



Family Guidebook 2025/26



"A healthy social life is found only when, in the mirror of each soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when, in the whole community, the virtue of each one is living."

-Rudolf Steiner

General School Information

[Okanagan Waldorf School](https://www.okanaganwaldorfschool.org/)

730 Whitevale Road

Lumby, BC V0E2G7

Phone: 250.547.9212 (Main Office)

Email: info@bridgeeducational.org

Main School Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00AM to 4:00PM (September – June)
Monday - Friday 9:00AM to 3:00PM (July – August)



View of the original school building. This special building is now one of many on the OWS campus.

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About the School

Welcome to Okanagan Waldorf School! Our school is dedicated to providing early childhood and elementary education that ignites a love of learning and supports children on their way to becoming confident, creative, and contributing community members. As a Group 1, BC Independent School, Okanagan Waldorf School offers BC certified Waldorf curriculum from early childhood to grade 6 (we are BC certified up to grade 7 and offer this grade when enrollment allows). The academically rigorous Waldorf curriculum is rich in experienced-based learning and the arts, and is geared towards the developmental stages of childhood. Okanagan Waldorf School has been educating children since 2006. Families travel from Cherryville, Lumby, Vernon, Armstrong, and Lake Country to attend. Okanagan Waldorf School is a member of AWSNA (Association of Waldorf Schools of North America) and WECAN (Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America).

Vision Statement

Connecting, nourishing and growing together.

Mission Statement

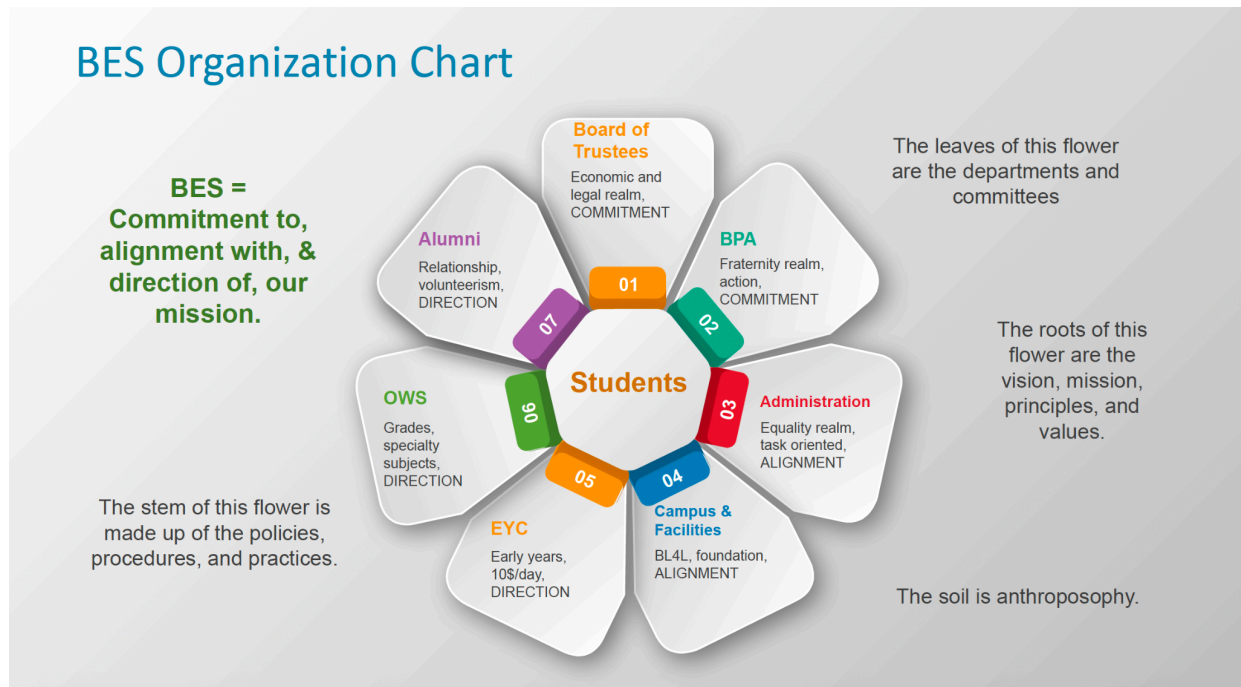
We offer Waldorf education through purposeful experiences on The Bridge Land for Learning. We seek to uncover the full potential of each person so they may freely carry out their lives with courage and purpose. We strive to foster positive social and ecological growth.

For more information, please visit our website at bridgeeducational.org.



School Organizational Structure

Okanagan Waldorf School functions through the joint efforts of the Administration and Facilities Team, Faculty, Board of Trustees, Alumni, and the Bridge Parent Association.



Administration & Facilities

The Administrative staff provide the infrastructure and logistical support for the activities of the school. Together they are responsible for the smooth operations of the school in the areas of finance, enrollment, development, and general operations, including facilities management.

Administrative Directors are the key positions responsible to the Board of Trustees. At Okanagan Waldorf School there are two Directors: Director of Administration/Business and Director of Education.

The Director of Education is responsible for overseeing the health and safety of students and staff, the planning/implementation/assessment of learning, and the application of school policies. The Director of Education/Principal is accountable to the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Faculty

The faculty consists of all teaching and classroom support staff, Kindergarten through middle school. The faculty is responsible for all pedagogical concerns such as program development, planning of curriculum standards, teacher mentorship, peer evaluations, and individual student support. In addition,



the faculty holds a responsibility for parent education and connection, and maintaining our school's relationship with the larger Waldorf community.

The Faculty Chair at Okanagan Waldorf School holds a leadership position within the faculty group. They are responsible for planning and facilitating weekly faculty meetings, supporting the process of staff evaluations and mentorship, and taking up any leadership tasks as needed throughout the year.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees works in collaboration with the faculty and administration to ensure that the mission of the school is carried out in accordance with our school's bylaws and agreed-upon goals and objectives. The Board is responsible for overseeing the business aspects of the school, including all financial, legal, and property matters. The Board is composed of teachers, parents, and community members. The Board meets on a monthly basis. Agendas and minutes are available in the Administrative Office. The Annual General Meeting of the Board of Trustees, in which all community members are encouraged to attend, is held in the Fall of each year. This is when new on-coming Board members are approved by the Society at large.

Committees are task groups of the Board. The Board oversees the invitation, function, and reporting of the committees. Current BES Committees are:

- Campus Development Committee
 - Grounds Committee
 - Forest Action Committee
 - Garden Committee
- Finance Committee
 - Fund Development Committee

Bridge Parent Association

All parents of children enrolled in programs at OWS are automatically members of the Bridge Parent Association (BPA) and may participate in the meetings and activities, as well as access the minutes of this group. The Bridge Parent Association follows approved Operating Protocols (bylaws).

When working in collaboration for a common purpose, the school and the parents form a powerful team with far reaching positive effects on the children and the entire school community. The Bridge Parent Association provides a vital and much appreciated service to the entire BES community. The BPA supports the decisions and policies of the Board and administration.

The BPA is a place where parents can develop projects together, take part in parent education opportunities and participate in meaningful activities that support the health of the community. The BPA aims to foster an inclusive and robust spirit of engagement, which has the added benefit of allowing parents to get familiar with each other, and positive social relationships can ensue.

