

Family Guidebook 2024/25



“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

[Early Years Centre](#)
730 Whitevale Road
Lumby, BC V0E2G7

Phone: 250.547.9212 (Main Office) extension 109 for EYC Office

Email: info@bridgeeducational.org or ecmanager@bridgeeducational.org

Main School Office Hours:	Monday - Friday	8:00AM to 4:00PM (September – June)
	Monday - Friday	9:00AM to 3:00PM (July – August)
EYC Hours:	Monday - Friday	7:30AM to 5:30PM (Closed Stat Holidays)



"Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility - these three forces are the very nerve of education."

-Rudolf Steiner

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Welcome to the Early Years Centre

The Early Years Centre Family Guidebook explains policy and structures, and provides information about the unique delivery of Waldorf Education in the early years. It serves as a guide during your family's time at the childcare centre. The policies and procedures described here support the mission and vision of our society, and build integrity, trust, and respect among all members of our community. We share these institutional expectations of conduct, professionalism, and communication to ensure healthy programming and relationships. Please take time to familiarize yourself with this guide and refer to it as necessary throughout your time here. Parents agree to support these standards with their children in all programs their children attend.

Vision Statement

Enlivened Education.

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. Together, we foster positive social and ecological growth.

Waldorf Education

Waldorf programs strive to educate the whole human being in a healthy and balanced manner. Waldorf schools and early childhood programs around the world base their educational philosophies on the insights of Austrian philosopher, scientist and educator Dr. Rudolf Steiner.

Waldorf educators work with the conviction that childhood is sacred; that children learn naturally when the curriculum meets their developmental needs; that children's imaginations need to be nurtured and protected; and that students should be engaged through active and thoughtful participation in their learning. We emphasize the importance of children finding joy in learning by experiencing wonder, awe, and reverence for the world around them.

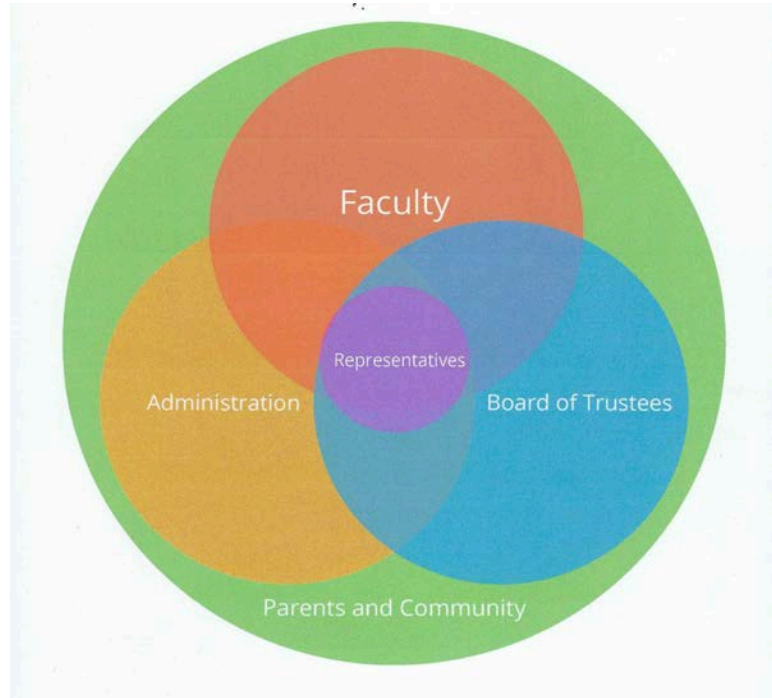
For more information, please visit our website at www.bridgeeducational.org

WECAN – Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America

The Early Years Centre is proud to be an Associate member of WECAN. The WECAN mission is to foster a new cultural impulse for the work with the young child from pre-birth to age seven. Based on an anthroposophical understanding of human development, WECAN is committed to protecting and nurturing childhood as a foundation for renewing human culture (WECAN, n.d). WECAN provides direct dialogue with early childhood educators and their colleagues about the programs they design in institutions and in homes, and about how they define and develop their roles and their work with parents. Site visits, regional gatherings, and conferences allow WECAN to research and harvest the current needs of programs in the vast geography of the USA and Canada.

