



Njeri's Morning Glory School and Art Center



# Parent Handbook

2013-2014

# Parent Handbook

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# Njeri's Morning Glory School and Art Center



## Welcome to our School!

Dear Parents,

Each year, as summer draws to a close, an air of excitement surrounds the school. The children have waited a long while for the doors to open again. In this magical world, music, movement, song, story, verse, and purposeful working with our hands are lovingly woven into the school day. The children are encouraged to create, imagine, explore, and learn about themselves, the world, and their place in it.

In kindergarten, the children's serious work of play occurs in a home-like environment. Together they set the table for snack, tidy up, bake bread, make soup, make pasta, paint, and garden. Most importantly, they play with enthusiasm and joy. In the grades, this joy for play is gently guided to encourage learning through discovery. New ideas and concepts are introduced and explored through creative stories, songs, purposeful movement involving the whole body, and hands-on, artistic activities engaging all the child's senses.

As teachers, we want to create a bridge between school life and home life. We hope that this booklet will begin to build these connections. We want to shed light on our work with the children. More than anything else, we want you to feel that we are always open to your questions or concerns. In our school we will transform ourselves into a true community.

**WELCOME TO NJERI'S MORNING GLORY SCHOOL AND  
ART CENTER**

Sincerely,

**The Teachers and Staff at Njeri's Morning Glory**

*"Education is a journey on which one acquires knowledge. It can be easy or difficult. Each one of us has our own pace. Some travel fast, some travel slowly, but once we acquire this knowledge, it's like riding a bicycle... we never forget."*

*~ Njeri McGillicuddy*



## About Our School

Founded in 2007, Njeri's Morning Glory School and Art Center has been bringing Waldorf education and a variety of art programs to children and adults in the San Jose area. We are a comprehensive elementary school, offering full-time studies through fifth grade. Our art programs serve children (ages 3-15) and adults after-school, on weekends, over holiday breaks, and during the summer months.

All our teachers are trained Waldorf teachers, are in the process of completing their three-year Waldorf teacher training program, are California credentialed teachers, and/or are being trained and guided by our school mentor and senior faculty. They bring a rich variety of experience and skills to the school.

Our community of teachers and families represent a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds, which we embrace in our educational values. We honor our international and multicultural community through the interconnected world-view of the Waldorf philosophy and pedagogy.

Our work as teachers is to nurture the physical development of the young child, while cultivating the positive human values of compassion, reverence for life, respect, love of nature, and social conscience, as well as developing cognitive, artistic and practical skills. By supporting the physical body and nourishing the soul life of the child, we build a strong foundation for healthy, active thinking.

We view Waldorf education and the arts as healing forces. They allow children and adults alike to find a greater sense of connection and purpose in the world.

Our intention is to make Waldorf education and art programs available to all.



## Introducing Our Teachers and Staff



**Njeri McGillicuddy**

Ms. Njeri McGillicuddy travelled from her home in Kenya to Scotland at age 15 to study education. She became a Waldorf teacher at Winston Rudolf Steiner School in England. Over the years Njeri has come to be recognized as one of the leading lights in the world of Waldorf education for her creative work as a kindergarten and art teacher. She has been a kindergarten teacher in Vancouver and most recently, has spent eleven years at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula. Njeri has intensively studied special needs education at Camphill Rudolf Steiner College in Aberdeen, Scotland. She studied art in Canada and the United States and is a ceramic artist. Njeri's greatest passion is her art. She has taught art to children for over twenty years and is the founder of our school.

**Kikumi Kida**

Ms. Kikumi Kida is our kindergarten teacher. She was born in Japan and moved to the United States in 1999. Kikumi is a graduate of the Waldorf Teacher Training Program at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, CA. She was a nursery and kindergarten assistant for three years at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula. She has been the assistant kindergarten teacher at Njeri's for the past five years. Kikumi also has experience in assisting children in gardening class. She loves cooking and spinning yarn.



**Nupur Gupta**

Ms. Nupur Gupta is our second grade teacher. She was born and brought up in India. Nupur obtained her Bachelor's Degree in Education from Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Delhi, India; after which she taught elementary school children in India for four years. After moving to the United States in 2010, she got her California Teaching Credential from the Commission on Teaching Credentialing. She has some credits in Early Childhood Education as well. She has taken some story telling sessions for preschool children near her residence in Sunnyvale. Besides teaching, Nupur loves to do paper quilling and cooking. The school is currently mentoring and guiding Nupur in her Waldorf teacher training process.





### Eva Wang

Ms. Eva Wang is our combined third, fourth, and fifth grade teacher. She graduated from the Waldorf Teacher Training Program at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California. Eva has a M.S. in Chemical Engineering from Stanford University, and worked as an environmental consultant for eight years. For the past 14 years, she has been bringing her enthusiasm for nature and environmental awareness to her work with children. Prior to joining our school, Eva was a substitute teacher at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula. She also worked with various home schooling groups teaching Waldorf-inspired art and handwork classes. Eva has one son attending tenth grade at Los Altos High School.



### Carmina Luce

Ms. Carmina Luce is our Spanish teacher. She has a bachelor's degree in Spanish Literature and Education. She has been a teacher for 34 years between her homeland in Bolivia and the United States. In 1983, Carmina became one of the founding teachers of the Waldorf School of the Peninsula where she taught Spanish for sixteen years. She retired in 2000 and served as a mentor for the next three Spanish teachers at the school.

As part of her university training, she performed various Latin American short plays. Besides teaching, she loves flamenco and Latin dances, singing and gardening. For more than ten years, Carmina performed with a Peruvian folklore dance group and a Bolivian dance group.

### Margaret More

Ms. Margaret More is one of our two music teachers. Margaret shares her incredible enthusiasm and love of music with the children in an engaging and developmentally appropriate way. She is an ORFF certified music teacher, acclaimed storyteller, Scottish dance teacher, professional recorder player and a teacher with numerous years experience in child education. She is the storyteller in residence at Hickelbees in San Jose.





### **Joanne Margalit**

Ms. Joanne Margalit is our art teacher. She is also our guest Main Lesson Block teacher for fourth and fifth grades. She has created history and fairytale immersion experiences, festivals and art experiences for young children for the past 20 years. She started teaching art classes at Njeri's school in the summer of 2008. After earning degrees at U.C. Berkeley and John F. Kennedy University, she raised two sons and found Waldorf education.

Joanne completed her Foundation Year of the Waldorf Grades Teacher Training Program in 2004, and graduated from the Waldorf Teacher Training Program at Rudolf Steiner College in 2008.

### **Luba Tzonev**

Ms. Luba Tzonev is our music teacher. She was born in Bulgaria, where she obtained a M.S. in Music Education and a Ph.D. in Speech Pathology. She has also completed her first level Orff training at Mills College, CA in 2000, and has been attending Orff related workshops ever since. Ms. Tzonev's true passion has always been teaching music and dancing to children, and she has been doing it for 12 years in Bulgaria and since 2000 in the Cupertino School District.

### **Lee Anne Welch**

Lee Anne is the violin teacher for third, fourth, and fifth grades. Lee Anne grew up in Saratoga, California and earned her BA in music from UCSC in 1977. Since 1979 she has focused her energy on traditional Celtic and American folk music and currently performs with the bluegrass band, Sidesaddle & Co. She helped to form Sorcerer's Apprentice, a contra dance band highlighting the playing of children and young adults. Her book, "Singing Games", written in collaboration with Anna Rainville, was published in 2006. Lee Anne taught violin at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula from 1999 to 2006 and has been teaching privately for 35 years.

### **Anna Rainville**

Ms. Rainville is our school mentor. She brings singing games to the children, and supports our school with her many talents. She has been singing, dancing and teaching all her life. Her life's mission has been to promote and teach the values and philosophy of Waldorf education, a task she has been engaged in since receiving her master's degree in Waldorf Education from







Adelphi University in 1979. Anna has taught movement and singing games to teachers for several years at Rudolf Steiner College in Fair Oaks, California. She recently graduated a class, which she taught from grade one through grade eight at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula in Los Altos, California. In recognition of her excellence as a teacher and her dedication to early childhood education, the California Kindergarten Association presented her with the Audrey Sanchez Teacher Enhancement Award in 2002. In 1989 she was named Teacher of the Year by the Lakeside Joint Elementary School District in Los Gatos, California. She is a co-founder and co-director of the Kindergarten Forum and is on the Board of the National Kindergarten Alliance. In her view of the world, every moment is a chance to sing and dance.



## Kindergarten

*“Play at age 5 is of great importance not just to intellectual but emotional, psychological, social and spiritual development. Play — especially the let’s-pretend, dramatic sort — is how kids develop higher-level thinking, hone their language and social skills, [and] cultivate empathy.”*

*Edward Miller, Alliance for Childhood*

A child’s day is full of creative play – perhaps painting or baking, singing, and a story. The content of kindergarten life at our school thus has a simplicity that the child can understand and imitate whole-heartedly.

The activities of baking, painting, gardening, singing, circle, storytelling and puppetry capture the children’s enthusiasm for the world. This becomes the mainspring of later learning. Our work as teachers is to nurture the physical development of the young child, while cultivating the positive human values of compassion, reverence for life, respect, love of nature and other people, and a social conscience, as well as developing cognitive, artistic and practical skills. The physical body is supported, and the soul life of the child is affirmed and nourished as the ground for healthy, active thinking.



## Rhythm in the Kindergarten

Our daily rhythm alternates carefully between expanding and contracting activities, such as outdoor and indoor creative play as well as inner and outer movement through story time and circle time. Rhythm in the days of the week is established through the practical and artistic activities of bread baking, gardening, cooking, finger knitting, watercolor painting, woodworking and other handwork and outdoor activities. The celebration of the seasons and festivals marks the monthly rhythms.

For snack, we serve organic grains in addition to the bread and soup we make with the children every week. Every day, the children participate in making their food at school. For special holidays or festivals, special treats are prepared. **Please let us know if your child has food allergies, so we may work with you to supply alternative snacks.**

English circle activities are brought by Teacher Njeri and Ms. Luba Tzonev, our music teacher. Additionally, all the children have Spanish with Senora Carmina once a week. Languages are taught through games, verses and songs in a very dynamic and engaging way.



Older kindergartners are brought additional activities designed to gently prepare them for first grade. For example, older kindergartners are introduced to the recorder, and learn how to play some simple pieces. Ms. More brings Kindergarten and first and second grades together once a month for music class. The older kindergartners also join the grades students once a month for a Nature Day at Sanborn Park, or other nearby nature preserves.

## First Day of School Items

- A complete change of clothes in an extra clothes bag
- Indoor shoes and rain boots
- An apron
- 2 cloth napkins and a placemat
- A bread bag

## Kindergarten Hours

**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Parents should arrive with the children 10 to 15 minutes early and stay with them until the teacher receives the children into the classroom. The kindergarten assistant or teacher will meet them and guide them to their first morning activity.

## Parent Support

The children's experience in kindergarten is enhanced by their parents' love and support. Part of this support takes the form of the following activities.

- Each family provides the kindergarten





with a bouquet of seasonal flowers, a week's supply of apples (about 20 apples), one dozen eggs, two onions, and five gallons of bottled water. Depending on the number of families enrolled, each family may be responsible for several weeks, spread throughout the school year.

- Each family launders a week's worth of napkins, placemats, dish towels, and paint rags. Again, each family may be responsible for several weeks, spread throughout the year.

## Birthday Celebrations

In kindergarten, we celebrate each child's birthday as a joyous occasion and invite parents to participate. Since this day is so special to your child, we ask that at least one parent join in the celebration. Parents are expected to bring birthday candles the night before. On the day of the celebration, the birthday child and his/her parents should arrive at 9:10 a.m., and wait outside the classroom until the teacher calls them in. The other children should arrive promptly at 9 a.m. Late arrivals disrupt and disturb the celebration. During the celebration, parents are expected to briefly share their child's life story,

and to provide a birthday treat, and a small gift for each child in the class.

Whether in kindergarten or the grades, each birthday celebration is thoughtfully crafted to celebrate your child's unique life and spirit. Your child's teacher will discuss with you details of the celebration before the birthday.

## Absences

The school calendar is provided as an addendum to this handbook. You may wish to plan your family vacations with the school calendar in mind. Please note that absences (e.g., illness, family vacations, doctor or dental visits – planned or emergency, etc.) are not refundable. Nor are make-ups allowed. In addition, the kindergarten days specified in your enrollment contract are not interchangeable with other days of the week.

If your child is absent for three or more consecutive days (and this is not due to a family vacation), please send in a doctor's note explaining the cause of your child's absence. These notes will be kept in your child's school files, as required by law.

If your child will be absent from school for one week or more, you must continue to pay tuition for your child to be considered enrolled at the school. Alternatively, you may choose to give us a 30-day notice of withdrawal. Then when your child is ready to resume school full-time, you must reapply, paying the interview fee, administrative and supply fees, and tuition covering the remaining months of the school year.





## Examples

Susie attends kindergarten every Monday and Wednesday. She is absent Monday, Wednesday and a second Monday. Susie's mom brings in a note from Susie's doctor on Wednesday (regardless of whether Susie is still absent). Susie cannot "make up" her absence by attending kindergarten on extra days (days other than Monday and Wednesday). Susie's mom does not get a refund for the days absent.

Jacob attends kindergarten full-time. During the first two weeks of April the school has a two-week spring break. Jacob's parents decide to take a family vacation the third week of April. Jacob's family still pays their monthly tuition installment, regardless of how many days Jacob attended school in April.



## First Grade

The first grade is a time of awakening to many wonders. It is seen as a bridge from early childhood to the second seven-year period of development, where the forces of feeling, imagination and a sense of beauty predominate. The first grader perceives the world with all her senses and creates, internally, a world every bit alive as the one outside. "Nature lives in me! I am the world, and the world is me." She dreams into the world and has a deep-rooted feeling of oneness with it. This feeling of unity is the hallmark of first grade. From this sense of wholeness, the first grader begins to explore herself and her surroundings through imitation of the teacher's doing and making.

Learning through doing and learning through making are twin aspects of the same fundamental attitude to education that permeates the Waldorf curriculum. Thinking and understanding arise out of activity and movement, and living thinking - or intelligence that can grasp what is in movement or is still in a state of becoming - is internalized movement. In first grade, the children's natural tendency toward movement and their enthusiasm for life are thus harnessed for learning and for work.