Alumni

The Alumni are our community experts. These valuable community members have been directly impacted by our efforts and have much to share back as a result. We value maintaining connections with our Alumni through celebrating their achievements, offering volunteer opportunities and engagement through festivals and events, and include them in our newsletters recipient list to ensure they get first hand information about job opportunities. See more about this program below.

Spirit of Engagement

The power of community lies in becoming involved. Just as our students discover daily that success depends on collaboration, caring for others, inclusivity, and continuity of purpose – the strength of our organization depends on the contributions of all of those who benefit from Waldorf Education and what our campus offers. We are grateful to our actively engaged community of involved parents, grandparents, and friends of our programs who support us through volunteerism and philanthropy.

At Okanagan Waldorf School there are many ways to get involved. Two automatic opportunities are Society Membership and the Community Maintenance Contribution. Another way is through our Alumni Program.

Society Membership

Membership to the society gives you the opportunity to positively impact the educational services provided by The BES through participation at the AGM and through volunteerism.

Community awareness and contribution, as well as environmental stewardship, are fundamental aspects in the Society's mission and are integrated into our educational programs. When your child sees you helping, they are learning in these areas at an even deeper level.

Community Maintenance Contribution

The BES members that have children enrolled in OWS are asked to contribute 10 volunteer hours per school year towards the betterment of The Society. Many parents ultimately find that volunteering at The BES is a personally rewarding experience as connections are made both with other members, the organization, and the campus on which their children attend. This system of volunteerism is referred to as the Community Maintenance Contribution.

To track their hours, parents use the Track it Forward app to log each hour they contribute throughout the year. The CMC school year runs from July 1 - June 30 and will automatically roll over on the app. This means that hours contributed over the summer will be logged towards the upcoming school year. At the end of the school year, families who have not logged volunteer hours will be billed at a rate of \$30 per unworked hour for up to 10 hours. This gives families the option to fulfill the hours through a volunteer contribution or a financial contribution to campus projects instead. Families who opt to buy out their hours can do so at any time during the school year.

In addition to each hour being of vast benefit to the campus, the families, and society, having a robust number of hours contributed by its members is of great importance to the Society when applying for grants. Tracking the volunteer hours contributed, even beyond the required 10 hours when applicable, gives our grant applications credibility and is information frequently requested by potential donors. We would like to encourage families to continue to contribute more than the required 10 hours when possible. As a token of gratitude to families who generously contribute in this way, we will hold a draw for a prize at the end of the school year and families who track 15+ contributed hours will automatically be entered.

It is on the steam power of community collaboration and contribution that The Bridge Educational Society has been built, and continues to grow and thrive. Our expansive campus and growing student body create an ever-scrolling list of things to get done. The use of volunteer labour (where appropriate/applicable) can help us economize and to make more meaningful opportunities possible. These projects and tasks are disseminated through the different committees and groups, and subsequent volunteer opportunities are shared through the newsletter.

Some examples of ways to fulfill your contribution hours include, but are not limited to:

- Participate in work parties
- Sign up to work at a festival
- Sign up to work at an event
- Write thank you cards on behalf of the Society
- Contribute items to the Children's Store in December (up to 2 hrs.)
- Wooden toy repair
- Festival craft preparations
- Be assigned specific grounds, woodwork or maintenance tasks as needed



Time spent at committee meetings and cooperative garden days does not count towards your CMC hours. However any tasks you take up outside of meetings as a result of your committee membership may be counted towards your Community Maintenance Contribution.

Most importantly, please know that every set of hands and every contribution is profoundly appreciated and makes a difference!

PDF of Full Community Maintenance Contribution description [HERE](#)

Alumni Program

The BES Alumni Program fosters lasting connections for students who complete their journey with us at graduation or after two or more years, offering opportunities to return for seasonal festivals, special performances, and community events. We welcome past families to remain an integral part of our vibrant school life through newsletters, events, and volunteer opportunities. The program honors each student's unique story while nurturing their continued growth beyond our campus. Through these relationships, we strengthen the threads of community that span generations.

Your child is eligible to join the Alumni Program if the following applies:

- They graduated from the school after attending K-Middle School, or
- They attended the school for two or more years, or
- They self-identify as alumni since one of the two points above apply to the past.

To participate, simply fill in the invitation form that your family will receive when your child leaves the school, or contact the school to request the form.

Policies and Protocols

We believe that transparency and collaboration are the key to a community's success. At OWS we collaborate to create policies with various stakeholders in mind and in response to various regulations and guidelines for schools in BC. In policy writing we include the voices of our employees as much as

possible and review the contents of our policy suite regularly. As a member of the BC Waldorf School Collective, OWS approves legislated policies as part of the collaborative group of Waldorf schools across BC. You can access Collective policies at www.bcwaldorf.com. To access the OWS policy suite specifically, you can request this at the Administrative office.

The role of policies and protocols is to uphold our shared agreements. They simultaneously define and guide the way so that we can provide consistency and transparency in operations. When we work at or have our children enrolled at OWS, we agree to uphold all policies of the school.

We have collected some relevant policies to share with you below. For more information, or to see other policies, please speak to the Receptionist in the Administration Office.

Communication Policy

At Bridge Educational Society Programs (OWS and EYC) we embrace and nurture warm, honest, and open communication. We value connection, transparency and shared responsibility. This policy outlines the protocols for communication with this in mind.

General Communication Guidelines

- Maintain a willingness to use compassionate communication without blame and to practice respectful thinking, listening, speaking and acting.
- Strive toward inclusivity in your interactions, activities and social gatherings (and in your child's interactions, activities and social gatherings. We are models to our children.)
- Bring any concerns to faculty or administration in an explicit, timely, and constructive way using guidelines from the BES Grievance Management Policy.
- When applicable, direct another person's statement or question about someone else back to the original source.
- Suggest a better time and/or place for a particular conversation to occur.
- Bring any issues that need addressing in an appropriate space and time and never during class time with or about the person in question.
- Remind each other to speak from the 'I'. (Speak for yourself; not for a group unless specifically delegated this responsibility)
- Recognize that we are each ambassadors of Bridge Educational Society when we speak about the Organization in the wider community.

Email Communication Protocol

Email is a tool for arrangements, confirmations, and information sharing. We do not address complaints or resolve conflicts on email. Email communication is to be used for relaying routine information pertaining to school and class business, and not used for student specific information or issues needing discussion.

Cell Phone Communication Protocol (Phone or Text)

Cell phone use is prohibited within the classroom/child care room in front of children unless required for extenuating circumstances (such as a sick child/family member at home or awaiting a very important phone call). In this situation, however, phone calls should be taken outside of the room. Photographs may not be taken by cell phones without approval by the Class Teacher who is aware of permissions in this area. Texting is reserved for adult emergencies while in the classroom or on school events.

PDF of full Communication Policy [HERE](#)

Grievance Management Policy

At Bridge Educational Society Programs (OWS and EYC) we embrace and nurture warm, honest, and open communication. We value connection, transparency and shared responsibility. This policy outlines the differences between types of communication, and the procedure aimed at conflict resolution.

Definitions

The Bridge Educational Society recognises that not all concerns are grievances. Faculty, staff, parents or community members more often have a question that needs to be worked out. Sometimes comments or concerns are questions in the making. The following are BES's definitions of types of communication:

Comment: A verbal or written remark expressing an opinion or reaction. An example might be 'My child's teacher is leaving after only two years of class teaching, that isn't right!'