The Bridge Educational Society Organizational Structure

The Bridge Educational Society functions through the joint efforts of the faculty, Board of Trustees, administration, and the Bridge Parent association.



The composition and responsibilities of these bodies are as follows:

Administration

The administrative staff provides the infrastructure and logistical support for the activities of the childcare centre and the OWS school. Together they are responsible for the smooth operation in the areas of finance, enrollment, development, outreach, and general operations, including facilities. Each administrative staff member plays a role in the overall function of the society and acts as a point of contact for parents.

Administrative Directors are the key positions responsible to the Board of Trustees. For The Bridge Educational Society there are three Directors: Director of Administration, Director of Education - EYC, and Director of Education - OWS.

Faculty

The faculty of the EYC consists of all educators and program support staff. The faculty is responsible to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children. The faculty comply with Child Care Licensing Regulation at all times. Educators are responsible for all pedagogical program development (in

alignment with *WECAN* membership), curriculum standards, mentorship, peer evaluations, and family and child support. In addition, the faculty holds a responsibility for parent education and connection through parent meetings, and maintaining relationships within the larger Waldorf community.

Faculty members are individuals who are deeply committed to the health and well-being of our programs. Beyond tending to the above responsibilities, faculty members actively study and strive to further develop their understanding of the growing child as they also continue to deepen their academic methods.

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees works in collaboration with the faculty and administration to ensure that the mission of the society is carried out in accordance with our 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 educators, 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.

Board Mandated Committees

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

Bridge Parent Association

All parents of children enrolled in programs at EYC 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 Centre 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.

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 the Early Years Centre there are many ways to get involved. Two automatic opportunities are Society Membership and Volunteerism.

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.

Volunteerism

Parent participation is an integral part of the BES experience and builds a thriving community both socially and financially. We ask that you give willingly of your time to help as needed at a variety of seasonal fundraisers. Parents can make a significant impact in the society's success, and strengthen their own connection to the society, by helping within the community.

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 be done. Incorporating volunteerism can help us economize and 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 get involved 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
- Wooden toy repair

- Festival craft preparations
- Accept assigned specific grounds, woodwork or maintenance tasks as needed



Please know that every set of hands and every contribution is profoundly appreciated and makes a difference!

Policy and Protocols

We believe that transparency and collaboration are the key to a community's success. At EYC we collaborate to create policies with various stakeholders in mind and in response to various regulations and guidelines for child care centres 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. To access the EYC 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 EYC, we agree to uphold all policies of the Centre.

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 Main Administration Office.

Communication

Your direct link to BES and to EYC is your Class Lead Teacher. This person can help you find the information you need. Begin your communication journey with your Class Lead Teacher.

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.

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 ‘The EYC program is requesting we provide very specific outerwear items’.

Concern: A cause of anxiety or worry. An example might be ‘The program is requesting we provide very specific outerwear that is expensive, this is not in my family’s budget right now’.

Question: An inquiry made to elicit information about something specific. An example might be ‘Why is the quality of my child’s gear so important to the program?’

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

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.

Registrar/Reception

- Re-commitment
- Tuition
- Calendar
- Aftercare

Finance Manager

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

BES Board Chair

- Strategic Plan

Director of Education EYC

- Policy, Health & Safety
- EYC HR Admin
- Programming

EC Manager

- ECE Licensing
- EYC Administration

Director of Education & Principal OWS

- Curriculum & Programming
- Reporting
- Policy, Health and Safety
- OWS HR Admin

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 (Two Board members 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](#)

EYC Financial Agreement and Policies

During your child's enrollment at the Early Years Centre financial agreements are considered binding. Refusal to adhere to them will result in termination of enrollment agreements. Upon enrollment in The Early Years Centre, currently part of the Government Funded \$10 a Day Child Care Initiative, fees listed below will be due. Full details of all financial responsibilities can be found in your Financial Agreement or contact the Business Manager's office at accounts@bridgeeducational.org.