## First Grade Curriculum

First graders are introduced to the following core subjects: form drawing, language arts, mathematics, science, painting, gardening, music, handwork, games, drama, Spanish, and speech. Each subject is enlivened and made relevant to the child through activities that move the physical body and artistic endeavors that move the soul.



### Form Drawing

Form drawing is the deliberate freehand drawing of forms from nature and from man. It is introduced through stories and movement. The children are encouraged to look at the world in a new way, thus providing the foundation for creative thinking, spatial acuity, and writing. The forms (straight lines, curved lines, and combinations thereof) are first drawn by walking them on the ground, by using our own bodies to make three-dimensional representations, by drawing in the air, and then finally by putting it down onto paper with the hand. In the second half of the school year, flowing or continuous forms are introduced. This builds the foundation for cursive writing in second grade.



## Language Arts

Fairy tales and nature stories from around the world are brought to the child in the oral tradition, serving a myriad of purposes. These stories nourish the soul by revealing hidden truths regarding human nature, life, and the afterworld. The storyteller's understanding of the deeper spiritual meaning of these stories is conveyed on a soul-level to the child. Hearing the stories out loud encourages the child to take the spoken word and convert them into living mental pictures, exercising her developing pictorial memory. The actual words used and sentence melody build her vocabulary and help with enunciation. This sets the stage for later instruction in phonics. From the child's mental



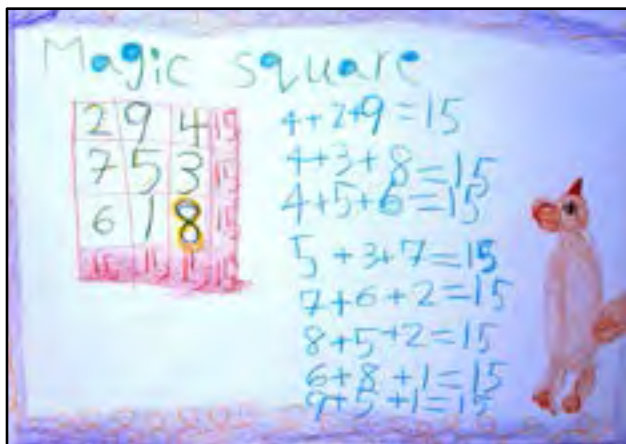
pictures and the gestures absorbed through her form drawings, she creates richly hued crayon drawings. From these crayon drawings, the letters of the alphabet are introduced. This awakens in the child an image or feeling to connect with each letter and its sound. The writing of simple words, focusing on word families, and the copying of short, simple sentences quickly follow. The child learns to write through drawing! Reading comes a little later through the gradual deciphering of what is first drawn by her own hand.

## Mathematics

The abstractness of mathematics is made concrete as the nature of each number from one to 12 is explored. For example, one is unity and the whole; two is the duality of life – sun and moon, father and mother, or love and hate. All four mathematical processes - addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication - and their corresponding human characteristics are brought to life through stories, movement, songs, and the physical manipulation of objects and fingers. Most importantly, each process is introduced from the whole to the parts. For example, when introducing addition, we start with the sum (let's say 5) as the “problem”, and the children are encouraged to discover all the “answers” (3+2, 2+3, 1+4, 4+1, 5+0, 0+5, 1+1+3, etc.). They quickly understand that there is no one correct way of thinking. At the same time, math riddles and mental math are introduced. The multiplication table is physically manifested in the child's feet and hands as rhythmic counting, walking, and clapping. Lastly, through stories and role playing, place value is introduced. Math thus resides in the child in the form of living images and physical experiences.

## Science / Nature Studies

Once a month, older Kindergarteners and grades children will spend the day outside, hiking in one of the local nature preserves. These Friday Nature days, combined with all the other activities brought to the first graders, are our science curriculum, which gradually unfolds and increases in complexity with each grade.



Science encompasses what's living in the child and appears like hidden gems in the activities planned for each day. The child takes her first step on the path toward scientific discovery by cultivating the ability to observe carefully, patiently, and

lovingly. Observation and listening skills are strengthened during drawing, painting, hand-work, and music lessons. The child observes how the teacher draws, paints or plays the flute, and she learns to listen to a series of instructions. Through gardening, nature stories, and gently guided observations, such natural phenomena as the changing of the seasons, life and death, the waning and waxing of the moon, and the growth of plants are brought to the child's



awareness and imagination. Through our monthly Friday hikes and actual physical experiences such as walking quietly in the woods, climbing a tree, or playing in a creek, the child experiences and experiments with the laws of physics. Science in first grade is not an explana-



tion of why something occurred so much as a kinesthetic knowing and a deep love for nature and the world. It lays the foundation for critical thinking, is the emotional basis for environmental stewardship, and is the physical basis for the understanding of the laws of nature. Science must first be alive in the child's imagination and reside in her body before she can comprehend the abstract concepts with her intelligence.

## Painting

The first grader continues to gain mastery of watercolor painting, which was first introduced in kindergarten. During painting the child is encouraged to explore the movements of her inner feeling life and reveal it using colors and form. The characteristics of and the feelings generated by the sight of each primary color and their combinations are also explored, and painting techniques are demonstrated.

## Gardening

In gardening, the child explores the plant world with her senses. We grow and cultivate edible plants, colorful and sweet-smelling flowers, and herbs having distinctive tastes, smells, and feel. These sensory experiences, combined with those from our Friday Nature days, foster a reverence, love, and respect for the earth. This eventually leads in later years to the development of environmental stewardship (a desire to nurture the earth and actively explore creative solutions to environmental issues).

## Music

Music is an integral part of each school day. We greet each day and each other with song and verse. Our daily circle play is accompanied by stories, pentatonic songs, and music from the recorder. First graders also attend music classes



taught by Ms. Tzonev and Ms. More. In these music classes, basic concepts in music theory are gently introduced to the children through lively movement, fun games, songs, and the playing of simple instruments. Singing and making music together deepens listening skills in the children. They hear the other and learn to respond harmoniously to the whole – not just musically, but socially as well.

## Handwork

Like music, handwork is incorporated into all aspects of the school day. Handwork, with its essential characteristic of doing and making, is central to the development of intelligence and thinking in the child. It brings our attention to the work of our hands while working on fine motor skills and mathematics. Handwork also opens our attention to detail. In handwork class, first graders are given time to learn and master a practical skill. We begin with knitting, learning that our hands are our most important tools. We visit a sheep farm, watch the sheep being sheared, make our own knitting needles, and then learn to knit. As our skill progresses, our projects become more complex (e.g., color changes, more sewing, etc.) but always practical.

## Games

Through pictorial images brought by the teach-





er, the children are encouraged to move and act out of their understanding of the games. Movements that strengthen the child's fine and gross motor skills, sense of movement, spatial awareness, sense of balance and equilibrium, and sense of well-being are encouraged. The games introduced focus on the development of cooperative, team building skills.

## Dramatic Arts

The dramatic arts are brought each year through performances in which the children are able to take on increasing individuality in their roles. Often the children will act out stories they have been told by the teacher as a way for them to live into the story. The school year culminates with a year-end play led by the children and presented to the community. Typically this is the enactment of a fairy or folk tale in which the children have worked extensively in main lesson: retelling the story to the teacher, drawing it, writing parts of it, reading it back and finally acting it out. The end results are an invigorated sense of confidence, a pride in what they have learned, and a great joy in sharing it with their family and friends.

## Spanish

Ms. Carmina Luce introduces conversational skills and simple vocabulary through songs,

rhymes, games, finger play, stories, crafts, festivals, and role-playing.

The children's view of the world is expanded through learning about the characteristics, customs, traditions, culture, and geography of the peoples who speak the language. In addition, empathy is cultivated in the children when their ability to listen to others as well as their sensitivity to others' spoken and unspoken intentions are strengthened.

The main activity of the Spanish lesson consists of practicing the language by speaking, reciting, singing, games, etc., and also by creating moments when the children listen to a story told by the teacher. The singing of folk songs and rhythmic activity songs accompanied by gestures can also play a major part in these lessons. All this work is done orally.

The learning of foreign languages is highly effective and stimulating, especially when a variety of physical activities are enjoyed along with speaking the language: standing up and sitting down, creating a circle, and spending time listening quietly. In this way a total engagement of the children with the material is experienced.





The Spanish lesson always begins with a greeting and reciting a poem. This is followed by a tongue twister, a riddle, and a song. Later, traditional Spanish games, guessing games, and active commands along with movements are done in a circle, and folk dances are utilized. As a closing of the lesson, the children listen and repeat short stories, fairy tales or a simple puppet show.

## Speech

The class teacher incorporates speech into each school day through recitation of seasonal poems and dramatic plays during main lesson, the children explore the power of the spoken word. How do what we feel and imagine inside shape our environment through the words we speak? Can we convey not only mood but movement through the words we speak? Through recitation of poems, tongue twisters, and passages from select works, the children develop limber tongues, flexible imaginations, and sensitivity to others.

## First Day of School Items For First Grade

- A complete change of clothes suitable for the season (including underwear and socks)
- Indoor shoes (and rain boots during rainy weather)
- Apron for painting
- Hearty snack and lunch

## First Grade Hours

Day	School Hours
Monday	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Tuesday	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Wednesday	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Thursday	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Friday	9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Students should arrive about 10 minutes early so they have adequate time to greet their friends, settle in and be ready for class to start. Parents are to supervise their child(ren) until the teacher calls them to class.

## Parent Support

Your child's first grade experience is enhanced by your love and support. Part of this support takes the form of the following activities that beautify your child's classroom and nourish all the children at the school.

- Each family provides the first grade class with a bouquet of seasonal flowers and two gallons of bottled water. Depending on the number of families enrolled in first grade, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.
- Each family launders a week's worth of dish towels and paint rags for the first grade class. Again, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.

In addition to the above support that all parents are asked to provide, the class teacher may periodically request volunteers to assist during a



specific class activity or event. The class teacher may also need field trip drivers and chaperones.

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very special occasions. In the grades, birthdays are celebrated with the class and generally without parents. The birthday celebration is thoughtfully crafted to celebrate your child's unique life and spirit. Your child's teacher will discuss with you details of the celebration before the birthday. Your help in providing the birthday treats will be greatly appreciated by the children.

## Field Trip Fees

From time to time, curriculum-related field trips will be scheduled for a class (especially in the grades program). Each field trip augments and enriches your child's school experience, both academically and socially. Some field trips are planned as group building experiences; some are planned to support the academic work done in the classroom. Thus none of the field trips, from the class teacher's point of view, are optional.

In addition, most of these trips have associated group fees which are the shared responsibility of all the families with children enrolled in the class. If one family unilaterally decides not to participate and not to pay their portion of the group fee, the other families in the class have an unanticipated and additional financial burden.

Based on the above two considerations, all field trip fees are mandatory, regardless of whether your child participates or not. Thank you for your mindfulness and understanding in this matter.

## Absences

The school calendar is provided as an addendum to this handbook. You may wish to plan your family vacations with the school calendar in mind. Please note that absences (e.g., illness, family vacation, doctor or dental visits – planned or emergency, etc.) are not refundable. Please notify your child's teacher about each absence. If your child is absent for three or more consecutive days (and this is not due to a family vacation), please send in a doctor's note explaining the cause of your child's absence. These notes will be kept in your child's school files, as required by law.

If your child will be absent from school for one week or more, you must continue to pay tuition for your child to be considered enrolled at the school. Alternatively, you may choose to give us a 30-day notice of withdrawal. Then when your child is ready to resume school full-time, you must reapply, paying the interview fee, administrative and supply fees, and tuition covering the remaining months of the school year.





## Second Grade

The children make a great leap from first to second grade, perhaps one of the biggest leaps in their school career. Writing, which was virtually an extension of drawing in first grade, now stands on its own; numbers, whose qualitative aspect was stressed last year, now are recognized as quantities, extending in space and time. The world of fairy tales, although not completely absent, now makes way for fables and the lives of the saints. These saint stories are inspiring biographies of men and women with an historical verity.

If the circle is a picture of first grade, all whole and unified, each part sustaining the rest, then second grade may be seen as two parallel lines. For the child is no longer carried by the dreamy sense of security in all that encircles him, but begins to experience a delicate quality of “apartness,” and “identity.” At this age, criticalness may suddenly appear. There may also be a tendency to squabble endlessly or to feel persecuted by “everybody.” Some may feel bereft of friends. The fables point out human foibles that suddenly appear so clearly to the second grader. In contrast, the saints’ legends calm, console and reassure them that we can indeed rise above our baser instincts.





## Second Grade Curriculum

Second graders continue their studies with the following core subjects: form drawing, language arts, mathematics, science, painting and art, gardening, music, handwork, games, drama, Spanish, and speech. Each subject is brought in an enlivened and developmentally appropriate way which is made relevant to the child through activities that move the physical body and artistic endeavors that move the soul.

### Form Drawing

This year we introduce more complex running forms and explore the transformation of forms. After the introduction of cursive writing, we then focus on 'mirrored' forms. These forms help children to 'see' the other side of the equation through their drawing. In mirroring a form, the child has to be able to see its sister form across the horizontal or vertical midline and be able to recreate it with accuracy. As in first grade, form drawing integrates the whole body as we walk, run, draw in the sand with chalk or our feet, sculpt with our bodies, and eventually bring the form to the page with crayon.



### Language Arts

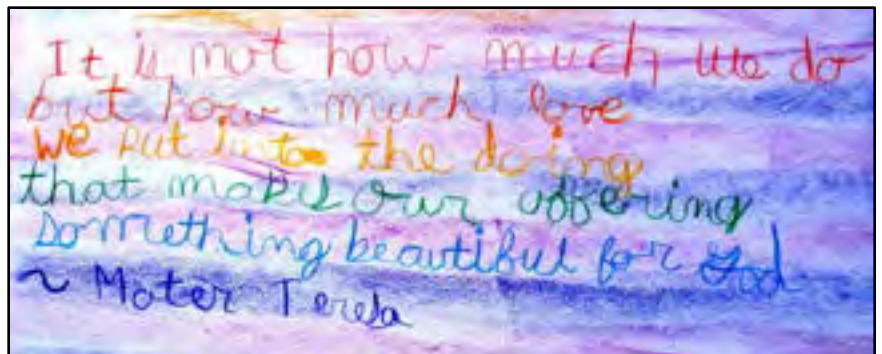
The budding ability to read in first grade is now expanded and strengthened. The children are now at a point where they can start to create their own sentences, with the aid of the teacher, as they recall yesterday's story of a great being or fable. The teacher writes this on the board as



they collaborate in capturing the essence of the story. Finally, the children write it for themselves as they author their own main lesson books and enliven them with pictures. As the year progresses, grammar is introduced with liveliness and humor by acting out stories in which the children can experience the contrast between doing words, naming words and describing words.

