

# SPINDLEWOOD

## Parent Handbook

### Welcome!

Receive the children with reverence  
Educate them with love  
Let them go forth with freedom

*—Rudolf Steiner*

Dear Parents,

We warmly welcome you to Spindlewood Waldorf Kindergarten and LifeWays Center. We are happy that you have chosen Spindlewood, and we want to work closely with you to make this time rich and rewarding for you and your child. We hope that this handbook will help to create a harmonious transition between home and school in the weeks and years to come. Our purpose is to present you with comprehensive information about the school and Waldorf education and to offer guidelines for navigating within the Spindlewood community. Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook and to keep it in a secure place for future reference.

*—The Spindlewood Teachers and Trustees*

### Arrival and Departure Times

Arrival - 8:30-8:45 a.m. Tuesday/Wednesday and Thursday

Pick-up - 12:15 - 12:30 p.m. or 2:45 - 3:00 p.m. Tuesday/Wednesday

### Office Hours - 207-763-4652

9 am - noon on Monday

7-8 am and 4-5 pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

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## Waldorf Education

The Waldorf approach to education emphasizes protecting the realm of early childhood in all its wonder and magic. Waldorf educators carefully nurture the creative play by which young children have always done their most profound learning. By example, teachers and parents encourage a reverence for all life, enthusiasm for work and compassion for each other.

Understanding that young children live in the world thoroughly and deeply through their senses, Waldorf education provides each child with environments that are beautiful and rich with natural healthful materials such as wood, stones, shells, cotton, silk and wool. The simplicity of the toys invites young children to engage in their actively growing faculties of imagination. From imaginative play a foundation of artistic and creative abilities is established that later promotes symbolic thinking.

Children grow through creative and open-ended play. They try on every imaginable situation. They build houses and villages, sailing ships and fire engines. They explore life in homes and farms, forests and mountains, underwater caverns and outer space. They create these worlds through simple natural materials. In the course of play, the children grow in all areas: physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively and spiritually.

Waldorf education encourages artistic expression in a variety of mediums. The use of quality art materials is very satisfying for the children and indicates respect for their creative selves. Music is celebrated with joyful singing, at group times and individually throughout the day.

The Waldorf approach offers a wealth of beautiful language experiences in the form of circle time, verses, poems, and songs. The telling of fairy tales, stories developed by wise humans over the centuries, nourishes the spirit and the moral development of children. These traditional stories also offer children glimpses into various cultures around the world. The use of language draws children in to the wonderful rhythms of the spoken word.

Recognizing the importance of each child becoming a loving member of the human family, Waldorf actively seeks to encourage the qualities of compassion and moral courage. The teachers guide the children in social skills like problem solving, negotiation, inclusiveness in work and play, and acceptance of individual differences as well as pleasant conversation and manners at the table. Waldorf educators support and encourage community building within the school and amongst families.

The natural world is an everyday part of Waldorf curriculum. Children and teachers reverently and enthusiastically engage in outdoor explorations. Children are encouraged to work with adults in gardens, to dig in the earth, explore fields and forests. Nature crafts, pressing of cider in the fall and maple sugaring in the spring, making bread from wheat to grain to flour to table, are all important activities within the Waldorf model. The changing seasons are celebrated with festivals that include the whole family and the wider community, as well.

In Waldorf education each day has its rhythm of active outgoing and energetic activities balanced by more quiet and inward times. Daily, weekly and yearly rhythms are internalized by the children and give them strength and security.

### **Rhythm of the day**

Children may be dropped off anytime after 8:30 a.m., no later than 8:45 a.m. Each day is planned with each child in mind. If you will be delayed, or your child will be absent, please call Spindlewood as soon as possible. Thanks!

The teacher greets each child individually as they arrive. It is hoped that parents will establish a consistent, short leave-taking ritual at the inside door of the kindergarten. Circle will begin at 9:00 a.m. and consists of verses, songs and finger plays reflecting the changing seasons. This is a sacred time for teachers and children. For the wellbeing of the children, please be aware that this circle time is for teachers and children only. If you arrive after 9:00 a.m., please wait with your child in the mudroom until a teacher greets you. Between 10:00 - 10:30 a.m. will be snack time. Snack, prepared with the children is enjoyed family style. At about 11:15 a.m. teachers and children enjoy an extended outside playtime, which may include walks on trails, outdoor gardening, nature collection and investigation, and active play. **Pick-up for the morning program is 12:30 p.m. At this time the children and parents gather with the teacher in front of the school house to join hands, sing a seasonal song.** This moment of stillness and closure is one of the social arts that we practice daily. Thank you for taking the time to participate!

**Children may stay for the afternoon until 3:00 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.** The children eat a hot lunch together, clean-up, enjoy a 40-minute rest/story time, and play out of doors on most days. Afternoon pick-up is 2:45 - 3:00 p.m.

### **Parent/Teacher Conversations**

Parent/Teacher conversations are scheduled twice a year to provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to share their impressions and concerns. Individual

conferences can be arranged with teachers at any time if parents have a special concern about their child. Teachers appreciate being informed of significant changes or circumstances in your child's life.