Concern: A cause of anxiety or worry. An example might be 'My child's teacher is leaving after only two years.'

Question: An inquiry made to elicit information about something specific. An example might be 'Is it true that a teacher at OWS moves with their students through the grades?'

Grievance: An official statement of a complaint over perceived unfair treatment. An example might be 'I spoke to my child's class teacher about my concern. I don't feel like my concern was heard and I am struggling to communicate this to the teacher.'

At the BES Programs we support resolution of grievances through a process called Grievance Management.

Grievance Management General Information

If you have a comment, concern or question please speak to your class teacher who will either be able to help you find resolution or direct you to another resource. In addition to your class teacher as a first step, below is a description of your leadership team member's areas of work. They are always ready to answer your questions

Main Office Administrator

- Re-commitment
- Tuition
- Calendar
- Aftercare

Manager EYC

- ECE Licensing
- Policy
- Health & Safety
- EYC HR
- Programming

Business Manager

- Receipt of payment
- Schedule of payment
- School public budgets

Director of Education & Principal OWS

- Curriculum
- Programming
- Reporting
- Policy
- Health & Safety
- OWS HR

BES Board Chair

- Strategic Plan

Grievance Management Procedures

The BES/OWS encourages direct and compassionate communication. Parents, teachers and staff are encouraged to speak directly to the person with whom they have a conflict or question. This may be done via telephone or in person. Notes will be taken and shared between those concerned in order to ensure the content of the meeting, telephone or in-person, is accurate. Email communication is not the place to share concerns or difficult questions and is reserved for transport of information and appointment setting only, as per BES Communication Policy. The BES aims to use thoughtful, truthful and compassionate communication. Therefore, communication must be free of aggressive, threatening or inappropriate language. Should this kind of language enter a meeting, the meeting will be ended immediately and rescheduled with additional support.

Parent to Employee

In the event that a parent has a grievance against an employee, they will follow the steps below;

1. The parent is encouraged to have a conversation with the person directly as soon as a situation arises.
2. If a resolution is not reached in step 1, the Director of the program mediates between the parent and the employee as soon as possible within 1 week of the grievance. Extreme circumstances will take priority.

3. If a resolution has not been reached in steps 1 & 2, the Director offers the parent a Grievance Management Form to fill out. The GMF is forwarded to the full HR Committee (A Board member and the Directors) and a decision is made on how to further proceed within 2 weeks of the initial grievance.
4. In the event that the parent is filing the complaint against one of the Directors, another faculty member may step in to fill that role for said grievance.
5. In rare situations, an ombudsperson may be called upon for mediation purposes.
6. In the case that the family or employee chooses to leave the school, an exit interview will be conducted by HR Committee members. The HR Committee will be responsible for a full report to the Faculty, Staff, and Board.

PDF of full Grievance Management Policy [HERE](#)

Appeals Policy

The Okanagan Waldorf School recognizes that parents/guardians/students have the right to appeal a decision of the school where such a decision significantly affects the education, health, or safety of a student. Okanagan Waldorf School follows guidelines for procedural fairness to ensure the best outcome for all.

The Okanagan Waldorf School recognizes that not all concerns are grievances or require an appeal. Faculty, staff, parents or community members more often have a question that needs to be worked out.

Here is the OWS definition of an Appeal:

An application to a school Board or Authority to reverse a decision made by the school faculty or staff. An example might be “My child has been suspended for two weeks, this isn’t right”. An appeal process is generally accessed when other communication processes have not resulted in resolution on the grounds that a participant feels they were treated unfairly/unreasonably, and/or they believe that due process was not followed.

Significant Decisions

The following decisions may be deemed to significantly affect the education, health, or safety of a student and are the type of decision that could cause grievance resulting in an appeal:

- Disciplinary suspension from school for a period exceeding ten days;
- Exclusion from school for health reasons;
- Failure to provide an Individual Education Plan (IEP) to a student with a diagnosed disability that meets the Ministry of Education standards and thresholds for designation;
- Failure to offer to consult with a parent regarding an IEP of a student with a diagnosed disability that meets the Ministry of Education standards and thresholds for designation.

Protocols and Procedures

The Bridge Educational Society has a process for Communication and for Grievance Management. We ask that parents assess whether they have a comment, concern, question, grievance or wish to appeal a decision made by the school. Once the communication needs are assessed the appropriate school specific protocol can be followed.

Appeals

In the event of an appeal the Okanagan Waldorf School will select an appeal committee. The Appeal Committee will:

- Not prejudge particular circumstances of a case, will be unbiased;
- Select persons to hear a case who do not have close relationships with the person/family appealing;
- If a faculty or staff member is involved in the decision being appealed they will only participate in the appeal for the purpose of providing testimony;
- Not hear evidence that will not be shared with the person appealing.

Ombudsperson

BC Waldorf Schools, as members of the Associate Member Society (AMS) of the Federation of Independent School Association (FISA), have access to Ombudspersons. These people are hired to investigate complaints made by a person affected by a decision, act or omission of an independent school or school authority that is a member of this Association and when the school's appeal process was ineffective toward resolution.

The Ombudsperson is not an arbitrator and does not have the ability to make a binding decision in a matter. The Ombudsperson, however, does provide an opportunity for an external review of a decision or action of a school.

The Ombudsperson, having completed an investigation, can make a recommendation to the school or school authority in an attempt to resolve the complaint. If the Ombudsperson is not satisfied with the school's response to the written report, the Ombudsperson may issue a report of the circumstances to the Association.

If a parent/guardian wishes to appeal a decision made by the school they can request this through the Administration office using a 'Request for Appeal' form.. If the school appeal process does not resolve the issue and it is thought that the help of an Ombudsperson is necessary, the school will provide an Ombudsperson Request Form with Ombudsperson contact information as stated in the AMS Schools' Ombudsperson Policy.

PDF of full Appeals Policy [HERE](#)

Financial Agreements and Policies

At Okanagan Waldorf School we aim to be transparent and fair across all Administrative aspects, including those related to finances. Please see the full document attached below for all OWS Financial Agreements and Policies. If you have questions about these aspects of OWS Administration please reach out to our Business Manager at accounts@bridgeeducational.org.

PDF of full Financial Agreements and Policies [HERE](#)

Behaviour Guidance Policy - Kindergarten

Okanagan Waldorf School (OWS) is a safe, caring and orderly school. Each child is respected as a unique individual who is part of a social community. The goal at OWS is to ensure that each child is directed from outside influences (teachers and parents) to develop inward faculties (self-awareness and self-control) that support the unfolding of healthy individuals.

Often it is in the early years (age 0 - 7) that children experience social situations for the first time. These new situations may include rules/guidelines/norms that are different from those experienced at home. This early experience is full of opportunity to learn to communicate needs, develop empathy, and develop self-awareness and self-regulation. This can be a time when learning challenges are first recognized. While respecting each child's individual journey, and out of their understanding of child development, teachers guide students through the intricacies of the social life of the school day.

We seek to encourage an open dialogue with parents. When parents have a question/concern we ask that these be brought to the class teacher. When further support in communication is needed, we ask parents to access our Grievance Management Policy.