- **Enrollment Fees:**
 - *Application Fee:* A one-time application fee is required upon enrollment. This fee applies to new enrollments and to families where the last enrollment was over 12 months ago. The fee is per child.
 - *Membership Fee:* Annual Society Membership dues run from July 1st to June 30th. A \$25 membership fee is due with enrollment paperwork. *This fee is per family.*
 - *Administration Fee:* Upon enrollment, a \$75 administration fee is required per child to cover the administrative work associated with their enrollment.

- *Child Care Fees:* Payments are due on the 1st of each month, with the first month's fee required before the first day of care. Invoices will be issued five days before the due date. Please contact us promptly with any invoice or account inquiries upon receipt.
- *Late Pick-Up Fees:* A charge of \$1.00 per minute will be applied to your account for late pick-ups beyond 5:30 p.m.
- **Affordable Child Care Benefit:** The Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) is a government assistance program designed to alleviate child care costs by providing direct payments to the Child Care Provider. Families can manage their ACCB applications, renewals, and track progress using [My Family Services](#). Note: The ACCB does not cover registration fees.
- **Withdrawal and Refund:** To withdraw from the Early Years Centre, a written notice must be submitted by the 1st of the month, effective for the end of that month. Failure to provide this one-month notice will result in responsibility for an additional month of child care fees. All withdrawal notices must be emailed to ecmanager@bridgeeducational.org and accounts@bridgeeducational.org by the 1st of the month preceding the anticipated withdrawal month.
- **Closures:** The Early Years Centre recognizes all BC holidays and will be closed for the following: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, BC Day, Labour Day, Truth and Reconciliation Day, Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day as well as Easter Monday and the week between Christmas and New Years and the last week in August.

On rare occasions the EYC, or parts of the EYC, may close due to unforeseen circumstances such as power outages, staffing shortage or at the recommendation of Interior Health. We appreciate your understanding in these circumstances and will strive to provide as much notice as possible. Please see your Financial Agreement for more information about the financial implications of EYC closures.

- **Repayment Agreement:** No refunds will be given for missed days due to illness, vacation, or personal decisions. Parent portions will not be reimbursed for planned closure days. Unplanned closure days may be reimbursed.
- **Arrears:** To ensure the sustainability of the Early Years Centre, it is crucial that families fulfill their financial obligations. The Board of Trustees and the Finance Committee have approved the following arrears policy:
 - Effective when an account is 15 days past due:
 - *First Notice (15 Days Late):* A First Notice will be issued for any amount overdue by 15 days. Families will receive an email reminder of the due date.
 - *Second Notice (30 Days Late):* If the outstanding amount is not paid within 15 days of the First Notice, a Second Notice will be sent.
 - Accounts that are 30 days in arrears will face the following options:
 - *Payment in Full:* Pay the outstanding amount within 5 days of the Second Notice (35 days overdue) to bring the account current, including any new amounts owing.

- *Withdrawal:* Failure to make payment will result in automatic withdrawal of the child from the program. To resume care, the family must settle all outstanding amounts and reapply for enrollment, subject to availability.

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

Behaviour Guidance

Overview

Learning appropriate social behavior is an important part of the 0-12 developmental stage. Our programs and educators embrace this as a part of every day in our programs, and we continuously provide children with support to practice and grow these capacities. This policy is guided by the aim to provide an inclusive environment that is safe for all of the children in a program, at all stages of their individual social emotional learning.

Behaviour Intervention Procedures

Behavior is a means of communication, and we seek to understand the underlying need or message that any child may be trying to express in a given situation and support them to get their needs met.