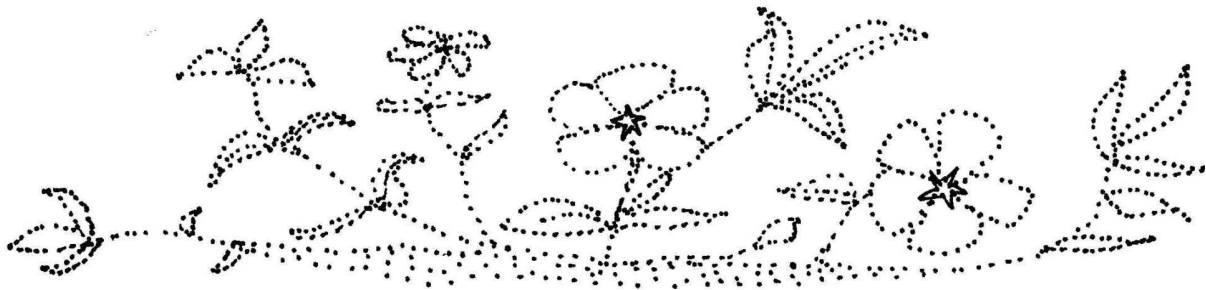
### **Kindergarten Parent Evenings**

The kindergarten teacher holds at least two parent evenings a year, an important way for parents to meet one another and to discuss questions about their children's education. Attendance is very important for building the healthy communication needed in support of the child in the classroom. Children are not permitted at these times.

### **Food in the Kindergarten**

Warm snacks and lunches are prepared and served family style each day with organically grown whole grains. Snack is served at 10:30 a.m., but it is important that the children eat breakfast at home. If for some reason, your child has not eaten before coming to school, please inform one of the teachers, so that we can be attentive to his or her needs.

To augment our menu, each family is given an opportunity to sign up to bring a certain food item each week. We request organically grown foods whenever possible.



### **Comings and Goings**

To ensure safety as well as good relations with our neighbors and their dogs, please drive slowly on Proctor Road at all times. Please drive all the way around the turn-around and park facing down the road. This will assure that the lawn is kept free of vehicles and you will not need to back up at departure time while children may be walking in the driveway. Please do not block access to the mailbox. We ask that **one** parking space near the architectural studio remain available for visitors to the studio. Please be aware that our driveway is now a through road. Although traffic is mild, the teachers ask the children to stop, look and listen before crossing the road. It is helpful if the children do not see adults standing in the

middle of the road to have a conversation. Please step into the lawn or onto one of the paths and supervise children carefully.

The Silverio family is delighted to welcome the parents and children of Spindlewood. We invite you to follow the path past the studio of Silverio-Architecture+ Design where John Silverio, architect and son Matthew Silverio are at work. You may also follow the path by the frog pond when the weather is not too muddy. On your way out, you are welcome to follow the path that leads past the Silverio house, residence of John (Jack) and Susan, past the woodshed and up to the barn. There are two sheep. They can be very loud when there is the prospect of an extra snack, and would be happy if you would toss them a dropped apple. There are laying hens in the coop. Sometimes they free range. You may also catch a glimpse of two barn cats, Cocoa and Peaches.



### **The Festivals of the Year**

Waldorf education is rooted in the Christian tradition but does not seek to teach a particular religious view. Rather, the human spirit in each child finds its universal expression in seasonal festivals celebrated through story and artistic presentation in the classroom and in family festivals.

Families from a wide range of religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds are welcomed at Spindlewood, and differences are honored. The curriculum itself provides many opportunities to share religious traditions and particular festivals in the classroom. If you are interested in celebrating special holidays within your child's classroom, you are welcome to talk with your child's teacher.

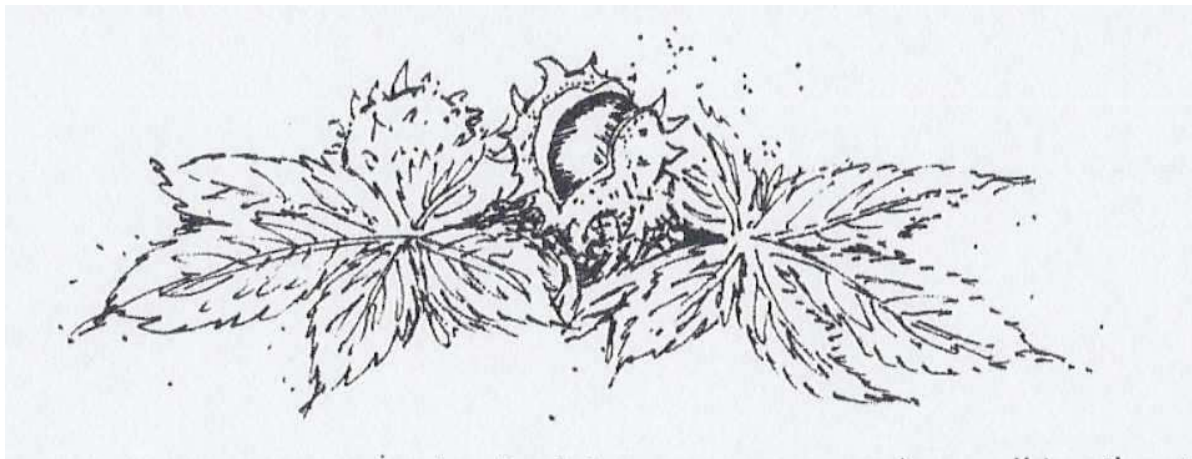
Children enjoy preparing for the festivals by making crafts, baking special treats, learning seasonal songs, and more. Nature stories and thematic tales help bring the deeper significance of each season to the children in a pictorial way.