Strategies and Practices

- We work with a structured rhythm of daily/weekly activities so that children are familiar and comfortable with their routine. This promotes a sense of safety and calm and is supportive in prevention of negative behaviour.
- We use an approach of 'loving firmness' when dealing with inappropriate/negative behaviour – a quiet, firm tone of voice, imagery, consistent messages, imitation, etc
- We describe/explain why a behaviour is inappropriate/unsafe/unacceptable and provide acceptable options
- We encourage children to share, take turns, and begin to develop self-regulation and self-control. Limits are set and quietly enforced through consistent messaging of rules/guidelines/norms and through modeling and imitation

- We encourage children to take care of each other and to participate in conflict resolution as it is modeled and supported by the teacher
- When it is necessary to remove a child from a situation, we do so, often with encouragement to work alongside an adult doing dishes/sewing/preparing snacks/etc as a way to redirect negative behaviour
- When consistent behaviour that is negatively affecting a student's and/or the class' success is observed by the teacher, SSP protocol is activated (see Student Support Plan Protocol – ECE, following this policy).

Student Support Plan Protocols – Kindergarten

The Student Support Plan (SSP) is designed to support students who have behavioural or academic needs outside the expected developmental range for their age and/or grade level. In early childhood, academic progress is measured by the ability to successfully participate in the activities set out by the teachers.

Student Support Plan - Redirect

When teachers notice behaviour that is negatively affecting the social climate of the group it may be necessary to remove the child from a situation, usually with encouragement to work alongside an adult doing dishes/sewing/preparing snacks/etc. as a way to redirect negative behaviour. This is defined as SSP – Redirect.

Student Support Plan - Observation

When teachers notice consistent behaviour that is negatively affecting a student's and/or the class' success they will activate the SSP Protocol defined as SSP - Observation. Parents will be notified that there is behaviour that warrants further, focused observation for up to two weeks (timeline to be determined by teacher based on type of behaviour). At the completion of the observation, the class teacher will share with parents the data and define next steps including possible interventions. Next steps may include, but are not limited to: request for extended observation, request for further professional assessment, implementation of a Behaviour Guidance Plan, etc.

Student Support Plan – Critical Incident

When teachers notice consistent (more than once in a two-week period) negative behaviour that threatens the safety of the child, the teachers, or other students, the SSP Protocol defined as SSP – Critical Incident is activated. Critical incident behaviour includes but is not limited to:

- Screaming
- Hitting
- Scratching
- Kicking
- Throwing items
- Running away, etc.

A critical incident will result in the child being removed from the activity either by utilizing the 'watching chair' inside the classroom or the 'waiting chair' in the school office, or with a request to have the child picked up by parent/caregiver.

SSP - Critical Incident protocol will begin with a school-based care team meeting where next steps will be defined. This will be followed by a second meeting with parents to share next steps including possible interventions. Interventions may include but are not limited to: implementation of a Behaviour Guidance Plan, request for professional assessment, etc.

Behaviour Guidance Plan

A Behaviour Guidance Plan (BGP) is put in place for students in the following situations:

- When behaviour issues are ongoing and the result of an observation period has determined that a BGP is required
- When ongoing non-compliance occurs
- When behaviours threaten the safety of the student, other students, or teachers

A BGP is determined by a school-based care team and shared with parents in a meeting. A BGP describes the expected behaviour and positive changes that the school would like to see in the child's behaviour at school. The BGP describes the strategies that teachers will use, the timeline, the expectations of the care team (teachers, staff, parents, etc), and adaptations that will be made to programming to accommodate strategies. Adaptations may include a modified schedule of the school day. A BGP does not change other agreements or contracts between families and the school.

In cases where a BGP is insufficient at restoring order to the classroom/school community, and the child does not have an IEP, the student may be required to withdraw from the school.

PDF of full Behaviour Guidance Policy - KG [HERE](#)

Behaviour Guidance Policy - Grades

Okanagan Waldorf School (OWS) is a safe, caring and orderly school. Each child is respected as a unique individual who is part of a social community. The goal at OWS is to ensure that each child is directed from outside influences (teachers and parents) to develop inward faculties (self-awareness and self-control) that support the unfolding of healthy individuals.

At OWS we expect students to behave in a respectful way toward teachers, adults, classmates, school property, and the school neighborhood. Expected behaviour is described more fully in the OWS Code of

Conduct (below). Each teacher is responsible for upholding these expectations during the school day. In the event that the OWS Code of Conduct is breached by a student, or students, the Student Support Plan Protocol (Grades) is activated.

We seek to encourage an open dialogue with parents. When parents have a question/concern we ask that these be brought to the class teacher. When further support in communication is needed we ask parents to access our Grievance Management Policy.

Strategies and Practices

- We work with a structured rhythm of daily/weekly activities so that children are familiar and comfortable with the routine. This promotes a sense of safety and calm and is supportive in prevention of negative behaviour.
- We use an approach of 'loving firmness' when dealing with inappropriate/negative behaviour
- We describe/explain why a behaviour is inappropriate/unsafe/unacceptable and provide acceptable options. We begin from a position of compassion.
- We encourage children to take care of each other and participate in conflict resolution as it is modeled and supported by the teacher
- When consistent behaviour that is negatively affecting a student's and/or the class' success is observed by the teacher, SSP protocol is activated (see Student Support Plan Protocol – Grades, following this policy).

Okanagan Waldorf School Code of Conduct - Grades

OWS seeks to create a healthy social environment that is conducive to learning and the development of respectful and responsible young people. Tidiness, manners, and social grace are part of a culture of consideration that teachers model and in turn expect from the students.

We recognize that behaviour is often an expression of frustration and challenges that a student might be facing. It is our goal to work with each individual to most effectively uncover the best way forward toward optimizing potential. We encourage a collaborative approach to discipline and seek to include cultural perspectives represented by our community.

Teachers and staff will respond to breaches of the code of conduct dependent on behaviour, intensity and situation. OWS Student Support Plan Protocol describes how teachers will work to promote positive behaviour.

Overall Expectations

- A positive attitude toward learning
- Respect toward self, others, things

General Rules for Kindness and Care

- Students may not cause bodily harm or discomfort to any person at any time. Such harm includes, but is not limited to: kicking, punching, pinching, shoving, forceful holding, etc
- Students may not swear, verbally threaten, or use offensive language
- Students will remain out of garden beds, off fences and generally care for school property
- Students may use furniture and classroom items with an attitude of gratitude and refrain from defacing or otherwise damaging such items

In the Classroom

- Students will arrive to school on time
- Students will greet their teacher at the door and close the day similarly
- Students will remain in the classroom/bounds unless permission is given to leave
- Students will eat snack/lunch sitting down
- Students are expected to complete homework
- Students will *walk* inside school building
- Students will remain silent when a teacher or another student is talking in class. Students will signal that they wish to contribute to class discussion unless otherwise instructed
- Students will leave toys, trading items, electronics, or other play objects at home or in backpack to be used outside school time

Outside the Classroom

- Students will refrain from using bikes, scooters, skateboards, etc during school hours. Outside school hours helmets must be worn on school property.
- Students may climb designated climbing trees only, up to a maximum of marked boundary
- Sticks and pieces of wood may be used in constructive play only, children may not use such items as weapons
- Students may not throw rocks, sticks, pine-cones, snow balls, dirt, sand or other items
- Students may not enter the school building during recess or before/after school hours without permission
- Students will remain within identified school boundaries on school grounds and at the fields during recess, class time, or festivals

Student Support Plan Protocol – Grades

The Student Support Plan (SSP) is designed to support students who have behavioural or academic needs outside the expected developmental range for their age and/or grade level. Academic progress is measured by the ability to successfully participate in the activities, and complete assignments according to grade level performance standards set out by the teachers. For students who are not able to complete assignments according to grade level performance standards, accommodations can be made and are outlined in OWS Inclusive Education Policy.