### Mathematics

In second grade, the children's understanding and practical knowledge of the four processes are deepened. Their mental agility and fluency with numbers are strengthened. Through stories and games, the children will expand the size of the numbers with which they can confidently work. Place value is reviewed and expanded upon to encompass numbers in the millions, and the concept of regrouping (formerly







referred to as borrowing and carrying) are introduced. The children will expand their acuity with the multiplication tables up to 12x12, which will continue to be reinforced for the next several grades. Manipulatives are still used, but more and more focus is placed on mental math as the children internalize their knowledge of numbers.



## Science / Nature Studies

Nature study continues with the monthly Friday Nature Days. In this combined class, the children will explore nature with their five senses through quiet observation, silent listening, songs, stories, and play. They will also take trips to the beach, farm and other venues that will enhance the children's exposure to nature in all

its beauty and forms.

What they discover and observe on their nature walks will then be recorded in their nature journals. Main lesson work will also be brought out of the children on the nature walks: reciting times tables as they march up the mountain, singing sea-

sonal songs, drawing forms in the dirt with a stick, creating geometric forms with branches, or simply trying to figure out how to fit 15 people in four cars. Most importantly, the children start to find themselves and their place in the world, through the challenges (rain, cold, steep climbs) and majesty of the natural world.

## Painting and Art

Our Art Program in the grades begins with watercolor painting in first grade, under the guidance of the class teacher. Starting in second grade, art classes led by a variety of local artists as well as our art teacher, Ms. Margalit, will be offered to the children. In addition to water color painting, which the class teacher will continue to lead, they will now explore other art mediums including

the fabric arts, bees wax modeling, clay sculpting and potting, painting with various kinds of paint (oils, pastels, and acrylic), paper modeling, weaving and other fine arts.

The children will also be introduced to the dramatic arts. These activities are all integrated into the curriculum to bring another side to the learning, reinforcing what they have learned and bringing it deeper into their soul life. Please refer to the section entitled "Art Programs" for more details about art classes for the grades.





## Music

Music continues to deepen as the second graders become more fluent with their recorder. Music theory and note reading are brought along further through games and fun activities. Listening, however, continues to be the most important faculty being developed. Students mimic the tones their teacher makes with their recorder and their voices. Ms. Tzonev and Ms. More move the children along in song and games and introduce various instruments to enhance their appreciation, dexterity and musical skill.



## Handwork

Handwork skills progressed rapidly in first grade, and the students are now ready to take on more complicated projects. Purling and crocheting will be introduced, and the children will create practical and fun items that they will be able to use and treasure. Their math and cognitive skills are enhanced as they plan their projects and keep constant track of where they are. Neurological development is nurtured. It is said that the hands are the window through which the brain develops. The stillness and repetition of the purling allow time for inner contemplation and reflection. The pride of accomplishment when they finish their hard labored efforts is unlike anything else.



## Spanish

Spanish is brought once a week. The class enjoys being able to learn an elementary conversation and retain expressions. Establishing a vocabulary and developing the skill for understanding the spoken language is satisfying for them.

As usual, the lesson begins with a greeting and then the recitation of a poem or riddle, followed by a tongue twister and song. The children learn these activities by imitation. New vocabulary or a review of previously introduced vocabulary follows the flow of the lesson. Active games, commands, and folk dances add physical activity to the lesson, which contributes to recall, and offers some freedom of movement. Listening to short stories, fables, and folk tales leads to a very calm ending of the class.

## Speech

Second graders continue exploring the power of speech through recitations, songs, movement, and games, while developing an intuitive understanding of how we relate to the world.

## Dramatic Arts, Gardening and Games

These classes continue to further develop the children's social and physical skills as well as their appreciation for nature, other people and cultures, their own bodies and their developing inner awareness.





## First Day of School Items for Second Grade

- A complete change of clothes suitable for the season (including underwear and socks)
- Indoor shoes (and rain boots if rainy weather)
- An apron for painting
- Knitting needles (if they have taken it home over the summer)
- Hearty snack and lunch

## Second Grade Hours

Day	School Hours
Monday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Tuesday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Wednesday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Thursday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Friday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Students should arrive about 10 minutes early so they have adequate time to greet their friends, settle in and be ready for class to start. Parents are to supervise their child(ren) until the teacher calls them to class.

## Parent Support

Your child's experience at school is enhanced by your love and support. Part of this support takes the form of the following activities that beautify your child's classroom and nourish all the children at the school.

- Each family provides the class with a bouquet of seasonal flowers and two gallons of bottled water. Depending on the number of families enrolled in second grade, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.
- Each family launders a week's worth of dish towels and paint rags. Again, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.

In addition to the above support that all parents are asked to provide, the class teacher may periodically request volunteers to assist during a specific class activity or event. The class teacher may also need field trip drivers and chaperones.

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very special occasions. In the grades, birthdays are celebrated with the class and generally without parents. The birthday celebration is thoughtfully crafted to celebrate your child's unique life and spirit. Your child's teacher will discuss with you details of the celebration before the birthday. Your help in providing the birthday treats will be greatly appreciated by the children.

## Field Trip Fees

From time to time, curriculum-related field trips will be scheduled for a class (especially in



the grades program). Each field trip augments and enriches your child's school experience, both academically and socially. Some field trips are planned as group building experiences; some are planned to support the academic work done in the classroom. Thus none of the field trips, from the class teacher's point of view, are optional.

In addition, most of these trips have associated group fees which are the shared responsibility of all the families with children enrolled in the class. If one family unilaterally decides not to participate and not to pay their portion of the group fee, the other families in the class have an unanticipated and additional financial burden.

Based on the above two considerations, all field trip fees are mandatory, regardless of whether your child participates or not. Thank you for your mindfulness and understanding in this matter.

## Absences

The school calendar is provided as an addendum to this handbook. You may wish to plan your family vacations with the school calendar in mind. Please note that absences (e.g., illness, family vacation, doctor or dental visits – planned or emergency, etc.) are not refundable. Please notify your child's teacher about each absence. If your child is absent for three or more consecutive days (and this is not due to a family vacation), please send in a doctor's note explaining the cause of your child's absence. These notes will be kept in your child's school files, as required by law.

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## Third Grade

The child's growing awareness of her separateness from the world culminates in a loss of childhood innocence – the “nine-year change.” This change marks the further incarnation of the ego—the further individualization of the being. As if what was spoken at two years of age, “I,” reverberates back as the louder, “I am alone!” For some children, this may manifest in feelings of isolation, insignificance, and fear: “I’m so small, and the world is so big.” Some may feel an intense sadness. Others may become highly critical of their peers and the world. For many it is an emotional roller coaster. For child and parent this is a taste of adolescence to come.

### Third Grade Curriculum

At this time, the child's growing awareness of his separateness from the world, his parents, and others, culminates in a loss of his childlike innocence. The child is waking up, becoming more of an individual and more earthly. This new-found individuality can bring excitement and creative freedom, as well as a highly critical attitude toward others. It is a small foreshadowing of adolescence. It is a crossing of the River Jordan, or the Rubicon, from which there is no turning back. While it is a substantial transition for the child to make, it can often be more difficult for



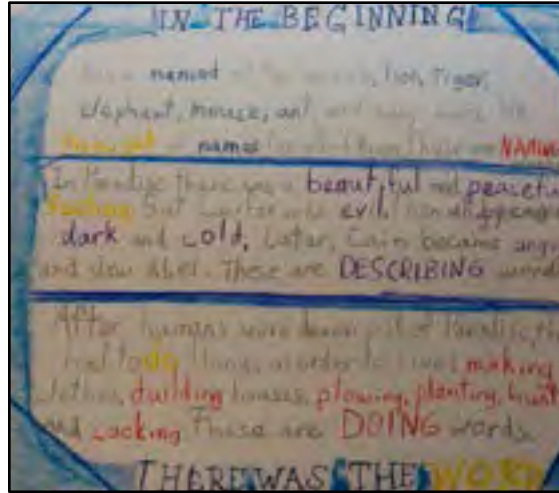




the parents than for the child.

## Form Drawing

Form drawing in the third grade continues with symmetrical forms - given one side, the child is asked to complete the other. But we move on from the simple vertical and horizontal symmetries of first and second grades, to curved and circular symmetries. Forms become more complex and cross the axis or mid-line, strengthening the child's left-right thinking connections. The child can also determine the basic pattern or archetype of a curved line form, and transform the same idea into straight lines, creating a different feeling in the process. Running forms, left to right, continue to be used as an aid to letter formation and cursive writing.



velop trust in worthy leaders and develop a sense of moral authority within him or herself. The three basic parts of speech are introduced; naming words (nouns) as Adam used to name the animals, doing words (verbs) which tell us all the activities early people had to perform to survive, and describing words (adjectives and adverbs) which show the

strong emotions one might feel along the way. Together, these words correspond to the three parts of the human being; thinking, feeling, and willing. In developing their sentences, the children follow the process from speaking, to writing, to reading. Spelling words are drawn out of the story content, and dictation exercises are used regularly. Children are encouraged to develop longer and more complex sentences. They begin to read in reading groups from chapter books such as Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Farmer Boy", exercising silent and oral reading skills, and testing their comprehension. Practical aspects of reading and writing are emphasized, such as writing letters, keeping journals, creating cookbooks, and reading fabric content labels on clothes.



## Language Arts

Hebrew legends from the Old Testament are used in third grade as a continuous story line through-

out the year. Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden of Eden mirrors the child's loss of the magic of early childhood. The ancient Hebrew people's search for a homeland parallels a nine-year old searching for his or her place on earth. Along the way, he or she needs to de-

## Mathematics

Practical aspects of mathematics such as linear, liquid, weight, time, and temperature measurement, and denominations of







money are introduced. All are explored in a hands-on fashion. Money, for example, is introduced first through ancient concepts of value and barter, and then through real-life situations such as creating a store and buying things. In addition to mental math “number journeys” and written problems, story problems are given which emphasize practical problem-solving. Two-digit multiplication is introduced, as well as long division, which incorporates several processes into one problem. Times tables begin to be memorized so they can be recalled in or out of sequence.



### Practical Activities / Science / Nature



### Studies

Just like language arts and mathematics, science in third grade focuses on its practical application. Thus the children are taught gardening, farming (the seven grains), cooking, textiles (wool, cotton, silk, linen) and shelter building. A sukkah, or a simple temporary shelter, may be built at the time of Sukkot. Sukkot is both a harvest festival and a time to remember the 40 years during which the children of Israel wandered in the desert. The children learn the ex-

perience not only of building, but of “doing without” as the ancient Hebrews did, by eating meals and living in the sukkah for a period of time. Along this vein, the children may also be taught wilderness survival skills. All these practical activities, which may include sheep-shearing and silkworm raising, provide the children with hands-on experiences. They may later also serve as a physical basis for abstract concepts introduced in chemistry, physics, biology, meteorology, and astronomy. They also strengthen the child’s confidence in their abilities to care for the physical self, while emphasizing the need to work with nature. The production and subsequent consumption of raw materials (such as in farming and cooking or shelter building) pave the way for future discussions of resource allocation, conservation, and environmental stewardship. In addition, once a month, the third graders join the first and second graders and the older kindergartners at Sanborn Park or another nature preserve for an intimate experience with nature that may include creating art and team building activities.

### Painting and Art

Weekly painting classes continue to enliven the child’s soul through the simple use of color and color blending. In the third grade, form begins to emerge more strongly out of the color. Whether in painting or drawing, scenes from the Hebrew or farming stories can become more defined through simple gestures. Thick color pencils begin to be used in addition to beeswax crayons, in order to get more fine detail when illustrating stories in main lesson books. Beeswax model-



ing continues to be used as a means for drawing the parts out of the whole, and encourages the same process to be used while drawing. Please see the section entitled “Art Programs” for more details about art classes for the grades.

## Music

The practical nature of the third grade curriculum extends to the teaching of music. Just as physical things can be measured, so can invisible things, such as the space, or intervals, between musical tones. The children learn many folk songs, dances, and clapping games. They are able to enjoy a wealth of musical material from African American, Appalachian, and Hebrew traditions describing the events of the Old Testament. The children make the transition from the ancient 5-note pentatonic to the more closely packed and earthly 7-note diatonic scale, learn musical notation, and start to name the notes on the soprano recorder. They begin to sing in rounds, in their first attempt to develop a musical ego, holding their own while their neighbor is doing something else.

## Handwork

Handwork in third grade focuses on providing the children with the experience of making cloth from which clothes can be made. Thus

taking the wool sheared from the sheep, we clean it, card it, spin it into yarn using a drop spindle we’ve made ourselves, and then dye the yarn with natural plant dyes. From here we learn to cloth ourselves by using the yarn we’ve handspun ourselves to crochet hats.

## Spanish

In third grade we work through imitation with



verses and songs about farming, cooking, and housing. Movements, gestures and dramatics are used to strengthen the emotional connection of the child with the language.

A general review of what the children learned last year initiates the year. Subsequently, we move on to conversational events using short plays about animals, vocabulary such as tools, parts of the body, clothes, the seasons, elements of nature, names of fruits and vegetables, toys used on the playground, the use of money, numbers, etc. We continue using bean bags, hiding games, jump ropes, memory games, and dances to lighten the flow of the lesson.

## Speech, Dramatic Arts, Gardening and Games

These classes continue to further develop the



children's social and physical skills as well as their appreciation for nature, other people and cultures, their own bodies and their developing inner awareness.

### Farm Life or Wilderness Experience

The third graders, now ready for more independence and responsibility, live for a short time without the comforts of home and family, by either participating on a working farm or surviving with their classmates in the wilderness. They learn how to grow, harvest, and/or gather food, how to cook their own food, and how to care for each other. They develop a greater appreciation for the amount of work necessary to bring food to their tables. Children return from this trip with increased self-confidence. They have truly arrived on the earth – strong, capable, and ready to face new challenges.

