



Pine Forest School
2022-2023
Preschool Handbook

The Waldorf Early Childhood Class ...

- ... *nourishes and protects a sense of wonder and imagination.*
- ... *offers a way to rehearse for life as a productive adult.*
- ... *strengthens a child's affinity with the world of nature.*
- ... *makes the rich soil in which a young child can grow.*

*Stories * Songs * Puppetry * Movement * Play * Practical Activities*



*Children meet themselves deep in the realm of the imagination,
through stories, songs, puppetry and imaginative play.
They meet the world through tasks like baking, sewing,
building, sweeping, gardening, making soups and other practical activities
which connect them to the rhythms of their body,
to life in the family, the community and their environment.*

*The teacher weaves daily and weekly rhythms
into the cycles of the year.*

*In autumn, songs and stories celebrate harvest themes.
Looking toward winter, craft activities may include stitching,
working with wool and creating colorful gifts for friends and family.
In spring, bulbs poke through the brown soil, their hints of green
encouraging the children to plant seeds for the summer garden.*

*The teaching in a Waldorf School is oral, dramatic and creative.
It challenges the children to gradually develop their awakening capacities
to think clearly, to feel fully and to live mindfully.*

*“Receive the child in reverence.
Educate the child in love,
Let the child go in freedom.”*

Rudolf Steiner

**Welcome to the Children's Garden
of
Pine Forest School!**

This handbook contains information you will want to access throughout the year.

Please, keep it as a handy reference.

Thank you,

Miss Darla and Ms. Lindsay

Darla Serna dsernascott@pineforestschool.org

Lindsay Blickhan lblinkhan@pineforestschool.org

Hours: 8:15 to 12:00

8:15 Arrival to classroom, hang up jackets; shoes off, slippers on
8:30 Creative play, craft work, snack preparation
8:45 Circle time
9:00 Bathroom, outside shoes
9:15 Outside play
10:00 Snack
10:30 Indoor play
11:00 Rest and story
12:00 Closing Circle and Dismissal

Extended Day: 12:00 to 2:50

12:00-12:30 Lunch
12:340- 2:00 Rest
2:00- 2:50 Inside play

Our weekly rhythm:

| <i>Day:</i> | <i>Color:</i> | <i>Snack:</i> |
|-------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|
| Monday | Purple | Brown Rice with Gomasio (sesame salt) |
| Tuesday | Red | Oat Groats with Currants and Pecans |
| Wednesday | Yellow | Vegetable Soup and Pumpkin Seeds |
| Thursday | Orange | Quinoa and Toasted Sunflower Seeds |
| Friday | Green | Spelt Bread With almond butter |

Note: Please inform us, in writing, of any food sensitivities or allergies.



Snow Information

"Snow Day" = no school
"Snow Delay" or "Late Start" = 10:00 Start

When there is a winter storm or icy road conditions, PFS will generally follow the Flagstaff Unified School District decision to cancel school or delay. Once a snow day decision is made, an announcement will be made in the following forms:

- 🧊 Radio Stations: KAFF (93 FM), KMGH (93.9 FM), KNAU (91.7 FM), KOLT (107.5 FM) or KVNA (600 AM).
- 🧊 Website: www.pineforestschool.com (Right-hand side under "Recent Posts")
- 🧊 The FUSD website: <https://www.fusd1.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=178>
- 🧊 Text Message: If you are signed-up for high-priority text messages from Pine Forest School.

🍀 ***Please do not risk driving on unsafe roads to bring your child to school***

🍀 *If it begins to snow during the day, students may be dismissed early. PFCS will announce an early closing time over the above radio stations and post this notice on the website. Parents may also call the school for closing information, but please be aware that due to a heavy volume of calls, your call may not get through the first time.*

Clothing

School Uniform Guidelines:

Fabrics that are solids and/or patterns (stripes, plaids, dots, etc) *only*.

No pictures, logos, commercial designs or illustrations.

Thus, the children may focus on their friends' faces, not their clothes.