## Michaelmas Harvest Celebration

Perhaps the least known of the festivals is Michaelmas, celebrated on September 29. Saint Michael is an archangel mentioned in the Bible, the Apocrypha, and the Koran. He appears as a spiritual figure and protector of humankind, inspiring strength, courage, and will throughout history. The motif of a conqueror of the dragon is echoed in stories of Apollo and the serpent, Krishna and the demons, and Saint George and the dragon.

Michael's overcoming the dragon is an image of courage and of keeping at bay our own dragons of fear, greed, thoughtlessness, and apathy. Michael's qualities of courage, compassion, and steadfastness can be an inspiration to us all. In the kindergarten the children hear stories about the brave knight and princess who overpower the dragon with the sword of light.

As a family festival, we invite parents, friends and grandparents to join us for our harvest circle time, a harvest activity of grain threshing or apple picking and cider pressing, a shared meal and a play on the third Wednesday of the school year, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.



## Hike to the Giant Chestnut Tree

As a deed of courage during the Michaelmas season, the kindergarten makes a long hike one sunny October morning through the woods to High Street where the Hazen family invites us to gather the shiny horse chestnuts that are falling from the tree in front of their house. Each child brings back a bag of (non-edible) chestnuts that can be taken home to be dried and stored in a basket for winter's play. Some have been sprouted to trees!

## All Hallows' Day and All Souls' Day

After Hallowe'en, children are invited to bring photos of grandparents or other family members who have departed. We will arrange them in a place of honor, and

hear a story about the value of keeping those we love present in our thoughts and hearts.

### Martinmas Lantern Walk

The Lantern Walk, or Martinmas, is a quiet and simple festival with roots in the story of Martin of Tours, a fourth-century Roman soldier who gave his cape to keep a beggar warm. We experience the change of season by lighting lanterns made in class to carry on a silent walk through the dark woods. Our Martinmas Lantern Walk will be at 4:30 p.m. on November 11, the Veterans Day holiday. Families and friends are invited.



### Advent Spiral

The Advent Spiral is a simple and beautiful festival celebrated on the first Sunday of December in a room lit by the glow of just one candle. The candle rests upon a stump placed in the center of a large spiral pathway edged with evergreen boughs, crystals, shells, and golden stars. A harp sets a mood of peaceful anticipation. One by one, the children journey to the center of the spiral carrying an apple holding a candle. Each child lights his or her own candles and places it on a golden star lining the path. When all students have completed the journey, the room is aglow with candlelight. This celebration reminds us that, at this darkest and coldest time of year, our own inner lights serve to bring light and warmth to the world.

### Gingerbread Tea Party

On the last day of school before winter vacation, from 8:30 - 9:30, family

members are invited into the kindergarten. According to Swedish tradition, the oldest girl in the kindergarten dresses in white as Santa Lucia. She is accompanied by the Bakers and serves gingerbread to all of the families gathered.



## Christmas

"Christmas is not a festival of Christendom only. In ancient Egypt, in Asia, thousands of years before the Christian era, we find that a festival was celebrated on the days now dedicated to the celebration of the birth of Christ. Wonderful fire festivals in the northern and central regions of Europe in ancient times were celebrated among the Celts. What were they celebrating? They were celebrating the time when winter draws to its close and spring begins. The days grow shorter and shorter up to the time when we celebrate the Christmas festival and when our forefathers celebrated it in another form. Then the days begin to lengthen again, and the light of the sun celebrates its victory over the darkness.

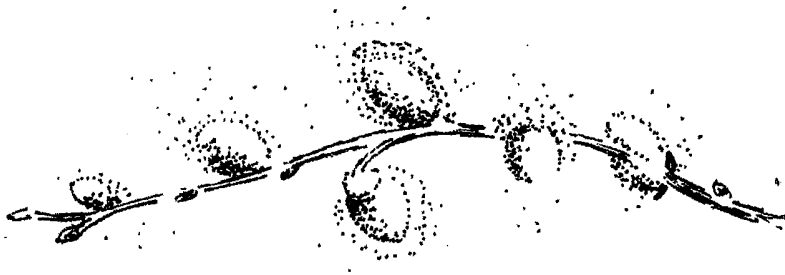
"In all religions, the Christmas festival has been one of confidence, of trust and of hope, because on this day it was felt that light needs must prevail; out of the seed planted in the Earth something will spring forth which seeks the light and will thrive in the light of the coming year."

—Rudolf Steiner

## St. Valentine's Day

During the kindergarten morning, each child sews a Valentine "mailbox" from his or her watercolor paintings. These are posted on the wall of the mudroom. Children

may bring simple homemade paper hearts for each of their classmates.



### Easter

Easter is the festival of rebirth and the return of spring. The natural renewal of life offers hope and the sense of victory of life over death. This hope is required to face the chaos and destruction affecting all humanity. Ancient civilizations all over the world believed that life was contained in the egg. At Spindewood colored eggs, flowers, and stories of new life in nature delight the children.

### May Celebration

The May Celebration is a joyful, colorful celebration of spring. We welcome the arrival of spring by making May crowns and singing and dancing around the Maypole. Families are invited to join us for the beginning of the school day from 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. We also honor our mothers at this time!