### First Day of School Items for Third Grade

- A complete change of clothes suitable for the season (including underwear and socks)
- Indoor shoes (and rain boots if rainy weather)
- An apron for painting

- Recorder and knitting needles (if they have taken it home over the summer)
- Hearty snack and lunch

### Third Grade Hours

Day	School Hours
Monday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
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- Each family provides the class with a bouquet of seasonal flowers and two gallons of bottled water. Depending on the number of families enrolled in third grade, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.
- Each family launders a week's worth of dish towels and paint rags. Again, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.





In addition to the above support that all parents are asked to provide, the class teacher may periodically request volunteers to assist during a specific class activity or event. The class teacher may also need field trip drivers and chaperones.

## **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays are very special occasions. In the grades, birthdays are celebrated with the class and generally without parents. The birthday celebration is thoughtfully crafted to celebrate your child's unique life and spirit. Your child's teacher will discuss with you details of the celebration before the birthday. Your help in providing the birthday treats will be greatly appreciated by the children.

## **Field Trip Fees**

From time to time, curriculum-related field trips will be scheduled for a class (especially in the grades program). Each field trip augments and enriches your child's school experience, both academically and socially. Some field trips are planned as group building experiences; some are planned to support the academic work done in the classroom. Thus none of the field trips, from the class teacher's point of view, are optional.

In addition, most of these trips have associated group fees which are the shared responsibility of all the families with children enrolled in the class. If one family unilaterally decides not to participate and not to pay their portion of the group fee, the other families in the class have an unanticipated and additional financial burden.

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trip fees are mandatory, regardless of whether your child participates or not. Thank you for your mindfulness and understanding in this matter.

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## Fourth Grade

By fourth grade, the child has entered well into the nine-year change and is negotiating its turbulent waters. By fifth grade, this will become the well-balanced “Golden Age”, but for now it is a stormy time. Children are literally bumping up against each other and the world, like the giants and magical beings that inhabit their stories. This is normal. Early childhood has been left behind, but the children have not yet entered puberty. The class has become a group of individuals, and now must struggle socially to find the most harmonious way to work together. In the students’ thought processes, there is a growing capacity for comprehending clear, factual concepts. Thus they have a great enthusiasm for learning about the world and a strong will to learn. The challenge is to satisfy the child’s need for these concepts while maintaining an emotional connection with the natural and spiritual worlds.

### Fourth Grade Curriculum

The fourth grade curriculum recognizes the child’s growing awareness of the wider world by adding new subjects such as local history, local geography and a comparative study of the human being and animal. At the same time, the focus of drawing, painting, and music shifts increasingly to the aesthetic. In the lower grades, the formative forces inherent in the arts were consciously used to assist in the healthy development of the whole child. While this is still true, from fourth grade on, the focus of the arts is now directed more toward drawing, painting,

or making music purely for their own sakes. The children are turned increasingly outwards toward meeting the aesthetic demands of the art form. Provided below is a general overview of the fourth grade curriculum.

#### Form Drawing

Form drawing in fourth grade focuses on knotted forms, where the child must follow a line of thought as it weaves in and out and over





and under. Working with these forms strengthens the child's newly awakened capacity for conceptual thinking.

## Language Arts

The ancient Finnish epic "The Kalevala", as well as the Norse myths, are brought to the children and form the basis of the language arts curriculum. These powerful tales are peopled with gods having diverse personalities and magical, if not quite omnipotent, powers. They struggle against evil - as represented in the Norse Myths by Loki - and do not always win. These beings are living through a time of change when the old clairvoyance and man's connection with the gods must die to make way for a new consciousness - the consciousness of self. This is the world of the fourth grader. With these tales as backdrop, the concept of verb tenses (simple past, present, and future) and the various parts of speech are introduced, while writing narrative and descriptive compositions continue to be practiced. Compositions might focus on describing one character or one scene - a part of the whole - reflecting the child's growing individuality. Letter writing and journal keeping are continued, as well as dictation and spelling.

## Mathematics

As the child now begins to take apart and examine the world, fourth grade mathematics deals primarily with the breaking down of numbers - factoring, working with prime numbers, and introducing the concept of fractions and their manipulation. Work with fractions represents

the social struggle of the class to find wholeness while respecting each person's individuality. Math puzzles and riddles, number patterns, logic problems, and math problems with special numerical answers are especially popular.

Mental arithmetic is practiced daily.

## Science / Nature Studies

The fourth grader's need for factual concepts must be balanced by a reverent connection with the natural world. Thus their first scientific study of the natural world focuses on the animal kingdom. Animals are chosen for these initial studies because of the children's natural interest in and love for animals, and because physically, socially, and emotionally, animals share qualities with human beings. In particular, the eagle, lion, and cow are introduced. These animals correspond closely to the thinking, feeling, and willing aspects of the human being. This method of observation and characterization (comparing, contrasting, and looking at something in its natural environment) will be used throughout the







next four years in all subjects, fostering the capacity to see the “big picture.”

## Painting and Art

The children gain greater mastery over their watercolor technique, working on paintings of animals and the powerful images of the Norse gods. Their art classes also reflect a growing complexity and greater focus on technique and fine detail. Please see the section entitled “Art Programs” for more details concerning art classes for the grades.

## Music

Fourth grade music continues with round singing of increasing complexity, now often in three parts. Quodlibets, or two different songs sung at the same time, are introduced as a kind of competitive fun, but also to pave the way for harmony singing in the fifth grade. The children experience the minor keys and a darker mood. Rhythm is brought more strongly into



play, and Native American songs and chants may be used. Children are encouraged to write and read their own melodies on the musical staff. Complementing the fourth grade study of fractions, time signatures are introduced, where measures and note values are divided up into their fractional components. The physical constitution of the child is stabilizing at this time. By the end of the year, most children will arrive at the grown-up 4:1 ratio of pulse: breathing. The gentle playing of flutes and recorders helps smooth this transition. Being in the heart of childhood, fourth grade is also the ideal time for the introduction of the violin. Listening attentively, we feel the intimate connection between sound and feeling through the delicate vibrations of the violin’s “heart strings”.

## Handwork

The fourth grader, with his strong will and developing ability to see others more clearly, are challenged in handwork with more detailed work. The children are taught embroidery - using a delicate needle to pierce through a plain cloth to create beauty based on discipline and form. They start the process by creating an abstract watercolor painting. They then learn how to chain stitch.

## Spanish

We enter into a new and exciting phase of the



language in fourth grade. Gradually the children begin to write down some of the poems, stories and dialogues acquired in the lessons of the first three years. It is essentially the task of this grade to learn to read the foreign language by way of writing. The element of grammar is initiated by conjugating the verbs “to be” and “to have”. Reciting poems and singing songs always is present as an opening of the lesson.

### **Speech, Dramatic Arts, Gardening and Games**

These classes continue to further develop the children's social and physical skills as well as their appreciation for nature, other people and cultures, their own bodies and their developing inner awareness.

### **First Day of School Items for Fourth Grade**

- A complete change of clothes suitable for the season (including underwear and socks)
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- An apron for painting
- Recorder (if they have taken it home over the summer)
- Hearty snack and lunch

### **Fourth Grade Hours**

Day	School Hours
Monday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Tuesday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Wednesday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
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- Each family provides the class with a bouquet of seasonal flowers and two gallons of bottled water. Depending on the number of families enrolled in fourth grade, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.
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In addition to the above support that all parents are asked to provide, the class teacher may periodically request volunteers to assist during a specific class activity or event. The class teacher may also need field trip drivers and chaperones.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays are very special occasions. In the grades, birthdays are celebrated with the class and generally without parents. The birthday celebration is thoughtfully crafted to celebrate your child's unique life and spirit. Your child's teacher will discuss with you details of the celebration before the birthday. Your help in providing the birthday treats will be greatly appreciated by the children.





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## Fifth Grade

This year is in the middle of the “heart of childhood” and for a “short moment each child is poised at the crest of the wave....” Physically, they have achieved an ease and grace of movement. Emotionally, the whole class has left the stormy seas of the nine-year-change and now rests in the eddy. Socially, the class has worked the past year on respecting individuals while acting as a unit. Intellectually, they have developed a greater capacity for conceptual thought and understanding right from wrong in a “reasoning spirit.” Altogether, they are ready for more challenges. The primary objective for this year is to develop a greater consciousness of the interrelatedness of all things.

### Fifth Grade Curriculum

The work begun in fourth grade is continued in fifth and with such detail that a new attentiveness and alertness is required. With enthusiasm, love, and deep interest, conceptual facts are continually brought before the children, fostering an enduring and loving connection with the natural world. New subjects taught include Ancient History and Botany. Geography and history is expanded to include all of North America.

Provided below is a general overview of the fifth grade curriculum. The specifics of the curriculum for this grade will be shaped by the class teacher.

### Form Drawing

Form drawing this year expands into the field of mathematics by focusing on free-hand geometric drawings. Various geometric forms are woven or intertwined about each other. In ad-





dition, the children are led through a series of geometric constructs using the ruler and compass. Beauty and form are combined with accuracy to create truly artistic and mathematically based drawings.



### Language Arts, Ancient History, and North American Geography and History

Language arts is taught as part of many different blocks, including Ancient History and North American Geography and History. Ancient History is introduced to the children in the context of the evolution of human consciousness, with a focus on the cultural life and mood of the time. As these civilizations encompass Sumeria, Babylon, Persia, Egypt, Greece, India, and China and their influences are felt to this day, the interrelatedness of life is emphasized.

In the North American Geography and History block, all of North America is studied, including geographical, economical and social ties of the various North American countries with



each other and with other continents. This block is multidisciplinary. Thus a description of each region visited also includes a discussion of geology, botany, comparative zoology, and meteorology.

Stories in both blocks focus primarily on individuals and their lives and contributions. With these individuals as backdrop, the children practice writing from different viewpoints and with different inflections, using direct vs. indirect speech and active vs. passive verbs, and varying sentence structure and punctuation. The children's compositions thus become more varied in texture and tone, reflecting their rich inner life. These different writing voices accentuate for the children when they are writing



about what they think and when they are writing about what someone else thinks. This paves the way for the children finding their own voices in life. In addition, the children are introduced to organizing and writing multiple paragraph essays. Of course, reading, spelling, dictation, letter writing, and grammar are continued.

### Mathematics

Just as Ancient History (and thus language arts) spans the entire evolution of human consciousness, fifth grade mathematics is a complete review of all math topics introduced since first grade. The children's enthusiasm for work is harnessed to ensure a strong foundation in all four processes with small and large numbers,





double digit multiplication, long division, factoring, and fractions. Geometry is introduced through geometric drawings. The children become familiar with terminology associated with and properties of circles, triangles, and quadrangles as they draw all their variations. Perimeter and area calculations are introduced as well as a new measurement system - angles. Decimals and the metric system are introduced. The Pythagorean Theorem is derived. Ancient numbering systems are introduced as part of the Ancient History block.

## Science / Nature Studies

Science in fifth grade focuses on Botany. The evolution from lower to higher plants are examined and compared to the developmental stages of the human being. The quiet, slow pace characteristic of all plant life encourages the children to deepen their observational skills with patience. In contrast, the colors and fragrance of the plants and flowers engage their interest and emotions. The earth is seen as a living entity. The children's careful observations are reproduced in drawings and paintings, reinforcing the soul connection developed during their plant studies. These studies provide a foundation for future studies of botany tied to geography.

## Painting and Art

By now, the children will have gained enough mastery over the watercolor painting techniques to create detailed portraits of humans,

dramatic scenes from stories read or told during main lesson, and the delicate beauty of the plant world. In art classes, the children will continue to deepen their artistic skills in other mediums. Please see the section entitled "Art Programs" for more details concerning art classes for the grades.

## Music

Fifth graders continue exploring harmony. They sing more complex rounds, explore quodlibets, and at last begin singing in three-part harmony. Violin and recorder lessons continue, with the children playing more complex songs. Rhythmic skills and familiarity with musical notation and ensemble playing are deepened.

## Handwork

Fifth graders are beginning to catch a glimmer of the interrelatedness of all things. More than anything, they feel balanced intellectually, emotionally, and physically. With this balance comes the intuitive understanding of how the intellect, emotions, and body come together to create a harmonious whole. We underscore this feeling of balance and harmony by teaching the children how to make a pair of socks by knitting in the round. In this knitting technique, each row is connected to the one before and what was done once must be repeated exactly again to create a matching pair of socks. The fifth grader is also asked to write down what he/she did, thereby creating a knitting pattern as well as learn-





ing how to follow knitting patterns provided in books and magazines.

## Spanish

The fifth grade Spanish lesson begins with a recitation of a poem and the singing of a song. Later, oral exercises are recited followed by learning vocabulary with the use of physical response. In this grade, the children reach a certain high point in the topography of language education. They can read with proficiency and understand the spoken word with ease in the classroom environment. Writing exercises continue as well as the study of grammar. Testing, quizzes, dictations, and homework are given as an integral part of the language lesson. Reminiscent of previous years' lessons, games are also developed in this grade.

## Speech, Dramatic Arts, Gardening and Games

These classes continue to further develop the children's social and physical skills as well as their appreciation for nature, other people and cultures, their own bodies and their developing inner awareness.

## First Day of School Items for Fifth Grade

- A complete change of clothes suitable for the season (including underwear and socks)
- Indoor shoes (and rain boots if rainy weather)
- An apron for painting
- Recorder (if they have taken it home over the summer)
- Hearty snack and lunch

## Fifth Grade Hours

Day	School Hours
Monday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Tuesday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Wednesday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Thursday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Friday	9:00 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

Students should arrive about 10 minutes early so they have adequate time to greet their friends, settle in and be ready for class to start. Parents are to supervise their child(ren) until the teacher calls them to class.

## Parent Support

Your child's experience at school is enhanced by your love and support. Part of this support takes the form of the following activities that beautify your child's classroom and nourish all the children at the school.

- Each family provides the class with a bouquet of seasonal flowers and two gallons of bottled water. Depending on the number of families enrolled in fourth grade, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.
- Each family launders a week's worth of dish towels and paint rags. Again, each family may be responsible for several weeks spread throughout the school year.

In addition to the above support that all parents are asked to provide, the class teacher may periodically request volunteers to assist during a specific class activity or event. The class teacher may also need field trip drivers and





chaperones.

## Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very special occasions. In the grades, birthdays are celebrated with the class and generally without parents. The birthday celebration is thoughtfully crafted to celebrate your child's unique life and spirit. Your child's teacher will discuss with you details of the celebration before the birthday. Your help in providing the birthday treats will be greatly appreciated by the children.