EVERY DAY:

1. A **Short sleeved shirt AND a Long sleeved shirt** (to protect from coolness or sun) All shirts must *have sleeves* and completely cover the belly when arms are raised.
2. **Sweater** or sweatshirt, in addition to the above shirts. (*may be kept at school*)
3. **Pants** must be easy to manage and long enough to cover the knees. Elastic waistbands preferred. No belts.
4. **Shoes** that are sturdy and your child can put on themselves. Shoes must have covered toes and a heel.
5. **Socks** preferably covering the ankle
6. **Hat**, warm hat for cold weather, a sun hat for warm weather.
7. **SLIPPERS:** A pair of slippers that will be kept at school. Plain shoe-shaped with a non-skid sole, that will stay firmly on. No laces, buckles, animal, media related. No fuzzy or floppy slippers, so your child may safely hop, dance and climb up into the loft.
8. **Additionally, provide one small bag with labeled socks, undies, shirt and pants (only) to be kept in their cubby space, in case of need.**

On snowy days, the children must have the following

ADDITIONAL CLOTHES FOR COLD AND SNOWY WEATHER:

Full snow gear: jacket, snow pants or suit, waterproof mittens, boots and a hat.

We play outside, *almost* always!

Comfort, protection, and ease are necessary at school.

All clothing should be well-fitting, sturdy, and easily washable.

LABEL ALL Outer and Spare clothing.

Avoid: belts, pants with button fly, headbands (unless simple and necessary to keep eyes free of hair), tight-necked sweatshirts, scarves, high top shoes, tight button cuffs on long sleeved shirts, barretts, jewelry.

Please save fancy clothes for special occasions and festivals. Dresses for school must allow for full freedom of movement (no pencil skirts or maxi-length) and have leggings or tights for protection on the playground.

Other Useful Information:

Warmth:

Keeping a child warm is the easiest way to strengthen their immune system. Young children typically do not have a well developed awareness of their own warmth or coldness. While they may easily build up warmth through vigorous activity, their thermal mass is much less than an adult. Their hands are the most useful tool with which to assess the individual child's heat. If their hands are cold, they need to have more clothes on, even if they do not quite realize it.

Snack Time

One thing we are learning at school is to try new things. Initially, Snack Time can be a challenge for some children at this age, particularly if the food we serve is unfamiliar to them. We offer various opportunities for the children to help with food preparation. This often sparks their interest. It is a joy to see them acquire new tastes!

We use organically grown foods in our program. The grains we serve are unrefined, whole grains. These complex carbohydrates offer sustained energy to the children for their work, as well having a calming effect. Protein sources include a variety of legumes and dairy products. To nourish growing brains, we use "good fats" to provide essential fatty acids.

We ask that you send a vegetable to school with your child to share with the class, each Tuesday. It soon becomes many children's favorite day! They love to bring a vegetable to share. Please, send them with a vegetable that they like. That way, they will know there is at least one thing they love in the pot!

REMEMBER:



Tuesday is Vegetable Day!

Regular Rhythms and Rest

As we weave daily and weekly rhythms in with the cycles of the year, we work to develop in each child a sense of security and trust, as well as an awareness of the flow of time and the natural world. Through these regular rhythms, children gradually become aware that one thing follows another in a fairly reliable and predictable way.

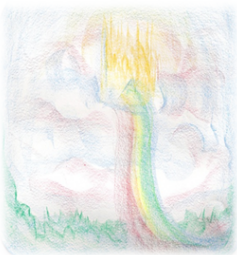
Our day begins on the playground where the children have the opportunity to reorient and connect with one another. This is important. So, please, make every effort to arrive on time.

Late arrivals must check-in at the front desk.

Please, make sure your child gets a good night's sleep and nourishing breakfast (low sugar).

Festivals:

Waldorf education incorporates a rich variety of festivals. As children grow through the grades, they participate more and more in each celebration. With each year, their understanding and appreciation increases. In the kindergarten, we bring each festival to the young ones in gentle, age appropriate ways, knowing that this is just the beginning of their journey. The kindergarten has separate celebrations from the rest of the school. If you have children in the older grades, we ask that you let the younger ones save that experience for their own turn. It is much more special and satisfying to them when they are "old enough" for the next new experience.



Community and Parent Meetings:

These provide an opportunity for questions and conversations about your children. Periodically scheduled, Parent Meetings are informative, fun, and social. We earnestly invite you to attend them, as they are one of our most effective methods of supporting you as parents. Pine Forest School additionally has many wonderful opportunities and ways for you to lend your input and connect with our wonderful community.



Parent/Teacher Conferences:

Individual Parent Conferences are held once each year. It is important that all primary caregivers, such as parents, attend this meeting if at all possible. It is a wonderful opportunity to discuss your child's social skills, personality at school, share anecdotes, challenges, appreciation, and advice. We will look at drawings, paintings and other work that your child has made. We think you will enjoy it!

Speech and Hearing Testing and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills):

The state of Arizona mandates that all kindergarten children will be screened for speech, hearing and academic readiness. The speech screening is done at the beginning of the school year by the NAU Speech Department and the hearing screening is done during the fall by a registered nurse. All tests are worked into the theme of playing a pleasant game with a wise helper. If you have any questions concerning these screenings, please check with the office.