Student Support Plan - Redirect

When teachers notice behaviour that is negatively affecting the social climate of the group it may be necessary to remove the child from a situation, usually with a quiet word outside the classroom, as a way to redirect negative behaviour. This is defined as SSP – Redirect.

Student Support Plan - Observation

When teachers notice consistent behaviour that is negatively affecting a student's and/or the class' success they will activate the SSP Protocol defined as SSP - Observation. Parents will be notified that there is consistent behaviour that warrants further, focused observation for up to two weeks (timeline to be determined by teacher based on type of behaviour). At the completion of the observation, the class teacher will share with parents the data and define next steps including possible interventions. Next steps may include, but are not limited to: request for extended observation, request for further professional assessment, implementation of a Behaviour Guidance Plan, etc.

Student Support Plan – Critical Incident

When teachers notice consistent (more than once in a two-week period) negative behaviour that threatens the safety of the child, the teachers, or other students, the SSP Protocol defined as SSP – Critical Incident is activated. Critical incident behaviour includes but is not limited to:

- Screaming
- Hitting
- Scratching
- Kicking
- Throwing items
- Running away
- Extreme non-compliance

A critical incident will result in the child being removed from the activity either by utilizing the 'watching chair' just outside the classroom or the 'waiting chair' in the school office, or with a request to have the child picked up by parent/caregiver.

SSP - Critical Incident protocol will begin with a school-based care team meeting where next steps will be defined. This will be followed by a second meeting with parents to share next steps including possible interventions. Interventions may include but are not limited to: implementation of a Behaviour Guidance Plan, request for professional assessment, a defined break from school attendance, etc.

Behaviour Guidance Plan

A Behaviour Guidance Plan (BGP) is put in place for students in the following situations:

- When behaviour issues are ongoing and the result of an observation period has determined that a BGP is required
- When ongoing non-compliance occurs
- When behaviours threaten the safety of the student, other students, or teachers

Note that a BGP may not apply to a student with an IEP/CMP when the IEP/CMP indicates a support plan for such behaviour. A BGP is determined by a school-based care team and shared with parents in a meeting. The BGP describes the strategies that teachers will use, the timeline, the expectations of the care team (teachers, staff, parents, etc), and adaptations that will be made to programming to accommodate strategies. Adaptations may include a modified schedule of the school day, implementation of programs such as 'zones of regulation', etc. A BGP does not change other agreements or contracts between families and the school.

In cases where a BGP is insufficient at restoring order to the classroom/school community, and or supporting the student to thrive, the student may be required to withdraw from the school.

PDF of full Behaviour Guidance Policy - Grades [HERE](#)

Anti-Bullying Action Plan

The Okanagan Waldorf School recognizes the critical role we play in the healthy social and emotional development of our students. Our teachers and staff have been trained in, and receive on-going training in: Erase Bullying, The Virtues Project, and The Way of Council (foundational restorative justice protocols). We purposefully bring to our students, experiences and lessons through our K-8 classrooms that scaffold anti-bullying awareness as well as relational and restorative practices.

Peer conflict, mean behaviour, and bullying - what is the difference?

When a child is having a problem with their peers, it can be hard for parents to know what is really happening, is it bullying, or is it something else? Each type of behaviour must be handled differently to keep children safe and help them learn how to get along with others. This process of learning takes time, warmth and support from adults.

Peer Conflict

Conflict between and among peers is a natural part of growing up. Children will have times when they disagree and can't resolve issues independently. They may even become so frustrated that they say mean things or act out physically by hitting, kicking or trying to hurt. In the case of peer conflict you will likely notice that the children in conflict:

- often choose to play or be together;

- experience equal power (similar age, size, social status, etc.);
- are equally upset;
- are both interested in the outcome; and
- will be able to work things out with adult help (after calming down).

Teachers usually respond by helping the children talk it out, and see each other's perspective. This is referred to as "conflict resolution". Dealing with these behaviours is supported by the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

Mean Behaviour

Children may try out behaviours to assert themselves –sometimes saying or doing mean things–such as making fun of others, using a hurtful name, taking something without permission, leaving a child out, "budging" in line, or lashing out physically at another child.

In the case of mean behaviour, you will likely notice that:

- it is not planned and seems to happen spontaneously or by chance;
- it may be aimed at any child nearby or someone they interact with frequently;
- the child being mean may feel badly when an adult points out the harm they've caused.

When teachers or staff see or hear about mean behaviour, they do not ignore it. Teachers or staff respond quickly, firmly, and respectfully to stop the behaviour, to let children know that their actions are hurtful and to redirect students to more positive behaviour. This quick response is aimed at stopping them from developing a pattern of mean behaviour as their way of interacting with peers, and prevents mean behaviour from escalating into bullying behaviour.

Bullying Behaviour

At OWS we are very careful to speak about bullying behaviour and not bullies. Bullying is serious behaviour that has three key features – all three must be present for the situation to be considered bullying:

1. Power imbalance - One child clearly has power over the other(s), which may be due to age, size, social status, and so on.
2. Premeditated and intent to harm is present - The purpose of the bullying behaviour is to harm or hurt other(s) it is intended to be mean and is clearly not accidental.
3. Repeated over time - bullying behaviour continues over time, and gets worse with repetition. There is a real or implied threat that the behaviour will not stop, and in fact will become even more serious.

The effect on the child who is being bullied is increased fear, apprehension, and distress. Often by the time teachers/adults find out about what is happening, the child has tried many ways to stop the bullying but cannot do so on their own. Teachers/adults must address the bullying behaviour and

ensure the safety of the student who has been targeted. They also need to reassure the children who may have witnessed the behaviour that adults are taking action.

Action Plan

At the Okanagan Waldorf School, we strive to create a safe, respectful and welcoming school environment by building and maintaining positive relationships between students, staff and parents. We also recognize that bullying and intimidation have a negative effect on the learning climate of the school and therefore, as a learning community, we prefer to address problematic behaviour rather than label a child as a 'bully' or 'victim'. Our students are actively taught problem solving skills and appropriate responses to bullying from an early age. It is important for them to know that we take bullying seriously and need to know when it occurs.

The bullying of members of the school community, by physical, verbal, written or electronic means, is not permitted at our school. Anyone who believes they have witnessed bullying or suspects bullying is expected to speak with the Class Teacher who will activate a 'care team' conversation with all faculty.

Our anti-bullying action plan includes the following:

- The teacher will ensure that the students are safe and supported;
- They will investigate a bullying claim to determine details of the incident and make a determination if in fact bullying behaviour occurred

If the behaviour is deemed an incident, or incidents, of bullying, the class teacher, in collaboration with all faculty as well as the Director/Principal, will determine the appropriate consequences and course of action, taking into consideration:

- The student's age/developmental level;
- The seriousness of the incident;
- The student's history; and,
- The history of the relationship between the students.

Discussion with students involved and resulting proactive solutions decided upon, including measures as outlined in the school's Behaviour Guidance Policy, may include:

- Completion of assignment on social responsibility including problem solving assignments;
- Formal letters of apology or personal apologies, essays etc.;
- Completion of school service;
- Loss of recess privileges;
- Loss of extra-curricular privileges;
- In school suspension;
- Formal suspension with written notification to parents which will be put in the student's file; or,
- Other consequences as deemed necessary.