## Field Trip Fees

From time to time, curriculum-related field trips will be scheduled for a class (especially in the grades program). Each field trip augments and enriches your child's school experience, both academically and socially. Some field trips are planned as group building experiences; some are planned to support the academic work done in the classroom. Thus none of the field trips, from the class teacher's point of view, are optional.

In addition, most of these trips have associated group fees which are the shared responsibility of all the families with children enrolled in the class. If one family unilaterally decides not to participate and not to pay their portion of the group fee, the other families in the class have an unanticipated and additional financial burden.

Based on the above two considerations, all field trip fees are mandatory, regardless of whether your child participates or not. Thank you for your mindfulness and understanding in this matter.

## Absences

The school calendar is provided as an adden-

dum to this handbook. You may wish to plan your family vacations with the school calendar in mind. Please note that absences (e.g., illness, family vacation, doctor or dental visits – planned or emergency, etc.) are not refundable. Please notify your child's teacher about each absence. If your child is absent for three or more consecutive days (and this is not due to a family vacation), please send in a doctor's note explaining the cause of your child's absence. These notes will be kept in your child's school files, as required by law.

If your child will be absent from school for one week or more, you must continue to pay tuition for your child to be considered enrolled at the school. Alternatively, you may choose to give us a 30-day notice of withdrawal. Then when your child is ready to resume school full-time, you must reapply, paying the interview fee, administrative and supply fees, and tuition covering the remaining months of the school year.







## Nature Day Program

### *One Friday Each Month*

*“Teaching children about the natural world should be treated as one of the most important events in their lives.” - Thomas Berry*

We are very excited about the opportunity to extend our teaching beyond the classroom and into the woods. A prime tenant of Waldorf education is a reverence and appreciation for the world around us. What better way to learn and feel this reverence than to be directly in its midst.

We take great efforts to bring the rhythms of nature into our classrooms: the rising and setting sun and moon, the ebb and flow of the tides, the changing seasons, weather and cycles of life. Yet there is nothing more profound and meaningful than experiencing them first hand to have their hands, hearts and heads engaged in discovering the wonders of nature. This engagement helps build a life-long bond between the children and the world around them. It is these experiences that serve as the foundation for unlocking the secrets of physics, chemistry, mathematics, poetry and language in the future. And equally, if not more important, they help the children to know themselves.





We will be taking the older kindergartners and the grades children to Sanborn Park in Saratoga, Ranch San Antonio Nature Preserve in Mountain View, or other local nature preserves one Friday each month from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Rain or shine, over the course of the school year, we will take the children to see the ever changing forest and it's creatures.

We will develop our program in the park based on the growing needs of the children. This may include nature-specific circles, walks, exploration games and activities, ranger talks, art collaborations, and stories. The grades children may also weave their main lesson work into the day, such as animal observation, plant studies, working on multiplication tables, nature journaling, or finding objects that start with specific phonetic sounds.

## Drop-Off and Pick-Up Times and Locations

If we are meeting at Sanborn Park, each family should drop off their child at Sanborn Park, in the Upper Main Parking lot to the immediate right of the entrance gate. If we are meeting at Rancho San Antonio Nature Preserve, each family should drop off their child in the lower parking lot by the restrooms. We will leave promptly on our hike at 9 a.m. Please plan accordingly. If your child cannot make it, please contact your child's teacher as soon as possible – preferably before Friday.

If you find it difficult making this morning drop off, please consult the school directory for possible families who may wish to participate in a carpool with you.

For the afternoon, however, we would like to arrange an official carpool to drive all the children back to school by 1 p.m. We may have up to 20 children participating in the Friday Nature Day program. We will thus need 5 or 6 drivers, depending on the size of their cars.

## What Your Child Should Wear

Please dress your child in comfortable clothes appropriate for a joyful (and perhaps dirt-full) outdoor experience. It is best to dress in layers. We have found from previous years that it is always a little chilly in the morning and then either warms up or stays cold, depending on the season.

During the winter, we recommend each child wear thermals or woolies underneath their hiking clothes, a warm jacket, wool socks, and wool hat and gloves.



On days when a light rain is forecasted, please have your child arrive dressed in rain boots, rain pants, and rain coat with hood in addition to their cold weather clothes. If the weather worsens or if heavy rain and/or high winds are forecasted, then Friday Nature Day will be canceled.

Lastly, we recommend your child wear sturdy shoes that provide good traction and that you will not mind getting wet and dirty. It may also be prudent to leave an extra dry pair of shoes at



school for them to change in to if needed.

## What your Child Should Bring

Please ensure that your child is wearing the following or has the following packed in a backpack each Friday:

- Sun hat (for hot, sunny days) or wool hat and gloves (for cold days)
- Light jacket or parka (depending on the weather)
- Change of clothes in a Ziploc bag (enough for a complete change, including underwear and socks)
- Plastic bag (for wet clothes)
- Small towel (to dry feet)
- Water bottle (with enough water for the day)
- Substantial lunch/snack (we will carry our trash out, so plan accordingly)

Your child will be expected to carry all of his or her gear during the hike. We will start slowly and eventually build up to hiking about 1 to 3 miles over a 4 hour period (depending on the children's stamina and things of interest that we may find along the way), so pack with this in mind. We will also be carrying out all our trash.

## Safety

In the midst of our enjoyment of nature, your child's safety is always uppermost in our consciousness. Living alongside this is our inten-



tion of creating an experience for the children that encourages and deepens their love, reverence, and respect for nature. Love and respect include acknowledging the dangers to be found in nature and responding appropriately, without fear. Our response, as adults, to any hazard encountered will affect how the children react at that time and in the future. It is always a delicate balance between keeping our children safe and letting them explore and interact with nature without fear.

Please see the summary of Safety Precautions (included in the Addendum) that we will be practicing in the field and that we recommend you practice at home. The safety precautions focus on exposure to poison oak and bites from ticks as these are the hazards most likely to be encountered by our group. Also, included is information on bees, rattlesnakes and mountain lions - although these encounters are much less likely to occur.



We will notify you if your child has been exposed to poison oak or if we see a tick on him/her. Of course, sightings of animals will also be reported. The adults will be carrying a first aid kit and treatment for bee stings, just in case.





Lastly, we would like to assure you that the children are never left unattended at any time. Limits as to how far they may venture during their free play are very clearly defined and reviewed with the children - just as we always review safety rules for our hike at the beginning of the day.



## Field Trips Beyond the Local Preserves

A few field trips are planned as part of the Friday Nature Day Program. We will have a family camping trip in September. We may also go tide pooling at Natural Bridges State Park. Costs associated with each trip will be shared by all families participating in the Friday Nature Day Program. More details about each trip will be sent later via e-mail.

## Parking Fees

Last year, families participating in the Friday Nature Day Program paid for the teachers' parking fees. We will continue this practice this year. We are asking each family participating in the Friday Nature Day Program to contribute \$10/child to the school. The funds collected will be used throughout the year to reimburse the teachers for their parking expenses.

## Forms To Be Filled Out

The following forms must be filled out and filed with the school before the first Friday Nature Day.

- Nature Day/Field Trip Authorization Form
- Emergency Information Index Card
- Medical Authorization and Release Form for Treatment of Bee Stings
- Safety Procedures Form

## Changes / Cancellations

Friday Nature Day will be cancelled if heavy rain and/or medium to high winds are forecasted. We may also return to school early if the weather worsens. We will be collecting a list of volunteers who can come early to help us drive the children back.

All changes, cancellations, and the latest news concerning the Friday Nature Days will be sent via e-mail.

We look forward to another year of hiking, laughter, and discovery in the woods!



*“We can now assume that just as children need good nutrition and adequate sleep, they may very well need contact with nature” Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods*





## Art Programs for Children and Adults

In art classes children create with all kinds of natural and synthetic materials such as woods, papers, fabrics, paints, clay, plants, and various drawing tools in all the world of color. Young hands connect to their minds through direct contact with textures and techniques. Art opens up children's imaginations to see and share their transformations. When the imagination finds expression in the real world, children experience peace during powerful learning experiences. Young minds live in mysteries which become gradually meaningful as art gives children new ways to express themselves. The excitement of creating something new and the inner peace which comes from artistic expression builds confidence.

Our school is not only a preschool and elementary school, it is also an art center. Art is a healing force that is too often overlooked and undervalued. An affirmation on the need for art in children's lives, entitled "Twenty Reasons Why Art is Good for Kids," is provided as an addendum to this handbook. We encourage all parents to read this affirmation. It was developed by the Museum of Children's Art in Oakland, California and gives pointers on how to discuss your child's art work with him/her once it is brought home.

Through our Art Center we offer art classes to our school community and the greater community of children and adults.





## Art Curriculum for the Grades

Our curriculum is steeped in the arts and addresses each growing child through movement, speech, form drawing, handwork, dramatic arts, music, gardening, and finally in separate art classes as well. These separate art classes begin in second grade and continue through fifth. They are taught by various local artists as well as our own resident artists: Njeri McGillicuddy and Joanne Margalit.



Many basic skills are acquired during the art classes offered to the grades. In the second through fifth grade classrooms, art classes are integrated with the progress of the main lessons as much as possible, but are always meticulously age appropriate. Art lessons are enriched through a connection to the specific seasons, tasks and stories of the curriculum at hand. Each art class also offers the children creative activities that move forward their mastery over their own bodies in specific ways. Gross and fine motor skills are enhanced, observation skills are introduced, hand eye coordination is developed and many other skills are acquired while the children enjoy creating their unique masterpieces in the brilliant light of great artist's works.

For instance, the mobiles of Calder or the mosaics of Bufano are first carefully studied and observed and then later used to provide the children with artistic guidance from which they

first imitate, then create freely within each great artist's medium. The children are thus slowly led from observation to imitation to free artistic expression.

At the same time, while enjoying and trusting their own creative impulses within each experience, the children learn basic skills such as:

- Drawing – with a variety of tools including colored pencil, charcoal, and pastels
- Painting – with a variety of mediums including watercolor using the wet-on-wet or more traditional techniques, acrylics, and oils
- Clay working – by hand and/or using pottery wheels
- Woodworking
- Sewing and dressmaking (by hand and with machine)

Over the span of five years, the grades curriculum combined with the separate art classes are designed to nurture and further develop each child's unique artistic sense and style. They will be familiar with the great works of art from diverse cultures and times and have a work-





ing knowledge of the technical language of art. They will also be comfortable and competent working with a wide range of artistic mediums. And lastly, they will gain a basic understanding of design and function and how the two can be merged to create beauty.



## After School Art Classes for Children and Adults

The school's Art Center also offers after school art classes for both children and adults.

### Adult Art Classes

Adult art classes are available upon request and can be tailored to your specific interests. Each session consists of six classes, one class a week. Class times are flexible and can be tailored to your work and family schedule. Adult art classes offered in the past include pottery, painting, knitting, and glass blowing, but we are capable of providing guidance in many more art medi-

ums. You are only limited by your imagination! Please inquire with Njeri McGillicuddy, our own resident artist.

### Hands On Art Program for Children

Our art classes for children are called the Hands On Arts Program. This is an exciting, one-of-a-kind art program offered after school and during school breaks. In these Hands On Art classes, students delve into a direct experience using many different artistic mediums and techniques. Freedom of expression is encouraged within each new experience. The Hands On Arts Program is ideal for children ages 3 to 15 years of age.

Activities offered in each session (typically once per week for six weeks after school or daily during school holidays) vary from week to week and may include:

- Painting – creative painting, acrylics, watercolor, and sandpaper
- Fabric Art – painting, felting, tie-dying, yarn work, and weaving
- Cooking – basic skills, making snacks, meals, desserts, and creating a cookbook
- Clay – hand sculpture, masks, various slab, coil, and molding techniques, mixing different mediums (i.e. clay and paper), and proper finishing techniques



Hands On Art class hours are as follows:

Time	Days
1:30 – 2:30 p.m. 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. 4:30 – 5:30 p.m.	One-hour class after school - Once a week for six weeks on Wednesdays, Thursdays, or Fridays Two-hour classes are also available by combining 2 one-hour classes
9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Holidays and school breaks - Daily Monday through Friday

We also offer private group art classes. Please inquire with Njeri.

To register for either an adult or child art class, fill out our enrollment form and mail it in with your deposit. The form is provided as an addendum to this handbook and can also be downloaded from our website: [www.njerismorningglory.com](http://www.njerismorningglory.com).

Please call (408) 255-5520 if you have any questions.







## After School Care

After school care (or Aftercare) for your child is offered from dismissal until 5:30 p.m., every day school is in session. Additional arrangements may be made for special needs by speaking to the school administrator. **Please sign out your child from Aftercare by printing your name and the time you picked up your child.**

Supplies needed for Aftercare are the same as for attending school: apron, snack, wholesome boxed meal, change of clothes, and indoor shoes and rain boots (if weather is rainy). If your child naps in the afternoon, a small washable blanket will also make your child more comfortable during rest time.

Sign-up, billing and messages for the Aftercare program are handled at the school's front desk. We ask that you be sure to tell your child's teacher your intentions to keep your child in Aftercare every day that he/she is delivered to school. We would like as much as possible to maintain an accurate schedule of your Aftercare needs so your child will have a smooth transition from class to Aftercare.

### Programs in Aftercare

As part of Aftercare, we now offer Friday Arts from 3 to 5 pm. This program is free for all children participating in the Aftercare Program. Details and sign-up sheets are available at the front desk.

### Billing

Aftercare billing will be calculated as follows – no exceptions.

- \$8/hour until 5:30 p.m.
- From 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., hours billed will be rounded up to the nearest half hour
- \$2/minute for every minute after 5:30 p.m.



### Example #1

Your child is dismissed from kindergarten at 1:00 p.m. You have arranged with the teacher ahead of time for him to go directly into Aftercare. You pick him up at 2:15 p.m. Your child spent 1.5 hours in Aftercare (after rounding up to the nearest half hour). Your aftercare bill for that day would be:

$$1.5 \text{ hours} \times \$8/\text{hour} = \$12$$

### Example #2

Your child is dismissed from second grade at 3:15 p.m. You have arranged with the class teacher ahead of time for her to go directly into Aftercare. You pick her up at 5:40 p.m. From 3:15 p.m. until 5:30 p.m., she spent 2.5 hours in Aftercare (after rounding up to the nearest half hour). She then spent an additional 10 minutes in Aftercare after 5:30 p.m. Your Aftercare bill for that day would be:

$$2.5 \text{ hours} \times \$8/\text{hour} + 10 \text{ minutes} \times \$2/\text{minute} = \$40$$

## Late Pick-Up Policy

Dismissal times for the various school programs are listed below.