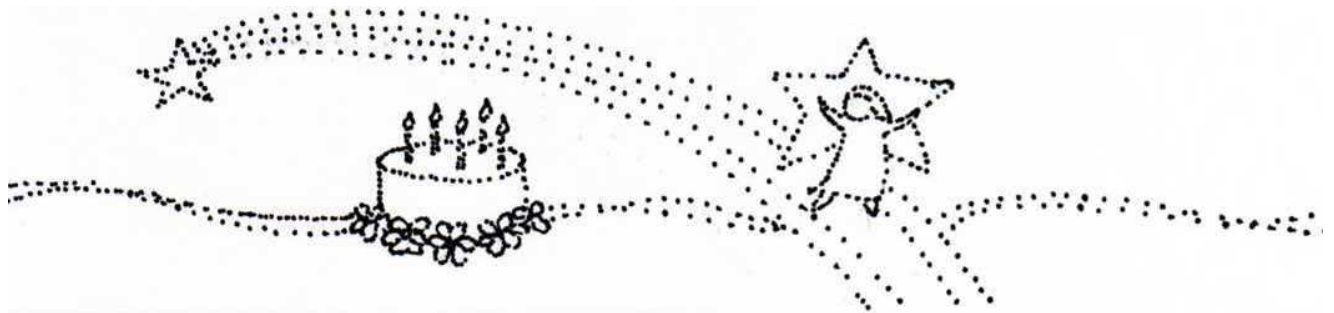
### Bridge Crossing

On the last day of school, a small bridge is set up in the school yard for a brief

ceremony. Parents, friends and family members are invited to join us for an outdoor circle time. Then, as parent sings "White Coral Bells", each child is called one by one to cross over the bridge to Summer Time. Each child wears a gold crown and receives a flower ("May you always have love in your heart.") and an apple ("May you be nourished on your journey.")

Those going on to first grade are dressed in gold silk capes and receive a crystal. ("May you always be strong and true.")

The ceremony is followed by a trip to Lincolnville Beach and a potluck lunch.



### Birthdays

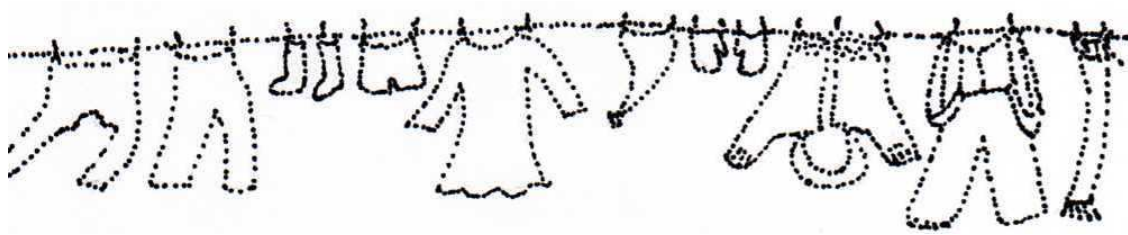
On or shortly after a child's birthday, we invite the birthday child's family to join us in our celebration from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. The birthday story is presented as a picture of the child's own birth and growth. This can be a reassuring, satisfying story for the young child. In its simple pictorial beauty, it answers many of the child's questions and wonderings in a way which is suited to her/his imagination. Then follows small presents from the children and the teacher. The birthday child may bring simple little gifts to share with the other children - shells, feathers, shiny stones, flowers or handmade treats - so that the birthday is a celebration of sharing and giving as well as receiving.

Children with summer birthdays may be celebrated at the Regatta when they may light their birthday candles on their own boats before launching them on the stream. Families are invited to join us for this walk to the stream from 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

### **Clothing**

Young children have not yet developed the temperature controlling ability which enables them to make decisions about the appropriate clothing for the day. It is our responsibility as adults to ensure that the children are adequately dressed.

Children need long sleeves at almost all times for both indoor and outdoor protection and should keep an outer layer (vest, shirt or sweater) with their extra clothing at school.



Along with the sweater, each child should have at school:

- A pair of strong secure non-slippery indoor shoes or slippers.
- A complete change of clothes (socks, underwear, pants, and shirt) marked with her/his name, for emergencies. These are kept in the net bag on the child's hook and need to be replenished regularly by the parent.

Please label each item of clothing clearly and check the baskets in the mudroom for lost & found items.

We go outdoors every day, through the seasons. It is of the utmost importance that the children be dressed appropriately and warmly. Perhaps the most valuable items of clothing are wool or silk/wool undershirts or vests, long johns and hoods (balaclavas). Wool has the ability to breathe and does not need to be laundered as often as cotton. Wool will also generate warmth when wet, and make it possible for a child to be comfortable and confident in going outdoors even on the coldest day. Woolens can become a "second skin" and parents have reported that when worn to bed, even a restless child can sleep through the night. In the autumn, parents find that a group co-op order of woolens makes these items more affordable.

Please note that our school location often has snow and wind even when the coastal regions are warm and sunny. The children need coats and snow pants (or raincoats and rain pants), mittens, hats, and boots for cold or rainy weather so that their experience of nature and the elements is a rewarding one. Please keep in mind that body heat escapes most rapidly from the head and neck. When in doubt, make sure your child has more than enough clothing.

Sturdy clothes for active children are in order. We bake, paint, play in the mud, etc.

We ask that children do not wear jewelry or watches. These are easily lost or

broken which can be upsetting to the child.

We also ask that children not wear garments with neon colors, strong graphic designs, or media images. We have found that those can be distracting as well as over-stimulating. Children may be asked by the teacher, at her discretion, to remove or cover distracting clothing.

There are, in addition, special times during the school year when children are expected to dress more formally: the Advent Spiral, Gingerbread Tea Party, and Bridge Crossing. On these special occasions, we ask that children wear shirts or blouses/dresses.

### **Toys**

The early childhood classroom is developed carefully to support the work and play life of the children. Highly formed toys with one role are less conducive to imaginative play, thus our emphasis is on natural, simple toys which lend themselves to easy transformations according to the child's imagination. Over a period of time the child will discover many possibilities for each object.