When a child exhibits negative, oppositional, threatening or harmful behavior, educators will support by:

Step 1:

- *Staying calm and intervening (as necessary) to support the safety of all.
- Acknowledging the behavior and providing clear positive guidance (by stating what is the appropriate, permitted or expected behavior).
- Allowing time (as appropriate) for the child to respond and/or regulate their own behavior.
- Repeating or rephrasing the positive guidance given.
- Supporting the child to communicate or get their needs met in an alternative way.
- Redirecting the child by offering an alternative activity/idea for the child.
- Supporting the child (as necessary and developmentally appropriate) to repair the harm, check on a friend's well-being, clean up a mess they made etc.

*In cases where there is a safety risk to others or a child is escalated, Step 1 may be followed by separating the child from the group and providing them with a safe space with the comforting presence of an adult nearby until they are regulated and ready to re-enter activity safely.

Parent Support, Step 2:

At EYC a program lead can call for parents to pick a child up when one or more of the following occur:

- When a specific behavior (ie. fleeing the group, refusing to transition outdoors), compromises ratios and therefore the safety of the whole group.
- When it is the 3rd incident on the same day of bodily harm or verbal attack to another child or adult.
- When 1:1 support is required to manage negative behavior for more than 20 consecutive minutes.

Additional Supports, Step 3:

When a child exhibits frequent and ongoing harmful behaviors parents will be informed and invited to collaborate on strategies to support their child.

An additional supportive step is a recommendation for referral to NONA (North Okanagan Neurological Association), our local child development support agency.

PDF of full Behaviour Guidance Policy [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

The Early Years Centre 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

The Early Years Centre 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.

Labelled diapers, wipes and cream can be brought to remain at the centre. Educators will notify you when more is needed.

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

Health & Wellness Agreements

Please be diligent about updating files in the Main Office. When phone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, or health insurance information changes during the year we want to ensure we have this updated information.

Illness

Mandated by Interior Health, BES 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 Centre 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:

- Caregivers will not administer medicines to provide relief from pain or other illness to be able to attend care. If your child is ill they should remain in the restful care of a guardian or parent until symptoms are stable.
- 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. For cases of gastrointestinal illness, the child may return to care 48 hours after the last symptom.
- 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 [Consent to Administer Medication 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 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.

Medical Concerns

In the event that doctor-prescribed, or over-the-counter medicine including herbal remedies, need to be administered during care at the Centre, please follow EYC procedures for administering medication. Procedures for administering medication include the following provisions:

- A [Medical Permission Form for Non-Life Threatening Medical Condition](#) is completed and submitted to the Program Lead Teacher (this will be sent to parents on DocHub);
- The medication, including herbal and homeopathic remedies, is provided in the original container;
- The parent brings the medicine directly to the Program Lead Teacher;
- Under no condition should medication, prescription or non-prescription, be sent to EYC in lunch baskets, with snacks, or in backpacks.
- All medicines will be stored in a locked cupboard/fridge in the program your child is in, and will be handled by adult caregivers only; and,
- As much as possible, the same caregiver will administer medicine to the child.

Absences

Call or email the Main Office (250-547-9212 ext. 1, or 'program'@bridgeeducational.org (eg. marigold@bridgeeducational.org) to report absences for children.

Planned Absence

For a planned absence, please notify the Lead Teacher of your child's program. Excessive/long term absences run the risk of the child being denied ACCB funding. Please refer to your ACCB contract.

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.

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.

Staff Shortage EYC Program Closure

In the event of a staff shortage due to illness or other reasons, where there are insufficient educators available to cover all regular shifts in the Early Years Center, the following procedure will be implemented:

- One or more programs will be closed and available staffing resources will be reallocated
- to other programs; and,
- Families will be informed as soon as possible of the closure in their room, via text and email, by the EYC manager or delegate.

In the event of multiple days of short staff over a 2-week period we will close each program in succession (youngest to oldest) in order to lessen the impact of service interruption on any one group of families. This procedure would look like:

- One-day closure for Honeysuckle, then one-day closure for Sweet Pea, then one-day closure for Marigold, then one-day closure for Dandelion.
- If there is a period of more than 10 operational days with no closure, we will reset and the cycle of closures will begin again with the youngest (Honeysuckle) program.