Waldorf Philosophy and Academics:

The Waldorf Movement was inspired by Rudolf Steiner (1861 - 1925), a universal humanist and scientist who gave valuable suggestions, not only in education but also in medicine, agriculture, the arts and the sciences. Steiner's insight into child development places particular importance on the mental, emotional and physical nature of *each age level*. Play, imitation and direct experience, are the most powerful tools of learning of the young child. It has long been observed that focusing too early on academics robs children of the growth forces they need to develop the healthy physical bodies and relationships that will support future intellectual development.

More recent research has been in strong agreement with this approach, recognizing the overwhelming need to develop physical, social and creative foundations, prior to academics and abstract thinking. We are happy to help folks become familiar with the processes of this philosophy. Let us know if you have any specific questions regarding the Waldorf curriculum.

Illness:

It is in everyone's best interest to keep sick children home: They **must be** symptom-free from anything that may be contagious for 24 hours before returning to school.

Please, let us know if your child will be out of class for any reason.

For the health of the class, you **must** keep your child home for the following:

Fever of 100.5 or higher

Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours

Thick yellow or green mucous

Pink Eye (conjunctivitis)

Anything contagious

Please, call the school if you question the suitability of your child attending because of illness.

Head Lice and Such:

Head lice are tiny bugs that infest the hair and scalp. They lay tiny, clear whitish-yellowish eggs, called nits, along strands of hair, usually close to the scalp. They are very difficult and tiresome to remove.

Please, check your child's hair every time you shampoo, for any sign of lice or nits (eggs). Itchiness and/or inflammation of the neck glands may also be an indications of head lice. If we at school find a nit in your child's hair, we *must isolate the child* until they are picked up. You will be notified immediately, as head lice can quickly infest a whole family or a whole class.

The process of having lice and eliminating them is unpleasant and to be avoided as much as possible. Pharmaceutical products to kill lice are potent, powerful, and expensive. While home remedies can be effective, they are time consuming and must be repeated regularly. All clothes and linens of an infested person must be washed. Let's cooperate to avoid it!

We may not allow a child back into class unless they are completely nit and lice-free. They must be re-checked after 10 days.

Bed bugs:

Again, keep us informed if you have *any problems such as these*, so we may take all necessary measures to help keep our community and classrooms free and clear. Be assured we will be discreet, appropriate and mindful.

Screen Time

Television, movies, and video/computer games are counterproductive to the development of the imagination, the brain/body connection and the vital life experience that we are working to nurture in the young child. We ask all families to make a commitment to eliminating these stimuli from the environments of young children, particularly before the age of seven. While this is a basic tenet to the Waldorf experience, we know that these are such ingrained

elements to our culture that their elimination/reduction may present new challenges for some situations and families. The school has books and resources available for more information, alternative ideas and assistance.

At the very least, **no** television, electronic games, or other screen use on school nights or before school.

Toys from Home and other Things:

Keep personal and special “things” at home. There is much important work going on in the classroom and plenty to play with. Encourage your child to play with home toys at home and school toys at school. Special home toys *will wait* for them until *after* school.

Occasionally, a little school item may slip into a pocket and show up at home. If this happens, simply tell your child that the object belongs at school. It may be returned the next school day. This is a fairly common confusion for a young child. No further repercussions are necessary.

Unexpected withdrawal from school:

Each day at Pine Forest School, teachers and students take much care to make your child feel valued. Specific plans to foster your child’s development are made and enacted, important lessons are shared and friendships are formed. If you need to withdraw your child at any time during the school year, please understand that your child and family will be greatly missed.

Please, consider the emotional experience of the young collective by:

1. discussing the move as soon as possible with the teacher. (Do not leave this up to your child.)
2. allowing enough time so that the other students can be prepared for the transition.

It is our hope that your family will be a part of the Pine Forest community for years, even beyond your child’s time here. All the same, we understand the occasional need for movement or relocation.

Questions and/or Concerns:

Please email (addresses on second page), and we will get back to you, as soon as possible.. Class Time, and even just before or after, is *most often not a good time* to discuss questions and concerns. Let us know of your preferred form of communication, and a good time to talk.

Welcome to our delightful community!

“When we bring to the children, just at the right moment, matter appropriate to their faculties, to each disposition, then, what they have been introduced to becomes a source of refreshment for them throughout the whole of their lives.”

Rudolf Steiner