It is natural for children to wish to show friends things which are precious to them. It is our experience, however, that bringing toys or books from home can create difficult situations. We therefore request that the children not bring such items to school but wait for the opportunity to share their own toys during friends' visits at their homes.

Some children may wish to bring a small blanket, stuffed animal or doll to school to help the transition from home. The teacher can assist the child in finding a safe place for these objects to live for the morning.

### **Safety**

You are welcome to visit the frog pond and barnyard at drop-off and pick-up time, but parents must closely supervise children at all times, especially when they are swinging on the swings. The barn contains tools and machinery that are not toys. Please do not feed the chickens or sheep from the hay bale or the grain barrels. Children may not enter the sheep pen or pasture and must not walk on the stone walls. Children may not climb trees at pick-up time, due to the numerous distractions at that time.

To protect our school and children, parents are asked to submit a list to your child's teacher of all persons who are authorized to pick up your child from school

other than other Spindlewood parents. Please update this list as necessary.

*Anytime a child is to be picked up by someone whose name does not appear on this parent-approved list, parents must send a note giving special permission. The specially approved driver must then identify himself or herself to the teacher before taking the child. Under no circumstances will children be released to unauthorized adults.*

*Playground supervision after dismissal times is not provided. The following Spindlewood Safety Guidelines must still be observed on campus outside of school hours.*

## Safety Guidelines

### 1. Parental Responsibility

Kindergarten Parents are responsible for their children until the teacher greets the child in the morning of a school day, and as soon as the teacher says good-bye to the child in the afternoon of a school day. Parents who accompany their children in the Morning Garden Parent-Child program are responsible for their child(ren) at all times.

### 2. Traffic

Children are to remain on grassy areas or paths whenever a vehicle is moving in the road/driveway. Adults are asked not to stand in the roadway.

### 3. Off-Limits

Children may not climb the ladder to the hayloft, or enter the sheep pen or pasture unless accompanied by a teacher. Children may not walk on stone walls. (They are not stable.)

### 4. Frog Pond

Children may visit the kindergarten frog pond before and after school only with close adult supervision. There are to be:

No sticks other than nets. (They could puncture the pond liner.)

No moving or throwing of rocks.

No wading.

### 5. Tree Climbing

Children may climb trees on branches that are the size of the child's wrist or

larger.

#### 6. Sticks and Stones

No hitting or running with sticks. No throwing of stones.

They may be used as building materials or gathered as firewood.

#### 7. Swings - Load Limits

Twisty Swing by road - 4 children maximum

Swings with seats - 2 - Children must be seated.

Trolley/Zip Line - 2

Tarzan swing - 2

8. Adults are asked to help children return all playground equipment—sleds, tools, and so on—to the shed at the end of every outdoor period.

9. Children must stay within sight of an adult when in the woods.

### Winter Rules

- Sleds must be shared.
- The sliders at the bottom of the hill should get up and out of the way as soon as possible.
- Children climbing back up to the top of the hill need to use a path at the side of the sledding hill, safely out of the way of sleds going down.
- Sleds must stay off the driveway.
- No throwing of snowballs.

### Pets

When brought to school, dogs should be left in vehicles or restrained on leashes.

If necessary, please take responsibility for cleaning up for your dog.

## **Health Policies**

Because Waldorf education is concerned with the whole child and finds a relationship between health and child development, you will find your child's teacher receptive to any comments you wish to share about your child's health, illnesses past and present, sleeping and eating habits, stresses, and home-life rhythms.

Any child who is ill with an infectious or contagious condition must not be brought to school until the end of the infectious phase. If your child is ill and will not be attending that morning, please call Susan at 763-4652 between 7 and 8:00 a.m. If there is some question about your child's state of health, it is often better to keep your child at home. We suggest that parents give their children at least one full day of rest at home after a fever.

If a child receives a minor injury during school hours, he or she will be offered a homeopathic dose of arnica, hypericum or apis and a band-aid or salve as needed. If a child requires more significant first aid, the parent will be contacted.

Please inform the teacher if there are changes in your work or emergency contact information.

### Communicable Diseases

Parents will be contacted if a child develops any symptoms that suggest illness such as:

- Unusual listlessness
- Excessively red or draining eyes
- Skin rash
- Severe cough
- Persistent nausea, with or without vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Persistent headache, stomachache, or sore throat
- Elevated temperature

Children with the following communicable diseases will be excluded for the time periods stated below.

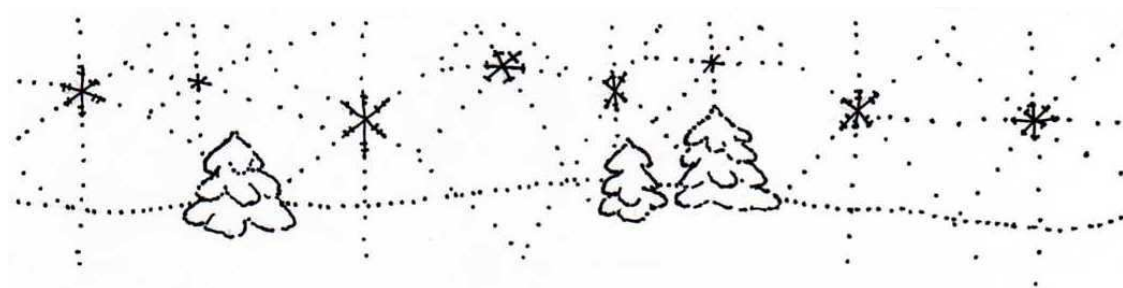
- Impetigo: There must be no draining lesions, and the child must have received 24 hours of treatment.
- Head Lice: The child must be free of all lice and eggs before returning; treatment alone is not sufficient for re-entry. The child's head will be checked before the child may return to class. All blankets, pillows, and articles of clothing that may have been exposed to lice should be taken home and washed thoroughly.
- Scabies: The child must stay home until at least 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Throat/Scarlet Fever: The child is to have 24 hours of antibiotics or equivalent treatment before returning to school.