The bullying incident will be documented and there will be a follow up with the parents. Additional supervision, support and monitoring will be provided as necessary. The Okanagan Waldorf School Harassment and Bullying Policy is designed as a partnership between parents and staff. Bullying should not be kept a secret. It is the secrecy that generally allows bullying to continue unabated and makes dealing with the issue very difficult. As staff and as parents, we need to help all children develop interpersonal skills upon which they build positive relationships with peers. By responding together, we can make a difference.

Any action of retaliation by those accused of bullying behaviours, or whose behaviour is seen to be bullying, will be taken very seriously by school staff and the schools behaviour guidance policy will be applied.

For more information about how OWS handles bullying see the school's Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy and Behaviour Guidance Policy as well as the BC Collective Student Discipline Policy.

PDF of full Anti-Bullying Action Plan [HERE](#)

Inclusive Education Programming

Okanagan Waldorf School receives additional funding for students who qualify with additional support needs. As such, the school supports the provision of inclusive education services in order to meet the needs of qualifying students.

The school agrees to provide educational services appropriate to the grade level in which the child is enrolled, consistent with the Waldorf curriculum and the student's needs. The school is not equipped with special resources required to remediate serious and persistent learning challenges. If such services are warranted the parent will be asked to pay for such tutoring, external consultation or special services that the school does not provide, and which the school determines the student may need. In rare cases it may be determined that the school is not equipped to serve a student with significant support needs that are outside the school's Human Resource or equipment/facility capacities.

For students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) the school will proceed according to its policy 304 Inclusive Education Policy.

Services

The school often provides Educational Assistants (EA) to those students that qualify for additional funding from the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care. In some cases the EA is able to support additional students as well, with their primary focus being the students who are working with an IEP.

EAs work within the classroom to support the full integration of all students. In some cases the EA will leave the learning space with one or two students to provide them with breaks or to supervise a quiet space for working.

The Teachers and EAs are provided with annual funds for professional development. These funds can be used to learn more about specific learning or behavioural challenges and how to best support students.

Some students will benefit from one-on-one sessions with the Learning Support Teacher. These sessions are scheduled annually and are based on HR capacities, student needs, and budgetary possibilities. Sessions might be focused on a specific subject, such as reading or math, or on developing fine or large motor dexterity. All sessions are arranged in consultation with the School Based Team and the Parents/Guardians.

OWS maintains a separate annual Inclusive Education budget from which funds are allocated to EA acquisition, related Pro-D, IEP administration, and other classroom resources. These resources are related to the specific needs of students who meet the criteria for additional funding and those that are in process of meeting the criteria. In most cases it is felt that the Inclusive Education resources benefit all students.

School Based Team

The School Based Team is the body that works to determine the educational needs of students who demonstrate additional support is needed. The team is made up of the Learning Support Teacher, the Faculty Chair, and the Director of Education.

The School Based Team will support the identification and designation of students with additional support needs in consultation with the Class Teacher and the Parents/Guardians. The Learning Support Teacher (LST) will then guide the process of IEP development or other relevant processes. The LST reports all updates to the School Based Team at regularly scheduled meetings.

The IEP development process will be guided by the LST in consultation with the Class Teacher, the EA if applicable, and the parents/guardians. When developmentally appropriate the student will participate in the process.

PDF of the full Inclusive Education Program Procedure [HERE](#)

As part of our Inclusive Education goals and strategies we offer three additional documents of interest.

1. The OWS Bullying Prevention, find the [PDF here](#).
2. The OWS Anti-Racism Action, find the [PDF here](#).

3. The OWS Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy, find the [PDF here](#).
-

Mindful Media Policy

As an integral part of its mission, BES Programs (OWS and EYC) take a strong stance against the exposure of children to television, videos, computers, tablets and other electronic devices that undermine and work directly against the healthy growth of essential learning capacities in the formative years of childhood. We recognize that student use of cell-phones, tablets, gaming devices, iphones, ipads, itouches, smart watches and other electronic devices are distracting, disruptive, and counterproductive to the culture of learning in a Waldorf setting and the healthy social environment we strive to create for the children.

Students shall not bring any such electronic devices to BES Programs or events. If such a device is inadvertently brought to childcare/school, the teacher shall hold it for safekeeping and it shall be returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the day. Students shall not bring such devices to school events (regardless of whether they are held on or off campus) including festivals, camping trips, and Parent Association led events.

Bridge Educational Society programs provide children with a unique haven away from the pervasiveness of such devices, and many parents choose to enroll their children for precisely that reason. Parents are asked to adhere to this policy by reducing exposure to screens and media for children, to the fullest extent possible and to be mindful of their own use of electronic devices while on school grounds or at school functions.

Early Childhood - Early Years Centre (EYC)

BES recommends that a child in EYC programs not be exposed to any electronic media in daily life. Exposure to radio and recorded music is best limited and age-appropriate. The younger the child, the more vitally important this is. We recommend no use of media, particularly on nights preceding and following program days. We are very grateful for your support in creating an electronic-device-free sanctuary for young children. This includes no adult use of cell phones within the Early Years Centre play yard, classrooms, and immediate campus surrounding program spaces.

Middle Childhood - Okanagan Waldorf School (OWS)

BES recommends that a child in OWS programs should not be exposed to any electronic media or use electronic devices on days preceding program days. Educators use personal devices outside of class times and with great discretion as necessary during school hours. An exception is made in our Grade 4 & 7 classrooms for FSA purposes, and Grades 6+ middle school classrooms where screen use can be

used when necessary to enhance curricular concepts, including but not limited to a Cyber Civics course. We are very grateful for your support in creating an electronic-device-limited sanctuary for children.

PDF of full Mindful Media Policy [HERE](#)

Mindful Clothing Policy

This policy serves to provide guidelines around clothing that encourage the safety, joy and focus of students.

Overview: Weather

Okanagan Waldorf School is a place of active work and play. Children play outdoors every day for at least an hour in all types of weather. To allow the child to experience nature and the elements in an enjoyable, open way, proper clothing is extremely important; therefore, we ask that all children be dressed according to the forecast. Since the temperature can fluctuate greatly over the period of a day your child should arrive with additional layers for all day comfort. A sweater can always be removed when your child becomes too warm.

Children are required to wear a hat when playing outside throughout the year. Please provide a cloth, fully-brimmed sun hat for the fall and spring and a warm winter hat that covers the ears for the winter months.

Overview: Logo/image-free

Okanagan Waldorf School is a logo-free zone. We make this choice for several reasons; we notice that logos present distraction in a place where focus is a priority, and we want to alleviate competition that can arise when some children have 'coveted' brands and some do not. We set the size criteria for logos and images at *no bigger than a fist* so that it is easy to remember. We include clothing, backpacks, and lunch bags in the zone.

Clothing Checklist:

Clothing worn to school should be:

- Neat and in good repair – no holes
- Free from graphic images, logos (OWS logo wear is acceptable), brands, advertising, or large writing - remember, *no bigger than a fist*!
- Appropriate for the weather (layered for changeable weather)
- Suited to active play and experiential learning

Coverage requirements:

For tops

- All tops should cover shoulders for maximum sun protection as children spend a large portion of their day outside
- Midriff must be covered even with arms raised above the head

For bottoms

- Shorts and skirts must be below fingertip-length for all genders
- Shorts under skirts

Shoes:

- Athletic shoes that lace up below the ankle and socks are ideal for a full day at OWS.
- During the hotter months, closed-toe sandals and shoes worn without socks are acceptable

Note: All students in the school require a pair of designated indoor shoes at all times.