Refunds will only be made when service interruptions last for 15 consecutive operational days or more.

Incident or Accident Reporting

In the event of an incident or accident (any incident that causes bodily harm and requires first aid) an Incident Report or an Accident Report will be filled out and parents will be notified. The Parent will sign the report to acknowledge understanding of the incident or accident and a copy of the report will be placed in the student file.

Emergency Management

Written protocols for emergency drills and evacuation are located at each entrance of the EYC.

In the case of an evacuation, the children and faculty will travel to 654 Whitevale Road, and contact parents from that site via emergency text/phone. If parents cannot be reached, faculty will reach out to emergency contacts and pick-up contacts. In the event a parent or contact is unable to collect a child the caregiver will stay with the child and call MCFD for support.

In the event of an area evacuation, children will be transported by vehicle to the Vernon Recreation Centre. With a severe emergency we will be guided by those in authority such as the police and firefighters. We will make every effort to communicate with parents. We ask that parents remain alert and attentive to the EYC's communication regarding any emergency management instructions during an area emergency.

Emergency Information

Parents are to ensure that emergency information (e.g. student allergies, medications and contact names and phone numbers) is kept current at the EYC. Childrens' emergency information is kept in the EYC Administration Office, and in the Class Emergency Kit, which is also used for off-site excursions.

School Culture Information

Parent Lending Library

The Parent Lending Library is located in the Main 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 (July to June), 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

EYC 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:

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. For this in-class festival there will be a sharing of song, verse, and food.

Enchanted Garden (October)

- This after-hours 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 their 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.
- Halloween is best celebrated by family choice at home. The EYC does not include this event in our Festival calendar.

Lantern Walk (November)

- This is the festival of Compassion. We celebrate the inner light, which burns brighter as the days are getting shorter. In some of our programs, the children make unique lanterns to use during our evening lantern walk. Our lantern walk is open to the BES Community. Your child's program may choose to participate in this event within their class.

Winter Spiral (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. Our older students may assist in the event by playing music along with the early childhood faculty. Many older students elect to walk the spiral path as well.

Winter Garden (January)

- 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.

Candlemas (February)

- The celebration marks the beginning of the end of winter. Children create their own candles and holders to celebrate the warm light joining us soon. This event is typically held during business hours for children and staff only. Your child's classroom may choose to participate in this event.

Valentine's Day (February)

- Each program lead uses their discretion as to how the class will hold this day. *If* it is celebrated, each child is asked to bring a hand-made valentine for every child in the class. Candy is not allowed. Educators help celebrate with stories.

May Fair (May)

- A festival celebrating the glories of spring. Dances are learned by each class. A family picnic follows the dancing celebration. Often there are several stations children may visit such as the donut tree, petting zoo, creating flower crowns, face painting, etc. There may also be a fundraiser held at this event. This festival is open to the BES community.

Photography

We understand that you want to capture the joy of your children's performance; however we kindly appeal to our audience not to take photos or record the performances. The activity of photographing or filming detracts from the experience and the focus of the children and audience. Being photographed or filmed changes the nature of the event into a performance that is being done for a device rather than for people. We strive to have the children and the audience experience and celebrate a live performance for the sake of joy and belonging. Further to this, we have children within our community whose parents have requested that they not be photographed for various reasons including the protection of privacy. We ask that you help us maintain consent or non-consent of photography for each student by not filming your child during a childcare activity. You may discuss with your Program Lead Teacher whether there can be opportunities for staged photograph opportunities, we ask that these arrangements be made in advance of activity.

Early Years Centre Rhythms and Routines

Overview

Children are carried along by the rhythms of the environment in which they live, from the cadence of breathing in their bodies, to the daily patterns of sleeping and waking. The yearly cycle of the seasons and the rhythmic procession of stars are part of life's experience. Children flourish when their daily activities are arranged rhythmically to reflect the natural order of life.