Program	Dismissal Time
Kindergarten	1:00 p.m.
First Grade	2:00 p.m. every day except Tuesdays / 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays
Second through Fifth Grades	3:15 p.m.

The teacher's day, however, does not end with dismissal. Often we have meetings and other school responsibilities scheduled after school. Thus for the safety and well-being of the children, the school has the following late pick-up policy.

*After dismissal, any child not signed out by a parent or parent-appointed guardian will be automatically signed into Aftercare. **Please note, you will be billed a minimum of 0.5 hour using the standard rates listed above – even if your child spent less than half an hour in Aftercare.***

### Example #1

Johnny is enrolled in first grade. On Monday, he was dismissed at 2 p.m. Johnny's mom, however, was late and did not pick him up until 2:20 p.m. At 2 p.m., Johnny's teacher enrolled him in Aftercare. He spent a total of 30 minutes in Aftercare (after rounding up to the nearest half hour) before his mom picked him up. The late pick-up Aftercare bill will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Late Pick-Up Aftercare Bill} = 0.5 \text{ hour} \times \$8/\text{hour} = \$4.$$

### Example #2

Paul is enrolled in first grade. On Monday, he was dismissed at 2 p.m. Paul's mom, however, was late and did not pick him up until 3:05 p.m. At 2 p.m., Paul's teacher enrolled him in Aftercare. He spent a total of 1.5 hours in Aftercare (after rounding up to the nearest half hour) before his mom picked him up. The late pick-up Aftercare bill will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Late Pick-Up Aftercare Bill} = 1.5 \text{ hours} \times \$8/\text{hour} = \$12.$$



## Council

Growing a healthy school requires a community of parents and teachers working together, contributing their wealth of talent. This is true especially for a young developing Waldorf school. Njeri, as sole proprietor and Director, carefully guides our school, creating an environment where families from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to come together, forming a rich community. She attracts skilled Waldorf-trained teachers, both full-time and specialty teachers, who instruct our children in small intimate classes, where children can be met at their own developmental and educational stage. It is Njeri's vision and intense dedication that has helped to foster the qualities so important to our school.

Growing a school, however, is a monumental task that requires the cooperation and input of many. As the school expands by a grade each year, increasingly complex decisions arise. Decisions such as the best way to house each new grade each year, and how to ensure healthy enrollment for all classes, must be made with care. In recognition of this, Njeri has decided to form an advisory council. The advisory council provides a forum where topics concerning day-to-day operations and long-view decisions can be discussed. It also facilitates collaboration

between parents and teachers who have been working closely with Njeri. The council itself is not a decision-making group. Njeri as Director makes all final decisions.

Members of the council are selected by Njeri, the School Board, the Administrator, and the College of Teachers. Current council members also make recommendations. Care is taken to include a parent from each program (grades and early childhood) in the hopes of allowing the council to reflect the school as a whole.

Putting together a group such as this council is challenging, considering there are many dedicated parents and teachers whose contributions are highly treasured. Including all those deserving or interested, however, is impossible, and would not allow for an effectively run council. In response to this dilemma, many ways in which every parent and teacher can provide direct input to the council have been put in place:

- **Fill out "Council Items" Form**

A form will be available at the front desk where questions, concerns, or opinions can be written down and placed in a box near the front desk. The council will re-





view the forms before the next meeting and address the issues either in a public meeting, or council meeting, depending on the nature of the topic.

- **Speak with a Council Member**

We have Council members from each of the school programs. You may choose to speak with the Council Member from your program, or you may choose to speak with someone outside your program.

- **Attend the All-School Meetings**

Twice a year, the school has an All-School Meeting. All are encouraged to attend and participate in discussions.

- Are all classes and the general make-up of the school represented by the council?

The many available methods of addressing the council should not replace direct communication with Njeri or your child's teacher. They are simply additional tools for communication. Personal or private matters should, as always, be directed to Njeri or your child's teacher as necessary.

The hope for the council is to continue drawing our school community together by increasing the means and quality of communication, and to move our school forward with care and deliberation.

Anyone interested in joining the council in the future (parents and teachers alike) should express their interest to Njeri, who will put together a list from which to reference when a member must be replaced. Njeri will attempt to answer the following questions when replacing a member:

- Who can bring rich, balanced viewpoints to the council?



## Festivals and Volunteerism

*“Festivals move our awareness into the realm of hope, the realm of the sacred. They give human beings the opportunity to assume roles that represent their true and essential cosmic nature. Celebrating festivals throughout the rhythm of the four seasons can help raise life up beyond the day-to-day, cultivating wonder, joy, and gratitude. Creating festivals anew each year helps us all to take part in the rhythm of time, and enables us to reunite in community with family and friends.”*



At the heart of our school are the festivals we celebrate together in acknowledgement of the seasons and cycles of the year. Children prepare, celebrate and bid farewell to each festival as they are observed. Because young children live so fully into the world that surrounds them, our festivals focus primarily on nature's changing processes.

By observing the children and addressing their needs both as a class and individually, the teacher is responsible for establishing the appropriate form and rhythm needed. Festivals are a crucial part of the rhythm being created. Since this is the child's first experience of school, the children are gradually and carefully introduced to the greater community. There will be opportunities to celebrate festivals within the familiarity of the class community and at other times with the greater community in which we live.





## School Sponsored Festivals

With your help and input, we have created three major and unique festivals that we feel reflect the nature of our school and our community. These festivals serve not only our community of children but also the greater community. They are our main source of community outreach, marketing, and fundraising for the school. Each also is an opportunity for the families associated with our school to transform themselves into a strong, vibrant community.

These major festivals are parent-led events requiring many willing hands to make it a reality. **We will be asking you to get involved and appreciate any time and energy that you can give to the school in support of these events.**

The major festivals we've hosted include (not necessarily all in the same school year):

- **Magic Forest Journey** – in the Fall, as darkness gathers strength, the children go on a magical journey in the dusk, through woods or meadow. They encounter people, animals, fairies, gnomes, and other magical beings who, for one night, come alive straight out of our favorite fairy tales.
- **All-School Winter Celebration** – a Winter festival, involving the parents and children of our school community.
- **Spring Multicultural Faire** – a spring faire highlighting the coming of Spring as celebrated in various cultures. The faire also includes games and crafts.

The school has also sponsored more intimate



festivals, open only to the school community. These festivals are traditionally planned, coordinated, and run by our faculty and staff and are a gift from the school to our parents and children. These smaller festivals include: Michaelmas, Martinmas (Lantern Festival), Thanksgiving, and Advent.

## Parent Sponsored Festivals

Our school has always been a community of diverse cultures. In the past, our cultural/festival life has been greatly enriched by celebrations brought by parents wishing to share their family culture with the school. These festivals bring an awareness of different cultures and religions to the children.

Festivals celebrated in the past include: Hanukkah, Diwali, Persian New Year, Lunar New Year, Japanese Girls Day, Japanese Children's Day and





others that hold particular meaning to our parents and children. Each were planned, staffed, and financially sponsored by the parents and were enormously popular with the children. We assume parents will continue to sponsor these events in the upcoming school year.

Please let your child's teacher know if there is something close to your heart that you would like to bring to the community. Simple celebrations are sometimes the best. When planning a celebration, we ask parents to keep in mind that expenses incurred are generally the responsibility of the parents sponsoring the event.



## Other Volunteer Opportunities

We are very grateful to our parent volunteers for their willing hands and open hearts.

Much of what makes the school year so memorable for both our children and our parents are the festivals – especially the school-sponsored festivals during which all our parents volunteer time and effort to bring a magical experience to life. (Please see our “Festivals and Volunteerism” section.)

Perhaps not as visible, but just as vital to your child's school experience, are those who volunteer periodically throughout the whole year to do the “little (or not-so-little) things.” These volunteers spend untold hours behind the scenes helping the school create a meaningful experience day to day for you and your child beyond the classroom.

If you have extra time and the desire, there are many opportunities for you to support the school beyond the school-sponsored festivals. The following programs are staffed by our parent volunteers.



- School Library – see section entitled “Library” for more details.
- School Newsletter – the school issues a newsletter at least once during the school year. While teachers may contribute some articles specific to their class, the rest of the newsletter is written and designed by parent volunteers.
- Council – an advisory council staffed by parents and teachers selected by Njeri and representing the various programs offered by the school. Please see section entitled “Council” for more details. The council meets the second Friday of every month. The meetings are designed to be a forum for parents to bring questions and comments to the school community.
- Parent-sponsored Festivals – these are simple ethnic celebrations drawn from a parent’s cultural heritage. They are planned, staffed and financially sponsored by the parents.
- Classroom Support – from time to time, class teachers may ask for volunteers to assist a particular class event or activity.

There are also many other things around the school that we could use your help with on a one-time basis. If you have extra time please let one of the teachers know, and we will find a welcome use for your talents.





## Visiting the Classroom

We welcome parents to our school at all times. We like to know when parents are coming for special visits. Please call the school desk and speak to the administrator. Visitors are given a task while quietly joining the classroom experience. Other than parents, student teachers or guests may stop by for a short time as well once proper notice is given.

## Attendance

Please strive to arrive on time so that all the children may go about beginning the rhythm of their day together peacefully. **When dropping your child off in the mornings, please be sure to sign in by printing your full name and the arrival time at your child's classroom.**

Parents are to supervise their child(ren) until the teacher calls them to class.

## Tardy Policy

We believe that being prompt is a sign of respect for others. In the school setting, promptness is a sign of respect and caring for school rules, for the teacher, and for classmates – who are always very concerned about the absent or late child. By letting your child see how important it is to you that he/she arrives on time at school, you are telling him/her that school is important, that being dependable is important, and that keeping your word (“I will be here at this time to meet with you”) is important. It also firmly establishes the foundation for the social skills and study/work habits needed in higher academics and in the workplace.

Given the above considerations, the school has the following Tardy Policy:

- **If a child is tardy to class more than three times**, the child's parents will meet with the child's teacher to discuss why the child is coming to school late and what we (the school and the parents working together) can do to promote punctuality.
- **If the child continues being tardy**, we will consider a one-day suspension – during which the parents can meditate on the importance and merits of punctuality and our school. School policy requires that any suspension be documented in an incident report and kept in the child's academic records.





## Absence Policy

You may leave a message on the school phone, (408) 255-5520, as soon as you know that your child will be absent. Your child's teacher always wants to know about your child's health condition, so please report the reason and probable length of the absence. If your child is sick, has a fever, is vomiting or has diarrhea please do not take her/him to school. This consideration is good for our whole community.

The school calendar is provided as an addendum to this handbook. You may wish to plan your family vacations with the school calendar in mind. Please note that absences due to illness, doctor appointments, family vacations, or other family plans are not refundable. Nor are make-ups allowed. In addition, the kindergar-

ten days specified in your enrollment contract are not interchangeable with other days of the week.

**If your child is absent for three or more consecutive days** (and the absence is not due to a family vacation), please send in a doctor's note explaining the cause of your child's absence. These notes will be kept in your child's academic files, as required by law.

For absences of one week or more, you must continue to pay tuition for your child to be considered enrolled at the school. Alternatively, you may choose to give us a 30-day notice of withdrawal. In this case, when your child is ready to resume school full-time, you must reapply, paying the interview fee, administrative and supply fee, and tuition covering the remaining months of the school year.



## After School Pick-Up

Please pick up your child promptly at the end of their school day (dismissal times are noted below). **When picking up your child, please be sure to print your full name and the pick-up time on the sign-out sheet posted at your child's classroom.**



## Aftercare Use

We ask that you be sure to communicate to your child's teacher your intentions to keep your child in Aftercare every day that he/she is delivered to school. We would like as much as possible to maintain an accurate schedule of your Aftercare needs so your child will have a smooth transition from class to Aftercare. Please see our "Aftercare" section for more details concerning billing.

## Pick-up By Someone Other Than Parent

If someone other than yourself is picking up your child, please notify the school office prior to the pick-up time. Also, please be sure the person picking up your child knows the Release Authorization password you have given us. For safety reasons, we will not release a child to someone we do not know without this password.

## Late Pick-Up Policy

Dismissal times for the various school programs are listed below.

Program	Dismissal Time
Kindergarten	1:00 p.m.
First Grade	2:00 p.m. every day except Tuesday / 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays
Second through Fifth Grades	3:15 p.m.

Any child not picked up promptly at the dismissal times noted above will be automatically enrolled in Aftercare. You will be billed for a minimum of 0.5 hour at the standard After-

care rates. Please see our "Aftercare" section for more details concerning billing.

## Social Time After School

After signing out, if you and your child would like to stay and have a meal with the other children after school, you are welcome to do so. At 1:30 PM our after school Hands On Art Program begins, so we ask that you finish your lunch or conversations outside. However, before moving outside, please pick up after your child. This includes putting away all toys, tools, books, furniture, and kitchen supplies you or your child may have played with or used.

## After School Clean-Up Policy

Before dismissal we make sure the children learn to put away all the toys they were playing with during the day. Before leaving the school, we kindly ask that you continue this example and ensure that your children – including those you are temporarily responsible for - put away everything (both inside and out) that they may have played with after school ended.



by Njeri



# Financial Policies

The financial policies detailed in the Enrollment Contract and Tuition Agreement and After School Care Contract are summarized below.

## Field Trip Fees

From time to time, curriculum-related field trips will be scheduled for a class (especially in the grades program). Each field trip augments and enriches your child's school experience, both academically and socially. Some field trips are planned as group building experiences; some are planned to support the academic work done in the classroom. Thus none of the field trips, from the class teacher's point of view, are optional.

In addition, most of these trips have associated group fees which are the shared responsibility of all the families with children enrolled in the class. If one family unilaterally decides not to participate and not to pay their portion of the group fee, the other families in the class have an unanticipated and additional financial burden.

Based on the above two considerations, all field trip fees are mandatory, regardless of whether your child participates or not. Thank you for your mindfulness and understanding in this matter.

## Annual Fund

In addition to paying all tuition and fees associated with your child's school program, each family is required to pay \$500 toward the school's Annual Fund. This fund will be kept in a separate bank account to be used towards

the acquisition, construction, or renovation of a permanent facility and/or to offset any operational shortfalls. Payments to the Annual Fund are due in full by October 1, 2013.