For cold weather:

- Hats (most hoods on coats will not suffice)
- Gloves/mittens
- Sweaters
- Coats/Jackets
- Boots

Additional expectations:

- No make-up or unnatural hair colour
- No hats worn inside unless required by religious practice. Kerchiefs may be worn.
- No jewelry unless required by religious practice. Stud earrings are OK.
- Watches for third grade and up must be analog (dial faces), not digital (this is to assist the child's curriculum and learning of analog time).

We ask that parents support their child to take home soggy, dirty items on rainy or snowy days. Send replacements right away. Wash and return borrowed clothing as soon as possible. Children who get cold easily may need to keep a sweater at school. Hats are required for outdoor play throughout the year. All spare clothing, outerwear and boots should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

Sunscreen and bug spray should be applied at home.

PDF of full Mindful Clothing Policy [HERE](#)

Emergency Management Roles & Responsibilities

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATORS	
Title and Name of Coordinator	Contact Information (cell #, extension #, etc)
Site Emergency Incident Commander (Principal)	Jillian Martin principal@bridgeeducational.org
Emergency Management Director	Trish Folland info@bridgeeducational.org
Administrative Coordinator	Paul McArdle pmcardle@bridgeeducational.org

Personal Information Privacy Officer: Okanagan Waldorf School	
Privacy Officer	Jillian Martin
Office Address	730 Whitevale Road, Lumby, BC VOE 2G7
Office Phone	250-547-9212
Office Email	principal@bridgeeducational.org

Substance Use Policy

Bridge Educational Society strictly prohibits students from possessing, manufacturing, selling, distributing, consuming, or using drugs, tobacco, vapour products, or alcohol during school/work/field trip hours, whether on or off school property. The ban also includes parking lots, fields, driveways, courtyards, and private vehicles parked on school properties.

For tobacco and vapour products, this ban extends to include all persons on all school properties and field trip locations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Employees, and volunteers may consume legal substances while offsite on sanctioned work breaks during the work day if such use does not result in impairment. Adults may consume alcohol on school grounds at school-sanctioned events and outside of school hours, when in line with school-specific policies and any necessary licensing arrangements.

Health & Wellness Agreements

Illness

Mandated by Interior Health, the school is required to post the occurrence of any communicable diseases. This includes strep throat, head lice, pinworms, chicken pox, pink eye, etc. Communicable diseases require treatment before the child can return to school. The child may require medical clearance.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, the parents will be called to arrange pick up of the child as soon as possible. Please note that the School does not have accommodations for students to rest while ill at school. We ask that parents/guardians be diligent about updating files in the Main Office including phone numbers, address, emergency contacts, or health insurance information.

Please observe the following guidelines where applicable:

- Do not bring sick children to school. If your child has an excessively runny nose, sore throat, heavy cough, headache, stomach ache, nausea, or fever (temperature above normal within the previous 24 hours), arrange to have the child stay home or to be cared for elsewhere. The child may return to school 24 hours after the last major symptoms (including fever) subside.
- Children with communicable conditions (strep throat, head lice, pinworms, pink eye, chicken pox, scabies, etc.) are not allowed in school. Re-admittance of a child who had parasites will be possible upon proof of treatment, including any prescribed waiting period, should one be designated by a physician or the public health department.

In the event a doctor-prescribed or over-the-counter medicine (including herbal remedies) needs to be administered during the school day, parents must fill out a [Medical Permission Form](#).

Lice

Although lice is inconvenient and uncomfortable, it does not pose a threat to health. If lice is identified at school, parents will be notified at the end of the school day. We ask that parents take the necessary steps to ensure that lice is removed according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Lice Treatment Guide](#).

If a teacher suspects a risk to other students in the class, an email note will be distributed with linked instructions.

Independent Travel Agreement

In the interest of student safety and clear communication, Okanagan Waldorf School requires written permission for any student who will be leaving campus independently after school dismissal—either walking or riding a bicycle.

Parents are required to complete an [Independent Travel Permission Form](#) to authorize their child's independent travel.

Toys & Pets Agreement

We ask that your child leave personal toys and belongings, other than those requested to be at school by your child's teacher, at home. Toys from home can become very distracting to the young child in their day and can create tension for your child as they rightly feel possessive with ownership of such toys.

We ask that pets who attend pick up or drop off do so at the end of a leash, lead line, or in a pet carrier and remain in the parking areas away from school grounds. We require that all contained pets are under the control of an adult at all times while on school property. We require that the adult supervise and guide meetings between pets and students. In the event that a student is injured by a pet, the owner of the animal is liable.

For agreements about bringing toys, personal belongings, or pets into the classroom for show & share, we ask that arrangements be made with the Class Teacher in advance.

Marked service dogs or dogs for other therapeutic purposes are allowed on campus with their owner or trainer. Please notify the office if you have a service dog.

Planned Absence Agreement

For a planned absence, please obtain a Planned Absence Form from the Main Office and return the completed form to the office. All teachers will be notified of the planned absence.

Excessive/long term absences run the risk of the student being denied funding by the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care. Each May, we are required to have an outside auditor assess our student files and attendance records to verify that the students we claim are in attendance at our school, are in fact, in attendance. When a student takes an extended leave of absence or is absent more than 10 days in a semester, there is a high likelihood that our auditor will determine that we are not 'responsible' for the academic progress of that student. In such a case, we are denied the available funding to help support that student at OWS. When this occurs, the amount not received by the school will be billed back to the

family. This can range from \$5000-\$7000 in additional tuition owed for the student above our regular tuition contribution amount billed.

For planned absences, the responsibility rests on the family to obtain assignments before the absence, complete these during absence, and return the completed assignments on time. When absences cannot be avoided, it is the student's responsibility to complete all missed work within the timeframe determined by the teacher. If a student does not turn in their work during the timeframe provided by the teacher, the work may be recorded as "incomplete," and the student will not receive a grade for the unfinished assignment(s).

Parents of middle school students (grades 5+) should recognize the importance of regular school attendance and timely arrivals when applying to independent high schools. Attendance records are used to aid the decision-making process for acceptance into high school, and absenteeism may negatively impact a student's ability to transition successfully into a high school program.

Parking Lot Protocol

We ask for your help in keeping our campus, staff, students, and visitors safe in and around the parking areas. To that end, we ask that you be aware of the following parking lot guidelines:

- Enter and Exit the appropriate parking lot via the marked Entrance, and exit through the marked Exit;
- A reminder that cell phone use by drivers in a moving vehicle is prohibited;
- Park only in approved areas that are distinguished by gravel ground cover or cleared snow;
- Keep car radios at a low volume that cannot be heard outside the vehicle;
- Front-end angle parking is required of all vehicles to ensure safety while backing up;
- Use extreme caution while backing up;
- All children must be supervised, with an adult within reach, at all times in and around the parking lots; and,
- All trees that line the drive between the school and the parking lot are not for climbing, we ask that you assist us in reminding your children of this rule.