- Chicken Pox: The child will be excluded from school until all lesions are crusted over and no new lesions have developed for 24 hours.
- Ringworm: The child will be excluded until treatment has been started.
- Conjunctivitis: The child is to have 24 hours of treatment before returning to school.
- Mumps: The child must stay home until he or she is without fever for 24 hours, and all facial swelling has resolved.
- Measles: The child must stay home until he or she is without fever for 24 hours and the rash has resolved.

### Medications Brought To School

If your child requires medication during the school day, the following steps must be followed:

1. Medication must be handed from an adult to the class teacher.
2. All medication must be in its original packaging, fully labeled.
3. A physician must provide a note describing when and how the medication should be administered and for how long.



### **Snow Days**

In the event of school cancellation due to weather, the parent phone tree will be activated. In general, Spindlewood will be canceled when Union 69 - Hope, Appleton & Lincolnville Schools are canceled.

### **History and Philosophy**

The kindergarten was founded as an initiative of several families of MidCoast Maine who were interested in Waldorf education. They formed a Steiner Study Group and incorporated as Ashwood School. They then expanded the small cabin near the Silverio residence on Proctor Road and the kindergarten opened in 1986

with 11 children and Susan Silverio as the founding teacher. A second kindergarten class opened in Rockport in 1990. Ashwood was recognized as a Waldorf School. Ashwood Waldorf School acquired the main campus in Rockport that now comprises "Rosewood", the early childhood center and first through eighth grade classrooms.

In 2006, Spindlewood Waldorf Kindergarten and LifeWays Center incorporated under the laws of the State of Maine as an independent nonprofit educational organization with its own board of trustees. Spindlewood is licensed by the Maine Department of Human Services. Spindlewood is also recognized as a fully developed Waldorf Kindergarten member of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America. Spindlewood received federal exempt status in 2007. Donations to Spindlewood Waldorf Kindergarten and LifeWays Center are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Waldorf education is based on the work of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925), an Austrian-born philosopher, artist, scientist and teacher. Steiner offered penetrating insights into a broad spectrum of human endeavors based on a spiritual vision. Steiner called his work Anthroposophy (Greek for "wisdom of the human being") or Spiritual Science. He emphasized that faculties lie dormant in the human soul, which, if properly nurtured, can lead to knowledge of spiritual reality, to self-knowledge, and to a new understanding of the world. He described a path of self-development using clear thinking, acute observation, refinement of feeling, and transformation of the will.

Anthroposophy is not taught to students. In the words of Rudolf Steiner, "It is not our intention to teach growing human beings our ideas, the contents of our world conception. We not are aiming at education for the sake of any special dogma."

Author of dozens of books, Steiner also gave approximately 6,000 lectures on a wide range of subjects. In addition to Waldorf education, he initiated biodynamic farming, an approach to the care and education of those with developmental disabilities, and an art of movement called eurythmy.

## **The Teachers**

In the Waldorf and LifeWays approach to early childhood, the teachers build a bridge between home and elementary school. They meet the children in their miraculous world, in their innate connection with life, and from there gently coax them into ability and self-awareness, without sacrificing their sense of wonder in

the process. The teachers strive to be worthy of imitation and to create a naturally rich environment in an atmosphere of purposeful activity.

## **School Administration**

### **Faculty**

Waldorf schools are administered by the faculty, who maintain the integrity of the school through the understanding of Waldorf education in the light of Anthroposophy. The teachers are responsible for the pedagogical endeavors of the school. The director is responsible for admissions and administration.

### **Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is drawn from the faculty and staff, parent body, alumni and community. The Trustees create a vessel for the carrying of the vision and mission of Spindlewood and oversee all aspects of the school. Board meetings are held regularly, usually on the third Thursday, and are open by request in advance.

## **Board of Trustees 2010 – 2011**

### **Sarah Baldwin**

139 Buttermilk Lane, S.Thomaston, ME 04858, ph 975-6260  
[sarahbaldwin@roadrunner.com](mailto:sarahbaldwin@roadrunner.com)

### **Sharon Sampson, Chairperson**

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### **Pat Shannon, Secretary**

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### **Susan Silverio, Vice Chair**

105 Proctor Road, Lincolnville, ME 04849, 763- 4652, [silverio@tidewater.net](mailto:silverio@tidewater.net)

### **Tim Wilson, Treasurer**

P.O. Box 467, Belfast, ME 04915, 338-3829  
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## Kinder Faire Committee

The Spindlewood Kinder Faire at Tranquility Grange on the second Saturday of December is the only outreach event of the year. It is designed to convey the spirit of the Waldorf early childhood education and to offer enrichment and vision to prospective families and the wider community. Funds raised will be used for special projects or a rainy day fund.

The willingness of our school community to support the Kinder Faire is greatly appreciated. Contributions of time and expertise are highly valued and accepted with gratitude.