## Absences and Discounts

As per the Enrollment Contract, which you have already signed, there are no discounts or refunds for absences during school. There is also no sibling discount.

The school calendar is provided as an addendum to this handbook. You may wish to plan your family vacations with the school calendar in mind. Absences due to illness, doctor appointments, family vacations, or other family plans are not refundable.

Children enrolled in our Two, Three or Four-Day Pre-School and Kindergarten Programs have days they will be attending school specified in their individual Enrollment Contracts. These days are not interchangeable with other days of the week.

For absences in the grades programs, please speak with your child's teacher about his/her policy regarding make-up of grades-level work at home. If the absence is for an extended period, the teacher may choose to assign homework to be completed with parent supervision during the absence. There is no make-up work for absences in the preschool and kindergarten





programs.

For absences of one week or more, you must continue to pay tuition, for your child to be considered enrolled at the school. Alternatively, you may choose to give us a 30-day notice of withdrawal. In this case, when your child is ready to resume school full-time, you must re-apply for enrollment, paying the interview fee, administrative and supply fee, and tuition covering the remaining months of the school year.

## Examples

Susie attends preschool every Monday and Wednesday. Her brother, John, attends first grade. One week Susie and John are both absent Monday (it does not matter why). Susie cannot “make up” this absence by attending preschool on Tuesday, Thursday or Friday of that week (or any week thereafter). John also cannot “make up” his absence. His mother, however, has spoken with his teacher, who has agreed to let him take his main lesson book home to catch up on his grades-level work.

## Tuition Payment Plans

We offer three payment plans for Tuition.

- Annual Payment Plan: Full tuition due by August 1
- Bi-annual Payment Plan:
  - First half of tuition due by August 1
  - Second half of tuition due by January 1
- Monthly Payment Plan: Your tuition is based on a 9-month school year. For your financial convenience, this payment plan will divide the tuition into 10 equal monthly payments starting August 1. By May 1, your 9-month tuition will

be completely paid. Payment of the first installment is due August 1. Each installment thereafter is due on the 1st of each successive month, with the last payment due on May 1. **This payment plan does not mean you are paying by the month – only that the tuition has been divided into 10 installments for your financial convenience.**

## Aftercare Contract

Life is unpredictable and sometimes a parent is not able to pick up his or her child from school when class is finished. To cover these unexpected times we have all the parents sign the After School Day Care contract. By doing so, the teacher can check the child into the Aftercare program, knowing they will be cared for safely until your arrival.

If your child is not picked up by the times indicated below, he or she will be automatically transferred to our Aftercare Program. Aftercare hours are from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

- Pre-School and Kindergarten – Children must be picked up by 1:00 p.m.
- First Grade – Children must be picked up by 2:00 p.m. (1:00 p.m. on Tuesday only)
- Second through Fifth Grades – Children must be picked up by 3:15 p.m.

## Due Dates and Late Payments

Under the Monthly Payment Plan, the first tuition payment is due on August 1st. The remaining nine tuition payments are due on the



1st of each successive month. If payment is not received by the 3rd, a late charge of \$50 will be automatically added to the amount due.

An Aftercare bill will be prepared for you every three weeks, and payment will be due 5 days after receipt of the bill. If payment is not received within 5 days of the date on the Aftercare invoice, a late charge of \$25 will be automatically added to the amount due.

Your tuition and aftercare payments go towards the rent for your child's classroom, wages for the faculty and staff, and utility and phone bills. The payments collected each month are vital to the day-to-day operation of the school. We offer the Monthly Payment Plan for your financial convenience. Late payments not only mean we will be short in terms of operating expenses that month, but it also means we will incur additional costs associated with notification, modification of billing, and follow-up. These costs are not included in our budget for the school year. This shortfall and the associated additional costs (beyond what is budgeted) directly affect what we can offer to your child in school and indirectly affect the financial health of our faculty and staff. We thank you for your mindfulness and consideration in this matter.

## Delinquent Payments

Collecting tuition from some of the families have been very challenging the past school year. Some families have not honored their financial obligation to the school for over a year now, despite the school and the teachers acting on faith and providing the services specified in the enrollment contracts. The time expended to collect these excessively delinquent payments

decreases the time we have available to work with your children. Also, the shortfall in our anticipated budget due to these delinquent accounts also makes it very difficult for the school to pay the teachers in a timely fashion and to pay the rent for the classrooms we are leasing. Therefore, starting this school year, payments that are 30 or more days late will be forwarded to an outside collection agency. Fees incurred for their service will be billed to the appropriate families.

## Withdrawals and Changes

As stated in your Enrollment Contract, notification of withdrawals and request for any change of days or addition of days must be submitted to the school **in writing 30 days prior** to the change. The adjustment in fees will be prorated based on the date the school receives your written notice.

Your notice must be in the form of a physical letter sent by mail. **E-mails or verbal notices do not count.** You may also use the withdrawal and change forms that are available from the front office.

### Example

Your annual tuition is \$12,500. You are on the monthly payment plan, paying \$1250 each month for 10 months. You just paid your 8th payment on March 1st.

You wish to withdraw your child from first grade on April 15. However, you sent your written notice via e-mail on March 15. As soon as we received your e-mail, we asked that you send your notice in writing by mail. You complied. We received your hand delivered letter on March



**18. For billing purposes, your child's official departure date is April 18** *(even though your child will no longer be physically present at the school after April 15).*

The school will now calculate amount you still owe the school. As of March 1st, you paid a total of \$10,000. By April 18 (the official date of withdrawal), your child will have attended school for 7 months and 18 days out of a total of 9 months. The tuition pro-rated for 7 months and 18 days is \$10,555.56. Your last payment, due April 1st, is thus \$555.56 (pro-rated annual tuition minus total amount you paid as of March 1st).

## **Late Enrollment**

If you are joining school after September 7 (the first day of school), you will pay the full, non-refundable interview fee, administration fee and supply fee. An enrollment contract will be prepared, and tuition will be prorated based on your child's school entry date.

**All forms including health records are required to be filled out and turned in prior to your child starting school.**

*Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. The less time we have to take to manage the finances and administration, the more time we have to nurture and work with your child.*





## Dress Code

Getting ready for school in the morning is a routine that may form many healthy habits. These are our recommendations for your ease and your child's comfort while here. Choose clothing that is easy to move in while running, crawling or climbing and to loosen for the bathroom. School clothes need to be highly washable or able to withstand dirt, grass, mud, water and paint. Layering for warmth and weather is useful. Natural fibers are often the most comfortable for young children. Staying free of fashion excesses such as fingernail polish or press-on tattoos is encouraged, as well as using clothing in solid colors or more muted prints which are all free from ads, media characters or slogans. When all clothing is labeled with names, we can keep the clothing with the child to whom it belongs.

Bring along hats for sun or cold and raingear, which can be stored at the cubbies in kindergarten or hung on the coat rack in the grades. Each child has either a cubby or a coat rack where extra clothes, coats, shoes and personal supplies are kept. Check your child's personal supplies

regularly for things that need to go home. Toys from home do not belong in school. The teacher is fully responsible for engaging the children actively and creatively during school hours. Check with the teacher before sending non-essential items to school with your child. Losing things at school may cause sadness.

You may hear the teachers talk about keeping children warm enough. This comes from an understanding that the young child is just developing the ability to balance the opposing forces of heat and cold. With this balance comes our most harmonious mental and physical activity. The well-known kindergarten educator, Margaret Meyerkort, points out that "the human being is born without physical protection; he thus begins his earthly path in a most vulnerable position, dependent on the caring concern of others." Meyerkort suggests that erring on the side of overdressing is better than allowing the warmth to stream out through the sensitive points of the head, hands and feet.



## Communication

Clear, concise, and respectful communication between parents and faculty and between families is very important to the school. How we choose to communicate with others is very important because we are role models for our children.

According to Steiner, when you **actively listen** to another person, you put yourself to sleep. You become the other person and live with their thoughts and feelings as if they were your own. How often do we listen to someone while having a running commentary in our minds critiquing all the other is saying? How often do we feel the need to interrupt someone – as if we already know what he will say? While the school cannot answer the above questions for you, we can and do encourage everyone to try to **actively listen** and to be mindful of the constant push and pull of group needs versus individual needs.

When disagreements arise, as they inevitably do, we also encourage that you allow time for meditation and reflection before responding. This could mean allowing yourself as much as 24 hours to sleep and live with the other's comments. As such, we must be patient and persistent and trust that the other is working as hard as we are.



Here are some of the ways we stay in touch:

## School Directory

To encourage communication between families, we publish a school directory with each family's contact information. This directory is given to each family upon registration at the school. If you would like another copy, please ask Njeri's administrative assistant.

## Handbook

All school policies and regulations are detailed in the parent handbook which is distributed to each new family registered at the school. Continuing families can access the school's website to read the handbook online or download it to print. These policies and regulations encompass all aspects of school life. **Each family should read the handbook.** If you would like another copy, please download it from our website.

The electronic copy of this handbook is available at:

[http://njerismorningglory.com/parent\\_handbook/](http://njerismorningglory.com/parent_handbook/)  
You will need to obtain the login name and password from the school administrator. Please contact [admin@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:admin@njerismorningglory.com) or call 408-255-5520 for the login information.

## Scheduled Parent/Teacher Meetings

Personal conversations with each family on a regular basis are very important to us. Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year to discuss your child's development. Teachers are also available to answer questions that may arise on a daily basis. For these infor-

mal discussions, we ask that you call ahead and schedule a time with the teacher so that we may give you and your questions the time and attention you deserve. Impromptu discussions during drop-off or pick-up tend to be abrupt and brief, as the teacher's attention is primarily focused on the children during these transitions.

## All-School Meetings

The school has scheduled two all-school meetings this year to discuss school-wide issues brought before the Council. More may be convened as needed. We understand the importance of being with our families. The school strives to schedule the minimum meetings necessary while still maintaining good communication with all families. We thus urge all parents to attend as many of these all-school meetings as possible.

## Council

The Council is an advisory group made up of eight parents and teachers, including Njeri McGillicuddy. Council meets the second Friday of each month to discuss topics ranging from day-to-day matters to the long-term goals of the school. Any parent, staff or teacher may submit items for discussion by filling out a form found near the "Council Items" box located at the front desk.

## Newsletter, E-mail, and Website

We issue a school newsletter once a year, as well as school e-mails in which information about new families and upcoming festivals and special events are provided. In addition, an e-mail is is-





sued every Friday focusing on events and activities planned for the next week. Upcoming events and art classes are also posted on our website: [www.njerismorningglory.com](http://www.njerismorningglory.com)

## Who to Ask What

Questions concerning school hours, events, policies, school directory, payments, art classes, and reservations for special events should be directed to:

Karl Kpatakpa, Office Manager - [admin@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:admin@njerismorningglory.com) or 408-255-5520

### College of Teachers

Njeri McGillicuddy, Founder - [admin@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:admin@njerismorningglory.com) or 408-255-5520

Eva Wang, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grade Teacher - [eva@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:eva@njerismorningglory.com) or 408-255-5520

Njeri McGillicuddy, Administrator - [admin@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:admin@njerismorningglory.com) or 408-255-5520

Questions concerning your child's class experience should be directed to your child's teacher, either verbally or through email. Your child's teacher will provide you with contact information by the first class meeting.

Questions regarding financial issues such as terms of the enrollment contract, billing for the art programs, billing for the Aftercare program, receipt for checks paid and any other financial issues should be e-mailed to:

Njeri McGillicuddy - [admin@nmgschool.com](mailto:admin@nmgschool.com)  
(with "**FINANCIAL**" in the subject heading)

Questions to other parents – please use the school directory to get their phone number and/or e-mail address.





## Creative Discipline

*“The young child instinctively expects guidance. Without the certainty of his parents and teachers he loses his/her security... Constantly being asked what he wants creates bewilderment in his mind... instead we must develop consciousness and consciously meet the child’s paramount needs. They are easily stated: security and an awareness of growth, love and a certain amount of protection... the conscientious and conscious parent will have to play an active and positive role in the education, the leading forth of his child... Lead the child by conveying firmness permeated with love.”*

~Margaret Meyerkort, Internationally respected kindergarten educator

As teachers, we guide behavior in a gentle, non-threatening yet effective manner. We carefully structure the environment and daily rhythm. When disruptions or conflicts occur, we use creative images, characters, stories and humor to redirect the play, or give out special roles involving cooperation.

Violent behavior or behavior resulting in injury to another person such as kicking, biting, punching, or hitting and behavior resulting in constant disruptions to the classroom will not be tolerated at the school. Children exhibiting such behavior will be sent home. If you receive a call from the school, please support the school and your child’s teacher by picking up your child immediately. Parents and teacher working together give children a firm and loving message that encourage change and a striving to do better. If your child is not picked up within 30 minutes of our call, you will be charged \$250. If your child is having difficulty with aggressive behaviors, please confer with your teacher before an incident occurs to establish consistent methods of discipline both at home and at school.

## Media

TV, computer games and movies have noticeable effects on children: uneasiness and a lack of attentiveness may occur in the classroom. In our opinion, the greatest loss is the dimming effect they have on the child’s wonderful imagination, which is the foundation for learning and growth. As such we ask that you limit, or preferably avoid, your child’s exposure to ‘screen time’. If you have questions about the effects of media on child development or are uncertain about how to remove it from your children’s lives, please talk with any of the teachers.



## Library

### Hours

#### *Daily*

- 1 p.m. – 1:40 p.m.

Books can be checked out **for two weeks**. Each **student can borrow two books** and each **adult can borrow one book** at a time. At this point, due to the size of the library, please refrain from renewing the due date. Also, please wait for one week to take out the same book again. If you lose a book, you will need to replace it.

## How books are organized

- Children's books have colored stickers either on the spine or the front cover that correspond to the book's category. The shelves are labeled with matching colored stickers.
- Adult books are marked with letters of the alphabet (i.e., "B" for biography, "S/H" for self-help and health, etc.).





## Check-in/Check-out Procedure

### Check-Out

1. **Print your name on the book card** located in the pocket on the inside of the back cover of the book. Present the book and card to the receptionist at the front office to write the due date on the card.
2. **Find your borrower's card** (the card with your name on it) in the wooden box at the front office.
3. **Print the title of the book on your borrower's card** and have the receptionist print the due date on it.
4. **Put the book card in the wooden box. Put your borrower's card in the pocket in the book** you are checking out.