Thus, the Early Childhood activities flow with a sense of "breathing in" and "breathing out," from the quiet moments of fairy tale and circle to the active moments of vigorous work and play. Activities the children are involved in during the day include creative play, circle, snack, outdoor play, and

story time with a fairy tale, puppet play, or nature story. Typically, each class has a daily and weekly rhythm of activities and snacks, which vary each day but repeat from week to week. All transitions between the activities are graced with song. A schedule of daily activities is posted in each Early Childhood room.

Just as children are carried along by the regular rhythms of the school day, so too are they nourished by regular rhythms offered at home. As difficult as it is in these modern times to establish set meal-times and bedtimes, we strongly encourage you to do so. It is very important for young children to go to bed at the same time every night, and we recommend that this be no later than 8:00 pm. Please feel free to contact your caregiver if you would like some ideas for making this transition a successful one for parents and child.

Calendar Year

Our EYC year calendar can be found at www.bridgeeducational.org under Our Community > Calendars > Early Years Centre > View Calendar. Each year our centre closes for one week in summer and one week in winter, as well as for occasional professional development opportunities for our staff members. This calendar contains our opening and closing dates, dates for celebrations and festivals as well as opportunities to participate in events such as our AGM. Please note our early dismissal dates and closing dates so you may find alternative care, if needed, in advance.

Scheduled Play Time

Care programs at the Early Years Centre include the following minimum active play opportunities for full-day care:

- 60 minutes outdoors
- 50 minutes free play indoors
- 20 minutes of active songs and circle or game times

These active play opportunities include facilitated play (circle time, games, obstacle courses, forest walks, household work), and un-facilitated (free play) times as described in each program's daily rhythm.

Scheduled Rest Time

- For children who require a sleep during program rest time - please bring a familiar blanket or sleep sac that will remain at the centre and be washed weekly.
- Children who rest but do not sleep during rest time will be provided with a light sheet and cot.
- All children who participate in our EYC will participate in daily rest time.
- Crib/bed sheets will be provided for children.

Snacks and Lunches

- Children should bring enough prepared food to serve two snacks and lunch each day. Please send healthy choices that can be eaten as they are. Items such as lunch meats and dairy products that

require refrigeration should be sent to the EYC in an insulated bag with a cold pack. Please make sure your child has a refillable water bottle each day, and utensils when needed.

- Bibs and dishes are available at the centre.
- Infant and toddler programs are able to warm foods up. In our 3-5 year old programs we encourage families to send warm things in thermoses.
- Snacks and lunches should be in a reusable lunch bag or box free of media images. Please be mindful of using reusable containers and avoiding pre-packaged foods to avoid creating garbage. Candy, gum, cookies, etc. are not appropriate for lunches or snacks.
- Trading or sharing of snack and lunch items is prohibited due to food allergy concerns and family preferences.

Drop off and Pick up

The EYC doors open at 7:30 AM. Parents can greet caregivers at the classroom door or outside on the play yard, as indicated by your child's educator. Caregivers are not always available for one on one conversations/conferences during this time. You may inform the educator that you would like to speak and an appointment will be scheduled.

Routine is an important part of a child's life, when picking up and dropping off your child, please try and keep the procedure the same. This helps the child with the transition and becomes something they naturally come to expect and understand.

Parents must provide (and update as needed) a list of all authorized adults that have permission to pick up their child on an emergency consent form. Photo ID is required for pick up if the person is not familiar to the faculty for drop off and pick up. If the adult picking up appears to be unable to provide safe care, an alternative person will be requested for pick up. In the event a parent or contact is unable to collect a child, the caregiver will stay with the child and call MCFD for support.

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.

Children who live in an atmosphere of love and
warmth, and who have around them truly good
examples to imitate, are living in their proper
element.

- Rudolf Steiner, *The Education of the Child*