## **Parents and Spindlewood**

Spindlewood encourages parent participation in the life of the school. Time, skills and creative ideas are welcomed! Volunteer activities, including helping to spruce up the grounds during a Family Work Party, coordinating a group order of woolens, taking home a basket of laundry at the end of the week or creating crafts for the Kinder Faire provide a mantle of warmth for the school, and thus the children.

## Class Parent

A class parent is selected informally by the teacher in each class. Outgoing class parents are asked to mentor incoming ones. A Class Parent helps to connect parents and class teachers and provide support for both by:

- meeting with the class teacher at least once a month;
- acting as a resource for the class teacher—for example, by helping with the scheduling and planning of class events;
- activating the class phone tree as needed;
- coordinating class participation in school work days, festivals, and other events.

## Procedures for Addressing Concerns Raised by Parents

Parents who have concerns about any aspect of their child's school experience are asked to voice those concerns directly and in a timely way to the child's teacher. *It is important that the meeting to discuss the matter be scheduled for a time when both parent(s) and teacher can devote their full attention to the concern brought forward.* At the time of scheduling, the parent(s) should make clear to the teacher the essential nature of the concern. That way, the teacher can prepare for the scheduled meeting in a professional, reflective manner. The school encourages teachers to schedule these meetings as soon as is convenient to both

parties.

In more cases than not, this one meeting will resolve the issue. However, if the meeting's outcome is not satisfactory to either or both parties, school policy requires a second meeting, this time with a third-party mediator present. The mediator must be someone from within the wide school community with whom both teacher and parent(s) are comfortable.

Should the issue remain unresolved after this second meeting; the teacher will report that fact to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who will then take whatever measures seem warranted, practical, and promising. These measures will vary with each case, but in all cases will include a clear step-by-step process for resolving the matter amicably. The school expects of its teachers—and of parents as well—a reasoned civility throughout this process. Our goal and yours, after all, is a shared one: to resolve a concern in a manner that benefits the child.

### Tuition Payment Dates, Late Payments, and Interest Fees

A detailed tuition payment policy is included in the enrollment and contract package and is available upon request.

### Withdrawals and Late Entrances

Enrollment is made for the entire year, and *school expenses are budgeted accordingly*. Therefore, no reduction in tuition is made for absence due to illness or vacation. Tuition for children enrolling after the start of the school year will be prorated from the date of entrance.

One month's notice is required prior to withdrawal from any Spindlewood program. After conversing with the teacher, parents must give notice *in writing* of their intention to withdraw their child. Tuition is due for the coming month whether or not the child attends Spindlewood during that period.

If a child is withdrawn before March 15, the Director may refund a prorated portion of the year's tuition. If a child is withdrawn after March 15, the full school-year tuition is due.

## **Rhythm and Home Life**

A key element of Waldorf education is rhythm: the rhythms of the day, the week, and the year, including the seasons and festivals. Simple rituals help to mark the rhythm of the school day: the lighting of a candle at story time, a blessing at snack time, a good-bye circle or song. A rhythmic home life harmonizes with the school experience, strengthens the child, and makes life easier for the entire family.

Regular times for meals, chores, play, homework, and bed help build a rhythm and lead to healthy child development.

In the words of Caroline von Heydebrand, a kindergarten teacher in the first Waldorf school: "Nothing makes a child so wild and nervous as capriciousness on the part of grown-ups. Children are full of deep trust, and when they can rely on a wholesome ordering of their daily life the basis is provided upon which the moral life as an adult can freely and quietly unfold."

For a number of books that elaborate on this topic, please see under "Reading List" at the end of this handbook.

### **Television and Media**

Spindlewood is dedicated to nurturing the children's capacities for imagination, healthy feeling, independent thinking, and active willing. It is our experience that these capacities develop best through warm human interaction and the children's enthusiastic immersion in the natural world, with all of their senses fully engaged.

The debilitating effects of media on children's developing capacities are increasingly apparent to us, and are well documented by independent researchers. By "media" we mean the full array of visual and aural electronic devices, including, but not limited to videos, DVD's, video games, IPODS, CD walkman units, computers, computer games, television and radio. Of equal concern are large-screen movies, whether in the theater or at home. We fully recognize the prevalence of media in our culture and the need that many adults have for this in their vocation and leisure time. We must also recognize, however, that the adult has the ability to absorb and consciously process these experiences. This a child cannot yet do.

It is not only the content that is harmful, but the actual physical and psychological processes involved. The passivity inherent in media viewing runs counter to children's active engagement with the world, and deprives them of the full use of their senses. The fast-paced imagery and fragmentation works against the more gradual development of their own concentration and imagination. After a day filled with creative play, children need a "quiet time" to work through their experiences, rather than additional stimulation.

We find that Waldorf education works best with children who experience little or no media at all. We strongly urge the elimination of all media in the first six years of life, and with parental involvement through fifth grade. This is especially

important on school days.

When children are actively and imaginatively engaged with the natural world, they experience the joy of their own energy. Their energy soon becomes will power, self-discipline and ultimately, self-direction. With a will, they apply themselves to all artistic endeavors - the painting that nourishes it, or the drawing that enlivens it. Children's thinking also becomes mobile and imaginative: their capacity for living vividly into the stories they hear becomes the capacity of empathy for their fellow humans in adulthood. As adults, too, they become independent, creative individuals, feeling at home in the world. Seen in this light, it is not so much a matter of avoiding media, as it is one of simply allowing the natural capacities of children to unfold.

Our teachers are happy to work with you to offer support and suggestions for reducing and eventually eliminating your child's media exposure. We have found that when adults work together on this issue, it becomes less of an issue for students.