### Check-In

1. **Present your borrower's card** to the receptionist at the front office. After she has marked the date returned, **put the borrower's card back in the wooden box.**
2. In the wooden box, **find the book card and present** to the receptionist at the front office. She will put the card back in the pocket in the book.
3. You have the responsibility to **put the book back on the shelf.**

## Donating books

If you'd like to donate books to our library, please make sure they are appropriate for our school community and Waldorf education and please follow this process:

1. Get a donor's label from the receptionist at the front office.
2. Fill out the label.
3. Put a label in each book you want to donate.
4. Drop off the labeled book(s) in the book bin at the receptionist's desk.

Thank you!



## What is Waldorf Education?

The aim of Waldorf education, as stated by its founder Rudolf Steiner, is “to develop free human beings who are able, in themselves, to impart purpose and direction to their lives.” This can only be done through educating the whole child — head, heart, and hands — toward the three great ideals of truth, beauty, and goodness. These three ideals taken together set the standard of education at a Waldorf School. Steiner expresses them in the following way: “The need [is] for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility — these three forces are the very nerve of education.”

This goal of education, to develop a balance of intellectual achievement, spiritual growth, physical health and personal responsibility, is based on a profound understanding of the process of human development. Each subject is introduced to the child when he or she is most ready for it, and in a manner to which the child is naturally receptive at that stage.

Year by year, the content of the curriculum expands with the ever-growing powers of the child, nourishing the inner life through stories from fairy tales, legends, myths and history, while addressing the well-being of the outer life with the development of individual and social skills. Waldorf education recognizes the uniqueness of the individual and the spiritual in life. It lays the foundation for a truly healthy adult attitude by developing the child's sense of beauty, wonder, and interest in the world of nature and in all humanity.



## Rudolf Steiner and Anthroposophy

Rudolf Steiner, born in Austria in 1861, recognized the need to reconcile the experience of supersensible realities with that of the material world. He thus schooled himself in modern science and developed anthroposophy as a phenomenological approach to the spirit. Steiner dedicated the second half of his life to applying the principles of anthroposophy to the riddles of human existence (biodynamic agriculture), anthroposophical medicine, a movement for social renewal, homes and schools for disabled children and adults (Camphill villages), and centers and schools for science, mathematics, drama, speech painting, sculpture, and architecture. By his death on March 30, 1925, Steiner had given thousands of lectures and written numerous books on diverse subjects.



Although anthroposophy is the philosophy from which Waldorf schools have emerged, each school is independent of the Anthroposophical Society. Waldorf teachers study the principles of anthroposophy as part of their teacher training and normally work with anthroposophy as part of their own personal development, but within the curriculum of the school, anthroposophy does not enter the classroom.







# 2013-2014 School Calendar

Year / Month	Day	Event Name
2013 August	24	Back To School Gathering 10 a.m. to Noon (Childcare Fee: \$4/child)
2013 September	2	Labor Day, Federal Holiday (No School)
	3	First Day of School—Meet and Greet
	11	Afternoon Art Classes Begin
	26	Michaelmas Play
2013 October	14	Columbus Day, Federal Holiday (No School)
	26	Magic Forest Journey
2013 November	8	Lantern Walk
	11	Veteran's Day, Federal Holiday (No School)
	27	Thanksgiving Festival 12:30 to 1 p.m. (Parents Welcome)
	28 -29	Thanksgiving, Federal Holiday (No School)
2013 December	21-31	Winter Break
2014 January	1-5	Winter Break
	6	School Resumes
	20	Martin Luther King, Federal Holiday (No School)
	26	All-School Winter Celebration
2014 February	17	President's Day, Federal Holiday (No School)
	18-21	Teachers' Conference (No School)
	18-21	Art Camp 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Four Days)
2014 March	1	All-School Meeting 10 a.m. to Noon (Childcare Fee: \$4/child)
2014 April	7-18	Spring Break
	7-11	Art Camp 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Five Days)
	14-18	Art Camp 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Five Days)
	21	School Resumes
	27	Spring Multicultural Faire (Sunday)
2014 May	1	May Day Celebration
	26	Memorial Day, Federal Holiday (No School)
	30	Last Day of School

**NOTE:**

1. The school's cultural/festival life is greatly enriched by celebrations brought by parents wishing to share their family culture with the rest of the school. In the past, such celebrations have included Diwali, Hanukah, Kwanzaa, and Lunar New Year. These festivals bring an awareness of different cultures and religions to the children. We assume parents will continue to sponsor these events in the 2013/2014 school year.
2. Dates and activities presented in this calendar are subject to change.



# Nature Day/Field Trip Safety Procedures

Provided below are the safety procedures we have developed for Friday Nature Days and field trips. For each hazard, the safety precautions we will be practicing in the field are described as well as the recommended at home precautions.

## Poison Oak

As the children continue their explorations in nature, they are bound to come into contact with certain aspects of nature that are not so friendly to humans. Perhaps the most common exposure is contact with poison oak. The result of touching this plant is the development of a rash (caused by the plant oils). Treatments include keeping the child comfortable until it runs its course - usually about 10 days. Wiping bruised mugwort leaves over the affected area may help, as will an herbal soap found at Whole Foods. The Waldorf School in Santa Cruz uses Technu - a soap specially designed to dissolve the plant oils. Technu can help prevent the rash (if used soon enough) and to help with the rashes that may develop. They swear by this soap, which you can get at REI.

One of the first things we will be doing is teaching the children how to identify the leaves of this unfortunately common plant. But we are bound to touch some. When this happens, the teachers will immediately wash those parts of the children's bodies that have touched the plant with Technu. In my experience, washing off the plant oils as soon as possible greatly reduces the possibility of developing a rash. In addition, it is our policy to notify the parents of their child's exposure to poison oak. If you receive one of these phone calls from me, please do not panic.

At home, have your child take a tepid shower with soap (either Technu, regular soap, or maybe the herbal soap from Whole Foods), focusing on the affected area. Rub a moisturizer (perhaps something with aloe vera) over his/her body as the Technu soap rinses off ALL oils - even the body's natural protective oils. Now watch to see if a rash appears. If a rash does appear, you can use calendula cream or consult your doctor about a more traditional medical response. I would also recommend washing your child's hiking clothes separate from the rest of your laundry - be careful when handling them as the residual oils in the clothes may cause another reaction! I will let you know if we think this is likely.

More information about poison oak can be found in the following websites:

<http://www.knowledge.org/oak/#general>

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7431.html>



## Ticks

Ticks are another potential hazard. Ticks are small, dark-colored insects perhaps the size of a poppy seed. They are most prevalent in grassy areas or in bushes and shrubs, although I have seen them on ground that's covered with leaves. They are most active during the summer months. Ticks in Northern California are infected with Lyme disease, which they pass on to humans through bites.

We generally do not walk on narrow trails where we can brush up against shrubs and bushes. However, ticks can be found anywhere. To prevent tick bites, please have your children wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants on the hikes. If they can wear light-colored clothes, we can see the ticks better (of course, they may not stay white or light for long). Many websites also recommend tucking the bottom of the pants into the socks.

When your child gets home, please do a thorough check for ticks. They like the warmest places on the body - groin, underarm, behind the ears, the nape of the neck (following the hairline), etc. If you see a tick, remove it with a narrow tip tweezers. Pull the tick straight out - do not rock it out or squeeze too tightly. It is important to get ALL of the tick out. Then put the tick in alcohol, wipe the area with alcohol, wipe the tweezers with alcohol, and wash your hands thoroughly. Save the tick in case you need to see a doctor, and he wishes to see the tick. In most cases, if the tick is removed within 24-hours, you will not develop Lyme disease. One symptom of Lyme disease is the development of a rash that looks like a bull's eye.

More information can be found in the websites listed below:

[http://www.revolutionhealth.com/conditions/first-aid-safety/first-aid-treatment/tick-bites/?s\\_kwcid=ticks|1072950534](http://www.revolutionhealth.com/conditions/first-aid-safety/first-aid-treatment/tick-bites/?s_kwcid=ticks|1072950534)

## Animals

When hiking out in nature, as a human, I sometimes forget that I am actually visiting the animals' homes. Then I see a deer grazing silently and am reminded once again of the animals' graciousness in sharing the beauty of their environment with me. We encroach on their homes more and more.

Some animals that we do NOT wish to see are: mountain lions and rattlesnakes. Last year we did not encounter either. The chances of us encountering a mountain lion or rattlesnake are low because the areas where we hike are actually well-used nature trails. We often see two or three other school groups hiking around. We also sometimes see the park rangers driving by on the nearby fire road.

However, just in case, we will be incorporating into our circle play with the children the appropri-





ate response to an encounter with a snake and a mountain lion. I wish to keep it playful, as the children will respond and remember better this way. More information can be found in the following websites.

[http://www.annmariebrown.com/hiketips\\_snakes.html](http://www.annmariebrown.com/hiketips_snakes.html)

[http://www.essortment.com/all/mountainlionat\\_rfem.htm](http://www.essortment.com/all/mountainlionat_rfem.htm)

## Bees

The best treatment for bee stings is, of course, preventative – in other words, avoiding bee hives. This is the school's primary policy. However, it is not always easy to spot a hive or to prevent encounters with bees that may be wandering away from their hive.

In these instances, the course of treatment for bee stings will be the following:

1. Immediately remove the child/children from the area
2. Remove the stinger using a credit card
3. Apply Baker's Venom Cleanser (an herbal remedy that neutralizes the bee venom).
4. If swelling occurs, provide the child with Apis Mellifica (a homeopathic remedy that reduces swelling from bee stings and insect bites).
5. IF THE CHILD IS FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO BREATHE, immediately provide the child with Benadryl (children's formula) and notify the parents.
6. Continue monitoring the child.
7. If symptoms persist, call 911.

It is the parents' responsibility to consult with a physician and, if necessary, obtain the proper medication (for example, an Epi Pen) if their child is severely allergic to bee stings or has previously shown an adverse reaction to bee stings.

Blessings,  
Eva Wang



## Nature Day/Field Trip Safety Procedures Acknowledgement and Parent Approval

We have read the above and agree to the terms and conditions specified.

Our child/children, \_\_\_\_\_ has/have permission to  
attend this event \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

A one-time charge of \$10 per child will be collected from all Friday Nature Day families to help defray parking fees incurred by faculty and staff running the Friday Nature Day program. If any additional activity fees are needed, it will be explained in future emails.

I have paid the \$10 parking fee.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

4250 Latimer Ave, San Jose, CA 95130

[www.njerismorningglory.com](http://www.njerismorningglory.com)

(408) 255-5520

E-mail: [admin@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:admin@njerismorningglory.com)



## Handbook Acknowledgement

- **PLEASE PRINT, SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE OFFICE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 6TH, 2013.**

In order to best serve our children and our community we ask that you sign below to confirm that you have read and understand your part in the workings of our school.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read and understood the policies and procedures of Njeri's Morning Glory School and Art Center as outlined in this Handbook.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read and understood the policies and procedures of Njeri's Morning Glory School and Art Center as outlined in this Handbook.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

4250 Latimer Ave, San Jose, CA 95130

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E-mail: [admin@njerismorningglory.com](mailto:admin@njerismorningglory.com)





# Twenty Reasons Why Art is Good for Kids

1. Art stimulates both sides of brain.
2. 33% of children are visual learners.
3. Studies show that children who do art read better and do better in math and science.
4. Children need to learn through their senses and art is an excellent way of doing this.
5. Children must have a place in school to express themselves.
6. Art enhances self-esteem.
7. Art develops awareness of the physical environment.
8. Art develops hand-eye coordination.
9. Art enhances perceptual development.
10. Art teaches open-ended thinking. It presents a culture of questions rather than a culture of answers.
11. Art teaches children that there can be more than one solution to the same problem.
12. Art teaches children how to engage in creative problem solving.
13. Children can share and reflect on their art to learn about themselves, each other, and the world in which they live.
14. When art is integrated with other curriculum areas children become more engaged in the learning process.
15. In the process of art making, a child is presented with possibility, discovery, and freedom thereby disrupting the control and predictability of conventional education found in the U.S. today.
16. Art nurtures the human soul! (It feels good to do it!)
17. Art brings the community's cultural resources into the classroom.
18. Art involves parents and guardians in school governance and volunteer activities.
19. Art provides a means, a common ground, to reach across racial stereotypes, barriers, and prejudices.
20. Art is valuable for its own sake!



# What do I say to kids about their Art?

- **Demonstrate your interest**

Tell me about your picture.

Do you want to tell me about it or just show me?

How did you make that?

Did you learn anything new?

What did you do first?

Stand away from your artwork, does it look different? The same? How? Why?

What is your favorite part?

What did you like doing best?

Lets turn your work around so we can look at all the different sides.

- **Talk about the art elements: line, shape, color, texture, space**

Look at all the zigzag lines.

I see big shapes and small shapes in your picture.

Can you count how many colors you used?

I like the effect of using one color, it makes it easier to see your lines.

How did you make all those textures?

Look at the difference between that shiny fabric and that crumply paper.

Look at the spaces you created in between these two forms.

- **Just describe what you see.**

I see some purple, orange and green. It looks like you mixed some “secondary” colors.

Wow! You were really listening to directions, look how you...

Look how you placed/arranged the...

You take your time and make careful decisions.

Wow! You used so many different brush strokes.

- **Steer away from value judgments: good/bad, like/dislike**

I enjoy the way...

I appreciate how you...

I am proud of you for...

I admire...

I notice...

Look at the attention you paid to...



# Parent Handbook 2013-2014

Last modified: August 18, 2013

The electronic copy of this handbook is available at:

**[http://njerismorningglory.com/parent\\_handbook/](http://njerismorningglory.com/parent_handbook/)**

You will need to obtain the login name and password from the school administrator. Please contact admin@njerismorningglory.com or call 408-255-5520 for the login information.

AFTER YOU READ THIS HANDBOOK,  
please submit the Handbook Acknowledgement form  
(available in this handbook or on the website above).  
**(Due September 6, 2013)**

PRIOR TO EACH NATURE DAY/FIELD TRIP EVENT,  
please submit the Nature Day/Field Trip Safety Pro-  
cedures Acknowledgement and Parent Approval form  
(available in this handbook or on the website above).  
**(Due one week prior to each event)**

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Njeri's Morning Glory School and Art Center

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