School Closure Protocol

In the event of an emergency, or due to inclement weather, the school may be closed for the day. In this case, an emergency text will be made to all families and the school Website will be updated with closure information.

In cold or snowy weather, the BES makes every effort to stay open. It is important that, even though the school may stay open in inclement weather, families make individual decisions about whether to transport to school based on the safety of their commute.

School Culture Information

Before and After School Supervision

Child minding is offered free of charge in the school yard before school from 7:45am to school start, and after school from school end to 3:10pm. To take advantage of the Early Years Centre's 'School Aged Care' Program for additional care needs, you can register for that separate service through the Administration Office or at [this link](#).

Parent Lending Library

The Parent Lending Library is located in the administration office beside the school store. Parents can sign books out according to the instructions found on the book shelf. There are many topics and several copies available. We encourage parents to read with a friend or start a book study. Don't see a Waldorf title that you'd like to read? Ask the Receptionist to put your title on the wish list and you'll be notified when the book is available.

Borrowing Time Limit: The time that a book can be signed out is limited to the school year, or if there is a hold on the book.

Fines: In mid May, the registrar/receptionist will contact any parents that have books signed out and let them know that they are required to return the books by May 24th. In the event that they are not returned the accounts department will add the cost of the book to their last invoice of the school year.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays or special day celebrations are celebrated each year for each child. Each teacher has a unique way of honoring your child at that time. Most often, a birthday story is told which, through the imagination, describes an understandable picture of the human birth experience. Parents are warmly welcomed to participate. Your child's teacher will contact you to discuss the details.

Festivals

OWS marks the rhythms of the year through the changing seasons and the coming and going of festivals. Festivals are deeply fulfilling experiences for both young and old. Refer to the school calendar for festival celebration dates. Please talk with your child's teacher if you wish to share your own traditions with your child's class. Festivals and Celebrations mark the culture of a people as mirrored in the changing landscape. The festivals chosen are dependent on the people who work and attend the school. Below are some of our past and present favourites:

Rose Ceremony (September)

- This all-school assembly marks the beginning of the school year and welcomes the new Grade 1 students. Following a story by the first grade teacher, the students of the oldest grade(s) give a rose to each of the new first graders, thus marking the beginning of their grades journey.

Harvest Festival/Festival of Courage (September)

- Around the fall equinox, the Festival of Courage brings consciousness to the changing of the season and the attributes represented by the archangel Michael: strength, courage, and clarity of thought. During the season between the summer and winter Solstices we strive to overcome our 'dragons,' our lower, less noble aspects. At the assembly there will be a sharing of drama, song, verse, and food. The afternoon is filled with field games for the children to practice courage, strength and skill.

Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Succoth, Hanukkah, Purim, Passover

- These traditional Jewish holidays are often celebrated within the Grade 3 curriculum and at the discretion of teachers in other grades.

Diwali

- The Hindu Festival of Lights, may be celebrated by the Grade 5 class and at the discretion of teachers in other grades.

Enchanted Garden (October)

- This event is typically open to all students in our early childhood programs up through any student who is under the age of 10. This 'Storybook Village' is created by parents for the children. It is different every year, but workers of the village may include a fisherman, an artist, a candlestick maker, miller, baker, farmer, and blacksmith. Children stroll through the village receiving natural tokens from each stop along the way.

Lantern Walk (November)

- This is the festival of Compassion. We celebrate the inner light, which burns brighter as the days are getting shorter. In all of our programs, the children make unique lanterns to use during our evening lantern walk.

Winter Garden (November/Early December)

- The Winter Garden is both a gift from the parents to the children and community as well as one of our most attended fundraisers. The Winter Garden Committee is responsible for organizing the event with support from the entire parent body. All parents participate by contributing to this festive event.

Spiral of Lights (early December)

- Celebrated by the early childhood and lower grades (as well as older students who wish to participate), the children walk an evergreen spiral to light their own candles and set them on the path. This beautiful ceremony makes outward the inner process of rekindling our inner lights during times of darkness.

St. Nicholas Day (December)

- Typically, the children place their slippers out and St. Nicholas fills them with fruit and a small treat.

Carnival

- Celebrated in French class.

Valentine's Day (February)

- This is at each class teacher's discretion as to how the class will hold this day. If it is celebrated, each child is asked to bring hand-made valentines for every other child in the class per the teacher's instructions. Candy is not allowed. Teachers help celebrate with stories.

Ramadan (March)

- This Muslim holiday is celebrated with light, reflection, fasting and cultural foods. Depending on the needs of the community, this holiday is recognized at OWS.

May Festival (May)

- A festival celebrating the glories of spring. Dances are learned by each class. An all-school picnic follows.

Graduation Ceremony (late May)

- Graduating middle school students are honored as they complete their journey at OWS.

Reverse Rose Ceremony (late May)

- This event is reserved for years when OWS has an enrolled Grade 8 class. An all-school assembly, on the last day of school, when the Grade 1 students give roses to the graduating class.

Weekly Assembly

Each Friday morning, students from Kindergarten and all the Grades join together to share news and celebrate birthdays and accomplishments. Assemblies begin with a land acknowledgment, followed by morning verses and festival songs led by a teacher. Next, students discuss the focused virtues for the month. Virtues can include Kindness, Generosity, Creativity, Courage, and many more, and students can then share examples of how the virtue is living within the school. Working with virtues at OWS is directly linked to the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care's social emotional curriculum called Core Competencies. After virtues discussions, classes take turns each week sharing an aspect of their classroom work. These sharings include music, drama, visual and 3D arts, and ADST projects. The audience can ask questions and offer praise and they receive a sense of what their peers in other classes are working on. The Assembly ends with a closing verse, and students return to their class activities. The weekly Assembly is vital to building community within the student body and a great tool for preparing younger students heading into the next grade.

Assessments

Assessments provide us with vital information about our students and about how we are meeting the learning needs of our classes. We use a variety of types of assessments including: standardized tests, summative snapshots (tests, quizzes, projects, etc.), formative snapshots (check ins, main lesson book collections, observation of participation, etc.) and self assessments. Assessment results are shared with parents in reports or at meetings. In some cases the results of assessments may indicate that intervention is needed, in which case parents will be notified and the School Based Team will advise

next steps. Below is a list of known assessments, these are combined with continual, ongoing assessments:

- Grade 1 Readiness Assessment - Spring of Kindergarten
- Literacy Assessments - All Grades, three times per year
- Numeracy Assessments - All Grades, three times per year
- Foundations Skills Assessment (Provincial) - Grades 4 & 7, Fall

Verses by Rudolf Steiner

The Bell Ringing Verse

To wonder at beauty,
Stand guard over truth,
Look up to the noble,
Resolve on the good.
This leadeth us truly
To purpose in living,
To right in our doing,
To peace in our thinking.
And teaches us trust
In the workings of [spirit],
In all that there is
In the widths of the world,
In the depths of the soul.



A Verse for Our Time

We must eradicate from the soul all fear and terror of
what comes towards us out of the future.

We must acquire serenity in all feelings and
sensations about the future.

We must look forward with absolute equanimity to
everything that may come.

And we must think only that whatever comes is given
to us by a world- directive full of wisdom.

It is part of what we must learn in this age, namely, to
live out of pure trust, without any security in existence.

Trust in the ever present help of the spiritual world.

Truly, nothing else will do if our courage is not to fail
us.

And let us seek the awakening from within ourselves,
every morning and every evening.