### **Sources of Books, Toys and Supplies**

Spindlewood's Kinder Faire in early December is a source of books, toys and supplies. These include high-quality art supplies for sale that replicate tools the children use in the kindergarten such as colored beeswax, 100% wool felt squares and Stockmar watercolors. Some items may be in stock in the kindergarten throughout the year and available for sale at 3:00 p.m. To explore or purchase books, toys, art supplies, and anything Waldorf, the following web sites will lead you to many other sites of interest: [www.anthropress.org](http://www.anthropress.org) ~ [www.waldorfinthehome.org](http://www.waldorfinthehome.org) ~ [www.bellalunatoys.com](http://www.bellalunatoys.com)

### **Library**

Spindlewood has a number of books about education, parenting, family life and Anthroposophy—the philosophy underlying Waldorf education. Several books are displayed on the shelf in the mudroom. Parents and friends are encouraged to borrow books.

### **Reading List**

Below are suggested titles for adult reading about Waldorf education. Those marked with an asterisk are available to be borrowed.

#### **Early Childhood**

*\*Beyond the Rainbow Bridge* - Barbara Patterson

- \**Work and Play in Early Childhood* - Freya Jaffke
- The Disappearance of Childhood*— N. Postman
- \**The Incarnating Child* — J. Salter
- \**Childhood: A Study of the Growing Soul* — C. von Heydebrand
- \**The Young Child: Creative Living with 2-4 Year Olds* — D. Udo de Haes
- Brothers & Sisters* — K. Koenig
- \**You Are Your Child's First Teacher* — Rahima Baldwin Dancy
- \**The Genius of Play* - Sally Jenkinson

### **Early Childhood Education/Care**

- \**Home Away from Home:*  
     *LifeWays Care of Children and Families* - Aldinger & O'Connell
- \**The Education of the Child* - Rudolf Steiner
- Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk* — D. Elkind
- \**Kingdom of Childhood* — R. Steiner
- The Way of the Child* — S. Harwood
- \**The Recovery of Man in Childhood* — A. Harwood
- \**Nokken - A Danish Approach to Waldorf-based Child Care* - Helle Heckman
- The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon* — D. Elkind

### **Fairy Tales**

- \**The Wisdom of Fairy Tales* — R. Meyer
- \**The Uses of Enchantment* — B. Bettelheim

### **Festivals and Family Life**

- \**Festivals with Children* — B. Barz
- Celebrating the Festivals with Children* — F. Lenz
- \**Festivals, Family, & Food* — D. Carey and J. Large
- \**The Children's Year* — S. Cooper, C. Fynes-Clinton, and M. Rowling
- \**The Christian Year* — E. Capel
- \**The Spiritual Tasks of the Homemaker* - Manfred Schmidt-Brabant
- \**Lifeways: Working with Family Questions* — G. Davy & B. Voors, eds.
- \**More Lifeways* — P. Smith and S. Eklund Schaefer
- \**Sing a Song with Baby - songbook and CD* - Mary Schunemann
- \**This is the Way We Work-A-Day - songbook and CD* - Mary Schunemann

### **Rudolf Steiner**

- The Essential Steiner* — R. McDermott, ed.

### **Toys and Play**

- The Doll Book: Soft Dolls & Creative Free Play* — K. Neuschutz

*\*The American Boy's Handybook — D. Beard*  
*The American Girl's Handybook — D. Beard*  
*\*Toymaking with Children - Freya Jaffke*  
*\*Painting with Children — B. Muller*  
*Children at Play: Preparation for Life — H. Britz-Crecelius*

### TV

*What to Do After You Turn Off the TV— Frances Moore Lappe and Family*  
*Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television — J. Mander*  
*Unplugging the Plug-in-Drug — M. Large*  
*Who's Bringing Them Up? — M. Large*  
*Amusing Ourselves to Death — N. Postman*

### Waldorf Education

*\*School as a Journey — T. Finser*  
*Toward Wholeness: Rudolf Steiner Education in America — M. C. Richards*  
*Education towards Freedom — A. Klingborg and F. Carlgren*  
*Teaching as a Lively Art — M. Spock*  
*\*Waldorf Education: A Family Guide — P. Johnson Fennert and K. Rivers*

*"The various activities of later life are carried out by the child in his or her play, which he/she conducts in full earnestness. Out of intellectual efforts by adults, all sorts of occupations and toys have been conceived for children, but children merely want to re-enact the actual work of adults. At kindergarten age the child really has the urge to imitate what the grown-ups are doing. It is therefore the task of kindergartens to introduce the activities in life in such forms that they can enter into the play of the child. . . . What one brings to the education of children should be taken from life itself."*

*Rudolf Steiner, 1923*

I know a place

There is a place not far from here  
A place I know from yesteryear  
a place I still hold dear  
where fairies dance among the flowers  
and gnomes laugh merrily in the bower

where I spent many a happy hour  
we gathered keys from the Ashwood tree  
to open doors no one could see  
it's all still waiting there for me  
the frog pond and the maple tree,  
the fairy forest (where I skinned my knee)  
I know if I go back I'll see  
the snowdrop bloom and hear the phoebe's song  
we'll chase each other all day long, and never sleep  
please, won't you come with me  
to hear the gentle baaing of the sheep  
and cradle a warm egg in your hand  
oh come with me now, to this wonderland  
I'll weave a garland for your hair  
we'll find the little people's lair  
I know a place, just over there.

Diana Weggler  
Parent Assistant, 1998-2000