance. The care and well being of your children will be paramount in our efforts. When possible, we will utilize a One Call Now system which delivers a message to everybody on our designated contact list to keep parents/guardians informed.

#### School Closure

Should it be necessary to cancel school due to a natural disaster such as lack of heat or electricity, flooding, severe storm, earthquake, etc., parents/guardians will be notified by the office. Parents/guardians should call their classroom parent/guardian or teacher if they are unsure of school being open. Please do not call the office! All phone lines will be needed to call out.

#### Reusing/Recycling

As a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School our goal is to be a nearly zero-waste school. Please support our efforts by packing all food in reusable containers and sending your child with a reusable water bottle, as eliminating single-use products is the most

effective way to reduce trash. We also recycle 100% of our paper, cardboard, glass bottles, aluminum, and plastic containers and place food scraps in our composting bin.

## **FINANCIAL POLICIES**

### Enrollment Fees

Annual registration and supply fees are non-refundable and payable to Maple Village Waldorf School as stated on enrollment contracts.

### Tuition

Please see the current enrollment contract for payment plan options, due dates, and policies regarding tuition.

### Late Payments

Any tuition payments received after the 1st of the month will be assessed a \$50.00 late fee. As stated in the enrollment contract, families are required to be current with tuition payments or make appropriate arrangements with our Business Administrator to ensure continued enrollment.

### Returned Check / NSF Policy

Any check returned from the bank or other non-sufficient funds payment will be assessed a \$50 NSF fee.

### Sibling Discounts

Younger siblings of currently enrolled students who are enrolled in Preschool through 8th Grade receive the following sibling discounts:

- 10% off for the second child;
- 15% off for the third child;
- 20% off for the fourth and further children.

Sibling discounts apply to tuition only and are not applicable for registration or supply fees. There is no sibling discount for children

enrolled in Me & My Baby or Parent/Toddler classes. Discounts will be applied from the oldest child to the youngest.

### Dismissal

The school reserves the right to dismiss a child at any time if the teacher, with the consent of the Board, deems it necessary for the welfare of the child or the school. Refer to the enrollment contract for more details and legal responsibilities.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

Maple Village Waldorf School admits students of any race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, economic background, gender presentation or identity, and sexual orientation to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at school.

MVWS does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, economic background, gender presentation or identity, or sexual orientation represented in the makeup of our faculty, staff, parents/guardians, and students in the administration of its educational policies, admission policies, tuition adjustment programs, or other school-administered programs. The MVWS school community represents the diverse surrounding area of Long Beach, California. MVWS strongly values the multiplicity of backgrounds represented in our school community.

## **LINES OF COMMUNICATION**

### School Directory & The Village Records

When your child enrolls at MVWS, the administration will send you a sign-up link to create your Village Records account. At least one parent/guardian of each student must create an account. Please keep all of your family's information up-to-date in The Village Records.

Once you have created your account, you can access your parent/guardian portal at <https://maplevillageschool.bigsis.com/portal/>. A school directory is available online on The Village Records site for the benefit of communication within our school community. Please use the directory as a tool for school communication only. The information contained in the directory is never traded, sold, or used for any commercial purposes. Thank you for respecting this policy.

#### Friday Bulletin

The Friday Bulletin is emailed to families on a weekly basis and includes important information and reminders from the faculty, administration, Board of Trustees, and Parent Village.

#### Website & Social Media

You can receive frequent updates on school activities as well as find information about our programs online.

Website: [www.maplevillageschool.org](http://www.maplevillageschool.org)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/maplevillageschool](https://www.facebook.com/maplevillageschool)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/maplevillagewaldorfschool/>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Association of Waldorf  
Schools of North America  
3911 Bannister Road  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628  
916-961-0927  
[www.waldorfeducation.org](http://www.waldorfeducation.org)

### The Anthroposophical Society

The Anthroposophical Society is a worldwide organization that came into being through the intention of Rudolf Steiner, who invited attendance at its founding in 1923 so that all efforts in the realm of anthroposophy could be combined in a single society. The Society today works throughout the world to foster spiritual-scientific research and other initiatives arising out of the work of Rudolf Steiner.

[www.anthroposophy.org](http://www.anthroposophy.org)

### For Further Reading

Baldwin, R., *You Are Your Child's First Teacher.*

Helps parents/guardian in the task of enhancing their children's development from birth to school age and preventing negative effects at a later age.

Bradley, P. & Patterson, B., *Beyond the Rainbow Bridge: Nurturing Our Children from Birth to Seven.*

Childs, G., *Understand Your Temperament! A Guide to the Four Temperaments.*

Shows readers how to recognize the temperaments in fellow human beings as well as in themselves, and how to understand their workings.

Elkind, D., *The Hurried Child.*

Offers parents/guardians insight, advice, and hope for encouraging healthy development while protecting the joy and freedom of childhood. Topics include the Internet, classroom culture, movies and television.

Fenner, P. & Rivers, K., *Waldorf Education: A Family Guide.*

Initially the Marin Waldorf School parent/guardian handbook; a treasure of information about Waldorf curriculum, family life, festivals, etc.

Harwood, A.C., *The Way of a Child.*

An excellent introduction and a clear explanation of how Waldorf education is integrated with the fundamental stages of child development.

Payne, K. J., *Simplicity Parenting.*

This book helps parents/guardians simplify life by streamlining the home environment, establishing rhythms and rituals, and scaling back on media and parental/guardian involvement.

Petrash, J., *Understanding Waldorf Education: Teaching from the Inside Out.*

Written by a teacher with more than 25 years of experience, this book offers a view of Waldorf education and its philosophy of the importance of a three-dimensional education.

Steiner, R. *The Kingdom of Childhood.*

One of Dr. Steiner's last lectures presented to a group of teachers

preparing to establish the first Waldorf school in the English-speaking world.